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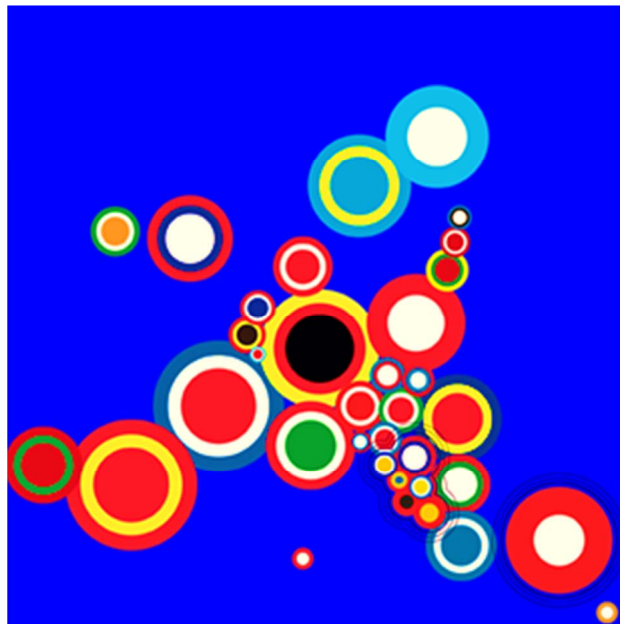
D – WESTERN BALKANS

D.5 – WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL COOPERATION AND
PROGRAMMES

IPA MULTI-COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

ACTIVITY REPORT:

JANUARY-JUNE 2017



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CONTACT

For any comments or suggestions on this Activity Report, notably on the length of the documents and details provided, please contact us by sending an e-mail to the following general inbox: NEAR-D5@ec.europa.eu or genevieve.ohl-engelbos@ec.europa.eu

For any additional information on specific projects, contact us via the same address and your e-mail will be forwarded to the relevant Task Manager in DG NEAR unit D.5 – Western Balkans Regional Cooperation and Programmes.

LINK

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/multi-beneficiary-programme/index_en.htm

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AEI	Agency for European Integration
ATA	Administrative and Technical Assistance Facility
BAS	Business Advisory Services
BIRN	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
BKA	Bundeskriminalamt/Federal Criminal Police Office Germany
BPR	Biocidal Products Regulation
CAB	Conformity Assessment Bodies
CAN	Capacity Needs Assessment
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
CBIB	Cross-border Institution Building
CC	Climate Change
CCW	Climate Change Window
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CEECIS	Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent states
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CEN	Comité Européen de Normalisation
CFR	Country Feasibility Report
CHP	Country Housing Projects
CHU	Central Harmonisation Unit
CIRCA	Communication & Information Resource Centre Administrator
CLP	Classification, labelling and packaging
CN	Contract
CO	Coordination Office
CoE	Council of Europe
CoP	Community of Practice
CSF	Civil Society Facility
CSF	Classical Swine Fever
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country strategy paper
CSR	Country Strategy Report

CVO	Chief Veterinary Officers
DG	Directorate General
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EAMLA	European Accreditation multilateral agreement
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EBU	European Broadcasting Union
EC	European Commission
ECAS	European Citizen Action Service
ECENA	Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession
ECS	Energy Community Secretariat
ECT(S)	European credit transfer (System)
EDIF	Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility
EE(FF)	Energy Efficiency Finance Facility
EEA	European Economic Area
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EETF	Energy Efficiency Task Force
EFSE	European Fund for Southeast Europe
EGP	Enterprise Growth Programme
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EIF	European Investment Fund
EJN	European Judicial Network
EMMA	European Multi-services Meteorological Awareness
ENEF	Enterprise Expansion Fund
ENER	Energy
ENIF	Enterprise Innovation Fund
ENIF	Enterprise Innovation Fund
ETF	European training Foundation
EU	European Union
EUBEC	EU Platform for Blending in External Cooperation
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUI	European University Institute
EUMETNET	European National Meteorological network

EURAMET	European Association of National Metrology Institutes
FAD	Fiscal Affairs Department
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement
GB	Governing board
GF	Guarantee Facility
GGF	Green for Growth Fund
GHG	Green House Gases
GIS	Geo Information System
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEREs	Higher Education Reform Experts
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
HLC	Humanitarian Law Centre
HOT	Hands-on training
HRM	Human resource Management
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBM	Integrated Border Management
IC	Investment Committee
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
IFI	International Financial Institution
IFICO	International Financial Institution Coordination Office
ILECU	International Law Enforcement Coordination Units
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPF	Infrastructure Projects Facility
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
ISCED	International standard classification of education
IT	Information technology
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization
JCM	Joint committee meetings

JIT	Joint Investigation Teams
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – banking group
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
LLEL	Life Long Entrepreneurial Learning
LLL	Life Long Learning
LPIS	Land Parcel Identification System
LSEE	Research unit established within the London School of Economics and Political Science's European Institute
MB	Multi-beneficiary
MCSP	Multi-country strategy paper
MDAS	Market development activities
MFF	Multi-annual financial framework
MIDWEB	Migration for Development in the Western Balkans
MIPD	Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document
MMF	Multilateral monitoring framework
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MSC	Migrant Service Centres
MSME	Micro and small enterprise
MWh	Megawatt hours
NATURA EU	Nature & biodiversity policy
NCTS	National computerized transit system
NEEAP	National Energy Efficiency Action Plan
NEAR	Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
NICO	Northern Ireland Cooperation Overseas
NIPAC	National IPA Coordinator
NSI	National Statistics Institute
NTB	Non-Tariff Barriers
NTOs	National Tempus Offices
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OTP	Office of the Prosecutor
P2P	People to People
PADOR	Potential Applicant Data Online Registration
PAG	Platform Advisory Group

PAR	Public Administration Reform
PB	Partner bank
PC	Partner country
PCA	Post clearance audit
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PEM	Pan-Euro-Mediterranean
PEMPAL	Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning
PFG	Project Financiers Group
PFI	Participating Financial Institution
PFM	Public Financial Management
PGSC	Policy Group for Statistical Cooperation
PIFC	Public Internal Financial Control
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PMU	Project Management Unit
PoW	Programme of Work
PP	Public Procurement
PPA	Public Procurement Authority
PPF	Project Preparation Facility
PPP	Public-private partnership
PSSF	Private Sector Support Facility
PV	Photovoltaic
QA	Qualitative Assurance
R&D	Research and Development
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RCI	Regional Competitiveness Initiative
RE	Renewable energy
RECOM	Regional Committee for Truth and Reconciliation
REEP	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme
REG	Regional
REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals
RENA	Regional Environmental Network for Accession
ReSPA	Regional school of public administration
RHP	Regional Housing Programme
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement

SAI	Supreme Audit Institution
SBA	Small Business Act
SBS	Small Business Support Programme
SC	Steering Committee
SEE	South East Europe
SEECEL	South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning
SEED	Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data
SEEIC	Southeast Europe Investment Committee
SEETO	South East Europe Transport Observatory
SEI	Strengthening European Integration
SELEC	Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SMECSF SME	Competitiveness Support Window
SPS	Sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
SWP	Strategic work programme
TA	Technical Assistance
TAC	Travel, accommodation and conference facility
TACSO	Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organisations
TADAT	Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool
TAXUD	Directorate General Taxation and Customs Union
TBC	To be confirmed
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
T-CY	Cybercrime Convention Committee
TFCS	Task Force for Culture and Society
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TNA	Training needs assessment
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of trainers
TVR	Temporary and Virtual Return
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USKOK	Office for the Prevention of Corruption and Organized Crime
VAC	Violence against Children
VAT	Value Added Tax
VIND	Vinca Institute Nuclear Decommissioning
WB	Western Balkan
WBG	World Bank Group
WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Framework
WeBSEDF	Western Balkans Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility
WeBSEFF	Western Balkans Sustainable Energy Financing Facility
WELMEC	European cooperation in the field of legal metrology
WG	Working group
WINPRO	Witness Protection in the Fight against Serious Crime and Terrorism
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WPU	Witness Protection Unit
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

CHAPTER 1: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM

1.1 SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (SIGMA)

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (SIGMA) in the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 18 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with OECD
Contract reference:	CN 2015/360-644
Duration of activities:	01/07/2015 – 30/06/2018
Links:	www.sigmaweb.org
Contact:	Alberto Costa, alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

SIGMA supports public administration reform (PAR) in the Western Balkans and Turkey, providing the beneficiaries with assistance to strengthen their legal frameworks, administrative capacities and processes for sound implementation of national policies and harmonisation and implementation of the *EU acquis*. Areas of intervention are the core areas of PAR: (1) strategic framework of PAR, (2) policy development and co-ordination, (3) civil service and human resource management, (4) accountability, (5) service delivery, (6) public financial management (PFM) including public procurement (PP) and external audit.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Fifty-six draft assessment monitoring reports against the Principles of Public Administration in all the intervention areas were prepared and sent during summer for further fact-checking in all the beneficiary countries
- Eight concept papers, analysis and studies were prepared in the areas of civil service, administrative law, public procurement, managerial accountability and PFM (Kosovo*, Montenegro and Serbia)
- Twelve advisory and written commentaries were delivered on strategic planning, managerial accountability, civil service law and practice, public internal financial control, PAR and PFM strategies, organisation of public administration and public procurement systems (Albania, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia)
- Twelve workshops or seminars were organised to support work on: the improvement of strategic planning and government work monitoring and policy evaluation; improving managerial accountability; improving civil service law and practice; strengthening public

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on Kosovo's declaration of independence.

procurement systems and increasing the understanding of CSOs on the main PAR challenges and the Principles of Public Administration (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Turkey)

- One regional workshop with ReSPA on the functioning of the centres of government
- Substantive comments on the Albanian Code of Administrative Procedure were delivered
- Two SIGMA Papers were published, one on relations between Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) and parliamentary committees and one providing a comparative study on the functioning of the centres of government in the EU Enlargement countries
- Support to three PAR Special Groups was provided (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia)

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Guidance for the implementation of the laws on organisation of public administration, and administrative disputes, code on administrative procedures and law on general administrative procedure (Albania, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
- Finalisation of the indicator frameworks, preparation and review of PAR and PFM strategies, improved outcome-based reporting, methodologies for monitoring and policy evaluation and the system of strategic planning and setting up for establishment of sector strategies (Kosovo, Montenegro, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
- Initialised process to improve public procurement legislation and practices in Albania and Serbia and of managerial accountability (Montenegro and Serbia)
- Improved Regulatory Impact Assessment methodology and methods of the calculation of medium-term budget costs, strengthened capacity of the CHU to carry out quality assurance of internal audit, and strengthened internal capacity for reporting of the Audit Authority (Albania)
- A draft Administrative Instruction for strategy development and draft memorandum of understanding and a draft action plan for rationalising agencies; improved annual reporting on the PAR strategies (Kosovo)
- Improved drafts of the PAR strategy and the PFM Reform Programme and practical guidelines for implementation of the Law on General Administrative Procedures (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
- Monitoring assessments against the Principles of Public Administration (all IPA countries)

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

SIGMA will deliver the 2017 monitoring reports against the Principles of Public Administration to the European Commission and will publish them. SIGMA will also continue to provide country-specific assistance to strengthen the functioning of public administration in all the beneficiaries. The Ministerial Conference on "*Good Public Governance - Delivering for Citizens and Business*" will be held in Paris in December.

1.2 PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Strengthening Accountability and the Fiduciary Environment (SAFE), EU Single-Donor Trust Fund
EU contribution:	EUR 3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Administration Agreement with the World Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2015/369-168
Duration of activities:	21/04/2016 - 20/04/2019
Links:	www.worldbank.org
Contact :	Javier Casanovas, Javier.Casanovas-Bernad@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of this Trust Fund is to improve the status of public financial management (PFM) in participating beneficiary countries in a systematic way through: a) improving understanding of PFM status in target beneficiaries; b) supporting design, implementation and management of PFM, taking account of governments' and donors' PFM objectives and the intended mid- to long-term impact; and c) developing knowledge and experience on PFM reform to strengthen reform effectiveness and focus on development partner support.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Albania - PEFA 2016/17 (ongoing): Training of government officials on the 2016 PEFA methodology and the launch workshop in February; Confirmation the peer reviewers (IMF, EU, SECO and the PEFA Secretariat).

Kosovo - Strengthening Office of the Auditor General capacities in carrying out value for money audits of procurement, compliance audit and procurement post reviews (inception stage): Finalisation of the procurement plan.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Enhancing the Implementation of Public Procurement (inception stage): Discussion on the envisaged capacity building activities.

Turkey - Deepening the Implementation of Public Sector Internal Audit Reforms (ongoing): An analytical study to assess the level of implementation of public sector internal audit reforms; a study visit to key officials to the UK National Audit Office, Institute of Internal Auditors, Charter Institute of Public Finance and Government Internal Audit Agency.

Regional - Strengthening Financial Management Functions of Line Ministries (ongoing): Updated contact list of line ministries; an on-line platform has been set-up; a list of potential experts has been produced and the CEF has stored CVs to its database for a potential recruitment; the CEF has visited five out of seven IPA beneficiaries to launch the project; a workshop on the EU instrument for pre-accession (IPA) has been organised.

Regional - Internal Audit Training of Trainers Program (ongoing): Selection of trainers; selection of a local consultant to develop a case study; a developed programme outline for (i) fundamentals and (ii) advanced stream; familiarisation of the members of the Community of Practice with the programme outline; a synopsis and outline for the Case Study completed (a fictional municipality will be featured through the series to cover practical examples and cases).

Regional - Strengthening Legislative Scrutiny in Western Balkans Countries (ongoing): The team is working with the Network of Parliamentary Committees (NPC) Community to identify reforms that are being implemented by different NPC members to identify illustrative case studies in particular in areas where the Balkan Parliamentary Committees are performing well and in areas where the network could benefit from identifying common good practice so as to work towards improved performance.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Albania - PEFA 2016/17: 45 Albanian officials trained on the new 2016 PEFA methodology.

Turkey-Deepening the Implementation of Public Sector Internal Audit Reforms: Increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses of the Turkey's internal audit system and good international practices.

Regional - Strengthening Financial Management Functions of Line Ministries: A platform for improvement the knowledge of line ministries on PFM developed.

Regional - Internal Audit Training of Trainers Program: The Internal Audit Training of Trainers Regional Community of Practice established.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Albania - PEFA 2016/17: The final report to be published in September/October 2017; the PFM system is assessed in order to update the PFM reform strategy and its action plan.

Kosovo - Strengthening Office of the Auditor General capacities: The National Audit Office (NAO) will prepare Terms of Reference for the consultant services; the NAO will procure consultant services as envisaged in the procurement plan; the first envisaged activity, the Review and Analysis of Factors, will determine the focus of further work.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Enhancing the Implementation of Public Procurement: Development of performance indicators and governance red flags in e-procurement; upgrading of the system with new e-procurement tools and functionalities; Harmonisation of e-procurement with e-archiving and e-appeals; CIPS certification training of officials from the Public Procurement Bureau.

Turkey - Deepening the Implementation of Public Sector Internal Audit Reforms: A knowledge sharing workshop will be organised.

Regional - Strengthening Financial Management Functions of Line Ministries: Blended learning on Fiscal Programming of Structural Reforms; workshop on Managing Public Investments; workshop on the Programme and Performance-Informed Budgeting.

Regional - Internal Audit Training of Trainers Program: The Case Study to be used in the training workshops and teaching materials will be developed; the final materials for training modules will be developed; workshops will be delivered.

Regional - Strengthening Legislative Scrutiny in Western Balkans Countries: The working group /network of Parliamentary Committee Clerks will prepare the next Network Regional Parliamentary Conference (Summer/Fall 2017).

1.3 REGIONAL SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (RESPA)

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Support to the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) in its efforts to contribute to the Public Administration Reform under the EU integration process in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 3.5 million

Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant contract with ReSPA
Contract reference:	CN 2016/373-854
Duration of activities:	01/07/2016 – 10/12/2018
Links:	www.respaweb.eu
Contact :	Inma Perez-Rocha, perez-rocha.maria-inmaculada@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The principal aim of ReSPA is to help improve regional cooperation among the Western Balkans public administrations on three pillars: European Integration, Public Administration Reform and Governance for Growth; to strengthen administrative capacities as required by the European integration process; and to develop human resource capacities.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Following the overall ReSPA strategic approach, the implemented activities are directly linked to the the European Integration, Public Administration Reform and Governance for Growth pillars. During the reporting period the following activities have been carried out:

- Workshop on managerial accountability and risk management for representatives of Central Harmonisations Units of Ministries of finances in ReSPA Members
- Regional Conference on Functioning of the Centre of Government Institutions
- Seminar on Better Regulation for PAR Legislators
- Regional Conference on Public Service Delivery across the Western Balkans
- Regional Conference "*Enhancing Managerial Competences in Civil Service*"
- Feasibility Study on the Establishment of ReSPA Quality Management Regional Centre

ReSPA also supported the improvement of administrative capacities of staff from the NIPAC offices and relevant line ministries involved in Budget Support operations funded by the EU. This objective was achieved through the organisation of specific country workshops on EU Budget Support and a study visit to the European Investment Bank.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- The Strategic Framework for PAR in Bosnia and Herzegovina prepared on the basis of the ReSPA Analytical Paper on Managing Process of Implementation of PAR Strategies
- Strengthened cooperation among National Investment Commission (NIC) Secretariats and the European Investment Bank (EIB) within the Western Balkans Investment Framework
- Practical guidance delivered on designing the intervention logic for budget support
- Following the recommendations of the ReSPA Study on Optimisation, ReSPA members have agreed on the need for a methodology to prepare sector strategies that include the costing of activities

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Regional Conference on EU Budget Support, Tirana (September)

- Regional Conference on Cooperation Among NICs, Belgrade (October)
- Study Visit for Judges of Administrative Courts to CoE and ECtHR, Strasbourg (September)
- Finalisation and translation of the Comparative Study on Better Regulation
- Better Regulation Working Group Meeting in cooperation with RCC to discuss relations with SEE 2020 Strategy (September)
- Translation of the comparative study - Legal Remedies in Public Administration
- 10th Annual ReSPA Conference "*Innovation in Public Administration - Navigating in Times of Change*", Podgorica (October)
- PIFC seminar on revised standards in Internal Auditing, Skopje (October)
- First meeting of the Coordination structure for Effective Public Service Dimension within GfG Pillar of SEE2020 Strategy organised in cooperation with RCC, Sarajevo (October)
- Finalisation of the Guidelines for Methodology for Costing of PAR Strategies
- Finalisation of the Feasibility study on ReSPA QM Regional centre
- The regional Conference on Gender in PA, Danilovgrad (December)

1.4 STATISTICAL COOPERATION

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/032-064
Project title:	Statistical cooperation for the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 8 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract and grants to 4 national statistical offices
Contract reference:	Service contract with GOPA Consultants, EUR 5.3 m Grant to MONSTAT, Montenegro, EUR 0.54 m Grant to State Statistical Office of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, EUR 0.64 m Grant to Statistical Office of Serbia, EUR 0.75 m Grant to Turkish Statistical Institute, EUR 0.56 m
Duration of activities:	01/11/2015 – 31/12/2017
Links:	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/our-partners/cooperation
Contact :	Torbioern Carlquist, torbioern.carlquist@ec.europa.eu Bernd Wild, bernd.wild@ec.europa.eu
Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2015/031-898
Project title:	Statistical cooperation for the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 16 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract and grants to 4 national statistical offices
Contract reference:	Service contract with GOPA Consultants, EUR 9.8 m

	Grant to MONSTAT, Montenegro, EUR 1.34 m
	Grant to MAKSTAT, EUR 1.73 m
	Grant to SORS, Serbia, EUR 1.50 m
	Grant to TURKSTAT, Turkey, EUR 1.38 m
Duration of activities:	01/04/2017 – 31/10/2019
Links:	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/our-partners/cooperation
Contact:	Torbioern Carlquist, torbioern.carlquist@ec.europa.eu Bernd Wild, bernd.wild@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to prepare the statistical authorities in the partner countries for future EU membership by aligning their present statistical methodologies and practices with the EU acquis in statistics and integrating them into the European Statistical System.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Regular activities continued to be financed from IPA 2014 such as participation in working group meetings, expert missions to the beneficiaries, study visits to EU MS, training events, 14 traineeships.

The inception phase of the service contract under IPA 2015 took place during the second quarter of 2017 and consisted of two general kick-off meetings between the contractor and Eurostat and 31 kick-off meetings with experts in the various pilot projects.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Mission reports of experts show that statisticians in the beneficiaries continue to learn more about the EU standards in statistics. Activity reports from the 3 beneficiaries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo) under the service contract show that round 300 participants participated in working group meetings at Eurostat, in pilot project workshops, training courses and study visits organised by the contractor. The participants from the beneficiaries (Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey), which are benefitting from a grant, also took part in these activities and described their experiences in mission reports.

Documentation of statistical sources and methods continued. Data delivery compatible with common standards has continued from partner beneficiaries to Eurostat.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The IPA 2014 service contract and grants will come to an end during the second semester of 2017. Four pilot projects under the service contract have been prolonged until end of December 2017.

Regular activities will start to be financed from IPA 2015. The date of switchover from IPA 2014 to IPA 2015 is different depending on the grant contract.

Many types of activities will take place: participation in Eurostat working groups and workshops, training events, expert missions to the national statistical offices, study visits, beneficiaries' work in different areas of statistics under 31 different pilot projects.

A total of 21 statisticians from beneficiaries are planned to be on traineeships in Eurostat and in statistical offices in selected EU Member States from September to December 2017.

1.5 CUSTOMS AND TAXATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	SEED Maintenance and Development
EU contribution:	EUR 898,160
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service Contract with Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency
Contract reference:	CN 2016/374-941
Duration of activities:	22/07/2016 – 21/07/2018
Links:	www.eu-seed.net
Contact:	Gabriel Blanc, gabriel.blanc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The main aims of this project are:

- to maintain the current SEED and INES+ infrastructures (Component 1)
- to extend and improve application in the customs field (Component 2)
- the technical and organisational preparation of inspection agencies and other relevant authorities in view of the future implementation of the SEED+ (Component 3)

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

During the period, several new SEED functionalities have been developed: interconnectivity between the NCTS and SEED in Serbia; a new "*ATA modul*" has been designed, developed and implemented; the alarm notifications system has been enhanced, and information about multiple exits of a single vehicle has been made available.

In addition, the following activities were undertaken in view of improving the existing system:

- Feasibility Studies on infrastructure and needs assessment for establishment of data exchange in 1) IPR field and 2) exchange of scanner images executed; on basis of the Feasibility Study, 5 out of 6 Beneficiaries will take part in the implementation of data exchange in IPR field; and regarding data exchange of scanner images, beneficiaries decided that it is too ambitious to implement this functionality at this stage
- improvement of the SEED system on VAT refunds for Montenegro, Serbia and B&H, on Cash flow for Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, B&H, Albania and Kosovo
- SEED module for data exchange about requests for VAT refund and data exchange on cross-border cash flow designed and developed
- preparatory activities on Safety/Security aspects were implemented. After designed the layout and prepared the architecture for the exchange of the attached documents all Beneficiaries can now enter control results in the SEED system

In order to prepare "*SEED+ Needs Assessment*", a National Report for each Beneficiary (37 meetings with 38 institutions) has been prepared. Each report provides information on needs for improvement for each stakeholder, rough costs estimations, exchange of data already established and

identification of data to be shared. Needs Assessment Reports have been adopted during the Steering Committee Meeting of 15 June 2017 in Rome.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Pure maintenance of the SEED infrastructure - continuous activity and engagement to maintain SEED infrastructure and maintain INES installations
- Extension of the scope in the Customs area: VAT refunds, SEED "*IPR module*", Feasibility Study on IPR and Improvement of the SEED infrastructure
- Improvement of scanner images applications
- SEED+ preparatory activities: Need Assessment for the SEED+ Project; Additional improvement of the SEED IT infrastructure; Preliminary activities for piloting of the AEO Mutual Recognition (MR); Preliminary activities for the creation of Regional Databases
- Elaboration of statistics on waiting time at the borders

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- **Pure maintenance of the SEED infrastructure:** SEED Maintenance - development of the completely new SEED platform; finalisation of the ATA module and other improvements required from Beneficiaries; INES Maintenance - release of new SEED software; Cross-border cash flow – transfer from the old software.
- **Extension of the scope in the Customs area:** Improvement of the current infrastructure, setting of a pilot exercise on VAT refunds module; update of SEED message structures to exchange information on result of physical/documentary controls on Safety/Security aspects and development functionalities for exchange of attached documents.
- **SEED+ Preparatory activities:** Improvement of the current infrastructure for easier future integration; defining an action plan for the implementation of the IT solution that will support Mutual Recognition of AEOs.
- **Extra activities:** During the next workshop, stakeholders should agree upon the best way to use the new functionality that collects statistics on 'average waiting times', in terms of Customs clearance for all products (HS6 codes) at all crossing points in the region (aggregate data).

CHAPTER 2: RULE OF LAW AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

2.1 FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME AND CORRUPTION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Fight against organised crime: international cooperation in criminal justice in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Delegation Agreement with the Italian Ministry of the Interior, Public Security Department
Contract reference:	CN 2014/341-116
Duration of activities:	12/07/2014 – 30/11/2017
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To improve international law enforcement strategic and operational cooperation among Beneficiaries as well as between Beneficiaries, EU Member States and EU/regional/international law enforcement organisations, through the support of international investigations and prosecutions, the promotion of secured exchange of information and intelligence, the use of modern communication technology and data protection mechanisms aligned to EU standards.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- supply of Sidda-Sidna upgrade modules to Serbia for a value of 60,000 euros
- workshop on Financial Investigations in Skopje
- Steering Committee in Trieste
- beginning of Croatian Science Experts in Montenegro and Albania
- beginning of Croatian Science Experts Experts in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- workoshop for undercover agents in Banja Luka (BiH)
- assessment and support to the Montenegrin Special Prosecutor's Office on financial investigations
- 2 workshops in Prevalle (Kosovo) on JITs
- French Prosecutor deployed to Sarajevo to assist the prosecutors office of BiH in the management of the cases
- workshop on Financial Investigations in BiH

- workshop on Financial Investigations in Brcko
- workshop on Financial Investigations in Banja Luka
- workshop on Assets confiscation in Kosovo
- workshop on Financial Investigations in Kosovo
- workshop on THB in Tirana
- inter-ministerial working group on trafficking of stolen vehicles in Tirana
- study visit in Italy on "Cash dogs training"
- workshop on Financial Investigations in Belgrade

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Hundreds of investigative meetings between Beneficiaries LEAs and between Beneficiaries and MS LEAs
- 246 persons and 2 wanted persons arrested; more than 300 kg of heroine, more than 15 kg of cocaine, more than 500 kg of marijuana seized as well as 3561 archeological goods, 6 guns, 2 automatic rifles 1 silencer, 5 bullet proof jackets, vehicles and luxury vehicles, money, forged documents, IT, mobile phones as result of supporting the investigations
- 2 investigations awarded by SELEC (BALKANI, PORTA)

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Follow-up on the selected investigations
- workshops on setting up a fugitives units network for the Balkans
- Ministerial Closing Conference

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	International Cooperation in Criminal Justice: the Prosecutors' Network of the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with GIZ GmbH, in partnership with Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
Contract reference:	CN 2014/350-650
Duration of activities:	19/11/2014 – 30/11/2017
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To strengthen the operational capacity and capabilities of the Public/State Prosecutors' Offices in the beneficiaries, to prosecute and investigate serious and trans-border organised crime, including linked

cases of illicit trafficking destined to the EU, in particular trafficking in firearms, drugs and human beings.

To prepare the beneficiaries for gradually applying the main provisions of the European Arrest Warrant.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

In the reporting period, the project continued its support to the beneficiaries in running cross-border cases. This support varied from advice about the drafting or processing of MLA requests, to facilitating contacts, organizing coordination meetings, technical advice, and financing of translations of evidence. As in the previous period, in a number of cases, this support was rendered jointly with the IPA 2013 police project. Furthermore, the training on various issues related to fighting organized crime and cross-border cooperation continued at a national and regional level. In three countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Kosovo and Montenegro), working groups for MLA legislation were supported. The officially appointed EJM Contact Points attended the EJM Plenary in Malta in June 2017. In order to create more understanding for the cooperation with the beneficiaries, working visits to all beneficiaries, with the exception of Kosovo, for EUROJUST National Members, were organized in the Spring of 2017. Finally, during the reporting period a number of internships for prosecutors were organized: for a Macedonian and a Serbian prosecutors to the Netherlands, for a Serbian and Montenegrin prosecutor to Germany and for two Montenegrin prosecutors and one Serbian prosecutor to Ireland.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Prosecutors, police and associates were trained on various topics related to fighting organized crime and cross-border cooperation in Albania, Kosovo, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
- Visits of EUROJUST National Members to the beneficiaries
- Signing of an MoU between Dutch and Serbian PPO's during a visit of the Serbian Republic Public Prosecutor to the Netherlands
- Website of Prosecutors' Network of Western Balkans further developed and input provided to EJM website
- Many regional and sub-regional cross-border organized crime cases further supported
- EJM Contact Points participated at the EJM plenary meeting in Malta in June 2017
- Hardware procured for Macedonian Ministry of Justice, necessary to run the LURIS system
- 3 Internships organized to Germany, the Netherlands and Ireland

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Continued support to (regional) cross-border organized crime investigations (operational meetings, advice to MLA, translations, etc.)
- Completion of the 'LURIS' in Ministry of Justice of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Participation of the EJM Contact Points at the EJM Plenary meeting in Tallinn in November 2017
- Regional EJM CP meeting for SEE in Novi Sad in October 2017
- Different national and regional trainings on financial investigations and asset recovery, confiscation, MLA and language courses

- Closing event of the project in Berlin in November 2017

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Cooperation in Criminal Justice: Strengthening Witness Protection in the Fight against Organised Crime, Terrorism and Corruption (WINPRO III)
EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Delegation agreement with Northern Ireland Co-operation Overseas (NI-CO)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/370-989
Duration of activities:	24/12/2015 – 23/12/2018
Links:	http://www.nico.org.uk
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to increase the number of witnesses of crime coming forward to denounce and report criminal acts and to collaborate with justice to get the perpetrators convicted. These witnesses (and also victims) need to be assured that their lives and livelihood are duly protected and secured throughout the region and abroad.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

In this reporting period, the following key activities were carried out:

- 2nd Steering Committee Meeting took place on 21st February 17 in Belgrade, followed by a Judicial Conference on 22nd February 17. It was attended by many senior officials from Prosecution services, Courts and Prisons from the BCs across the region
- Balkan Network Meeting took place in Montenegro (March 2017)
- Support provided to the beneficiary delegates attending international WP conference organised by Europol in Vilnius (May 2017)
- A Work shadowing programme with the ICC Victims and Witness Support in The Hague commenced (group 1 completed the programme on 12-23 June, group 2 commenced the programme on 26 June, group 3 to be completed on 7 July)
- The WINPRO III team started working on a WP Strategy Document addressing long and short term WP issues in each BC as well as any WINPRO III legacy and sustainability aspects to be considered by all parties involved in the project
- Relevant training courses for various stakeholders were organised to enhance their knowledge and best practice related to implementation of the WP programmes across the region, including stakeholders' awareness courses, witness assessment and data protection in dealing with collaborators of justice etc.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- International relations within the region and between BCs Witness Protection Units and EU Member States strengthened, including better co-operation with Europol and ICC
- Improved understanding of Witness Protection programmes amongst the stakeholders across the region, in particular by prosecutors through relevant training courses, seminars and direct project interventions

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The Work shadowing programme with the ICC Victims and Witness Support Unit in The Hague will be completed (group 3 to attend on 10 - 21 July, and group 4 to attend on 21 – 31 August).
- Support will be provided to BC delegates to attend EUROPOL/CEPOL Advanced WP Training course from 28 August to 1 September 2017 in Poland.
- Work will continue on the development and implementation of the Sustainability Strategy for WP Programmes in the Western Balkans.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2015/358-127
Project title:	Measuring and assessing organised crime in the Western Balkans: supporting evidence-based policy making
EU contribution:	EUR 2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant contract with UNODC
Contract reference:	CN 2015/358-127
Duration of activities:	01/04/2016 – 01/04/2019
Links:	www.unodc.org/brussels/en/organised-crime-western-balkans.html
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project will contribute to the strengthening of the rule of law through the fight against organised crime in the beneficiary countries and territories by enhancing the understanding of the nature and evolution of organised crime. Specifically, the project will develop and implement a statistical framework for quantifying and analysing organised crime in the Western Balkans and to establish mechanisms to monitor it and produce an evidence-based analytical report.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

In this reporting period, all structures have been finalized for carrying out the main project activities, specifically, the data availability assessments regarding the extent of available data to build the statistical framework as well as the possibilities to increase the types of data that may be available with offered technical assistance under the project.

The following activities have taken place:

- Organisation of the National Technical Groups (NTGs) and the first NTG meeting held in each beneficiary. The role of the NTGs is to ensure that all relevant agencies are engaged as

stakeholders in the direction of the project activities. The participants provide expert advice and information on aspects of organised crime in their national context and identify and provide relevant data sources, as well as participate in data collection activities that will be integral for measuring and assessing organised crime;

- Extensive desk review of the legislation as well as available literature on organized crime in the Western Balkans. The desk review consists of legislation, reports, and academic articles that are analysed in order to assess the current state of knowledge, government response, and known variables and proxies that may be useful contributors to the statistical framework and to carry out the data availability assessment;
- Closing of the procurement process and engagement of expert consultants. After extensive negotiations that were ultimately unsuccessful, the procurement process for a research partner to assist in the implementation of the project was closed. The activities are instead planned to be carried out by substantive specialists in the field with expertise from the UNODC project management team;
- Development of the structure for the database that will house the data collected. The database will be designed to allow transmission and sharing of data by all beneficiaries in a secure and effective way.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- National Technical Group (NTG) meetings took place. Members were informed in detail of the planned outputs of the project as well as planned activities to take place within the next year;
- Framework for data availability assessment developed. The framework serves as the guiding tool to carry out the assessments and standardize the collection and identification of data. It will also serve as a source to identify capacity building opportunities;
- Experts on organised crime in the region recruited to finalize the framework for the data availability assessment and to carry out the assessment missions alongside UNODC;
- Outline for the database designed and developed.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Carrying out of the data availability assessments in each country and territory. Missions of approximately three-four days will take place to identify the variables, proxies and data available that can be used to measure and characterise the dimensions of the statistical framework as well as assess the feasibility of increasing the availability of data through planned technical assistance activities;
- Second NTG meeting to take place during the assessments to present early findings and identify capacity-building opportunities. Background report for each country on data availability, legislations in place and policies guided towards fighting organised crime;
- Statistical indicator framework developed and findings provided in a report to be presented and discussed with the Advisory Committee members.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Project iPROCEEDS - Cooperation on Cybercrime under the Instrument of Pre-accession (IPA): Project on targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey

EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant agreement with the Council of Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2015/367-971
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 30/06/2019
Links:	ww.coe.int/cybercrime
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project aims to assure that the Enlargement countries will comply with relevant standards regarding cybercrime and crime proceeds including the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (CETS 185)* and the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS 198)† of the Council of Europe. Both treaties and the related assessment or monitoring mechanisms are most relevant for countries covered by this Action. In fact, the beneficiaries are expected to comply with the EU acquis and relevant Council of Europe conventions and standards.

SUMMARY

The work realised during the reporting period confirmed that the intervention logic of the project reflects the realities of the context on the ground and meets the evolving needs of criminal justices authorities in the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds.

Due to increasingly sophisticated methods and complexity of the cybercrime the iPROCEEDS project continued increasing the capacity of cybercrime and financial investigators, prosecutors and FIUs in the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds through specialised workshops and by supporting the studies in a long-distance Master programme on Cybercrime and Digital Forensics offered by the University College Dublin.

The project worked towards ensuring sustainable training programmes both for LEA and judiciary. To this end law enforcement training institutions were familiarised with the ECTEG training materials as to ensure their delivery at the national level, thus facilitating best use of opportunities provided by EU. To increase the level of specialisation of the judiciary, a pool of 28 national trainers made of judges and prosecutors was established that will instruct their peers with the support of the project.

iPROCEEDS continued its support in the setting up or improvement of cybercrime reporting mechanisms. The project made available concrete recommendations for the reform of the reporting systems of online fraud and other types of cybercrime with the aim of improving inter-agency and private-public cooperation in exchanging cybercrime-related information.

* Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia , the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey are Parties. The Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) assesses implementation of this treaty (www.coe.int/tcy).

† Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are Parties. These States are monitored by MONEYVAL (www.coe.int/moneyval). Turkey has signed it.

Substantial progress was made in strengthening of criminal justice authorities' capacities with respect to interagency and international cooperation for the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds. General guidelines on domestic protocols on inter-agency and international cooperation for the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds were produced along with background reports that come as explanatory notes to the guidelines. These will assist the countries in drafting respective domestic protocols in accordance with the national legislation and international standards.

With the aim to mitigate money laundering risks and control online fraud and criminal money flows on the Internet, the project supported the relevant authorities in improving and where necessary developing guidelines and indicators for the prevention and control of online fraud and money laundering in the online environment for financial sector entities.

The iPROCEEDS project continued working towards establishing or enhancing public/private information sharing and intelligence exchange mechanisms through a series of meetings between relevant state authorities (Cybercrime Units, Financial Investigation Units, Prosecution services, FIUs, Central Banks) and representatives of the private sector (ISPs and banks).

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

In this reporting period, the following key activities were carried out:

- Workshop on online financial fraud and credit card fraud on 16-17 January 2017 in Belgrade, Serbia.
- Pilot training on Investigation on Darknet and Virtual currencies in cooperation with the Romania's Directorate for the Investigation of Organised Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) and with the support of the law enforcement officers from Austria, Belgium and The Netherlands, 28 February - 3 March 2017, Bucharest, Romania.
- Support the studies of 13 law enforcement officers in a long-distance Master programme in Cybercrime and Digital Forensics, offered by the University College Dublin. The programme runs for 24 months and covers modules like Computer Forensics, Financial Investigation Techniques – Following the Money, Network Investigations, Mobile Devices Investigation, Live Data Forensics, VoIP and Wireless Investigations and others. Learning takes place through a mix of lectures, hands-on labs, case studies, reading, small group and individual exercises, tool demonstrations and in depth-discussions.
- Three advisory missions and workshops for the setting up or improvement of reporting mechanisms in Skopje, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (20-21 February 2017), Ankara, Turkey (15-16 March 2017) and Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (27-28 March 2017).
- Four workshops on the preparation of the interagency cooperation protocols combined with four workshops on international cooperation for search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (16-17 February 2017), Albania (15-16 March 2017), Turkey (3-4 April 2017), and Serbia (19-20 April 2017).
- Participation in UN Intergovernmental Expert Group on Cybercrime, 10-13 April 2017, Vienna, Austria.
- Regional Cybercrime Coordination and Partnership Exercise in cooperation with the Georgian Data Exchange Agency, 24-28 April 2017, Tbilisi, Georgia.
- Participation in the 17th plenary of the Cybercrime Convention Committee of the Council of Europe (T-CY), 7 – 9 June 2017 in Strasbourg, France.

- International workshop on search, seizure and confiscation of proceeds from crime online in cooperation with the FIU Luxembourg (combined with 3rd meeting of the Project Steering Committee), 12-13 June 2017, Luxembourg.
- International workshop on cybercrime training strategies for law enforcement agencies and access to ECTEG materials in cooperation with INTERPOL, Europol and ECTEG (with GLACY+ and Cybercrime@EAPIII projects), 15-16 June 2017 in Brussels, Belgium.
- Seven country visits to assess the guidelines to prevent and detect/identify online crime proceeds in Tirana, Albania (13 March 2017), Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (22-23 March 2017), Ankara, Turkey (25-26 May 2017), Podgorica, Montenegro (13-14 June 2017), Skopje, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (15-16 June 2017), Pristina, Kosovo (19-20 June 2017) and Belgrade, Serbia (22-23 June 2017).
- Training of trainers on delivery of the introductory training module on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 20-24 June 2017 in Budva, Montenegro.
- Three meetings to support existing public/private initiatives or establish such mechanisms at domestic level were organised between relevant state authorities (Cybercrime Units, Financial Investigation Units, Prosecution services, FIUs, Central Banks) and representatives of the private sector (ISPs and banks) in Belgrade, Serbia (10 April 2017), Skopje, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (23 June 2017) and Pristina, Kosovo (29 June 2017).
- Development of the online platform/tools in the Octopus Community, which gives access to Country Wiki Profiles, Legal Profiles, Online Tool on Public/Private Cooperation and Online Tool on International Cooperation.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2016)

- Assessment of the reporting systems of cybercrime in the project countries and recommendations for the reform of the system, with the aim of improving interagency and private-public cooperation in exchanging cybercrime-related information were made available to the national project teams.
- Increased knowledge and understanding of investigators, prosecutors and FIUs on the latest cybercrime trends and threats, tools and investigative techniques to fight cybercrime as well as improved detection and mitigation techniques.
- Enhanced capacity of the investigators and prosecutors on how to detect, identify, and collect intelligence and evidence in order to investigate Darknet and virtual currencies and better cooperation among law enforcement officials worldwide.
- Basic and advanced modules on cybercrime, electronic evidence and search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds were developed and steps were defined to be taken in each project country/area in view of introducing these modules into the training curricula.
- A pool of 28 national trainers made of judges and prosecutors was established.
- Preparation of structured and documented procedures (domestic protocols) for interagency and international sharing of information and evidence that are auditable, simple and applied by cybercrime unit, financial investigation unit, FIU and Prosecution service in the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds.
- Assessment of guidelines to prevent and detect/identify online crime proceeds in all project countries/areas.

- Support to the existing public/private initiatives or establishment of such mechanisms at domestic level.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Update of the basic course material on cybercrime, electronic and online crime proceeds following the regional training of trainers on delivery of the basic training module on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors with the aim to be further delivered at the national level (August 2017).
- Translation of the training modules on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds (August-September 2017).
- Preparatory meeting to agree on the aspects/elements, including technical solutions of the Cyber Exercise Scenario that need to be revised/updated/developed with the aim to be further replicated at the national level (C-PROC, consultants), 9-11 August 2017, Bucharest, Romania.
- Development of a Questionnaire on obtaining and using electronic evidence in criminal proceedings under the respective domestic legislation of the beneficiary countries (August 2017).
- Support the participation in the Underground Economy Conference 2017 (organised by Team Cymru), 5-8 September 2017, Barcelona, Spain.
- Workshop on online financial fraud and credit card fraud (for Montenegro and Kosovo), 18-19 September, Podgorica, Montenegro.
- Case simulation exercises on cybercrime and financial investigations, 25-28 September 2017, Skopje, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.
- Meeting of the 24/7 Network of Contact Points of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, 26-27 September 2017, The Hague, The Netherlands.
- Support in participation in the 5th INTERPOL/Europol Cybercrime Conference, 27-29 September 2017, The Hague, The Netherlands.
- Meeting to support existing public/private initiatives or establish such mechanisms at domestic level in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey and Montenegro.
- Regional workshop to share experience on indicators and guidelines for financial sector entities to prevent money laundering in the online environment in cooperation with FIU Slovenia, 4-5 October 2017, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- Regional conference on cybercrime and money laundering in cooperation with the Global Prosecutor’s E-Crime Network (GPEN) and Government of Azerbaijan, 9-11 October 2017, Baku, Azerbaijan.
- Seven workshops of the working group to elaborate/improve guidelines and indicators for financial sector entities to prevent money laundering in the online environment in each project country/area (October –December 2017).
- Study visit of representatives from national CERTs to a CERT-RO, 12-13 October 2017, Bucharest, Romania.
- Workshop on cybercrime law reform, 16-17 October 2017, Tirana, Albania.
- Pilot introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 23-24 October 2017, Tirana, Albania.

- Pilot introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 23-26 October 2017, Podgorica, Montenegro.
- Advice and workshop on the preparation of interagency cooperation protocols, 26 October 2017, Podgorica, Montenegro.
- Workshop on domestic protocols for international sharing of intelligence and evidence, 27 October 2017, Podgorica, Montenegro.
- Support in participation in the South-eastern Europe Regional Forum on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of Bulgaria, 30 - 31 October 2017, Sofia, Bulgaria.
- Regional workshop to assess the national regulatory framework for obtaining and using electronic evidence in criminal proceedings, 2-3 November 2017, Bucharest, Romania.
- Assessment report on obtaining and using electronic evidence in criminal proceedings under the respective domestic legislation of the beneficiary countries, November–December 2017.
- Pilot introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online proceeds for judges and prosecutors (2nd part), 6-7 November 2017, Tirana, Albania.
- Pilot training introductory training courses on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 6-9 November 2017, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Case simulation exercises on cybercrime and financial investigations, 13-16 November 2017, Pristina, Kosovo.
- Participation in the 18th Plenary of the T-CY, 27-29 November 2017, Strasbourg, France.
- Case simulation exercises on cybercrime and financial investigations, 4-7 December 2017, Ankara, Turkey.
- Pilot introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 4-7 December 2017, Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- Pilot introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 4-7 December 2017, Ankara, Turkey.
- Pilot introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds for judges and prosecutors, 11-14 December 2017, Belgrade, Serbia.
- Regional workshop for sharing good practices on reporting mechanisms existent in IPA region (combined with the 4th meeting of the Project Steering Committee), 14-15 December 2017, Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Strengthening National Integrity Systems in the Western Balkans and Turkey, and tracking developments of anti-corruption efforts
EU contribution:	EUR 1.71 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with Transparency International
Contract reference:	CN 2014/339-583

Duration of activities: 01/05/2014 – 31/10/2017

Contact: Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The implementing partner will carry out an institutional 'health check' in the Western Balkans and Turkey on the readiness of the countries to address corruption threats. This will be undertaken in form of the so-called National Integrity Systems (NIS) assessments, a methodology already tested in around 100 countries worldwide. Based on these assessments, project partners will develop and implement advocacy strategies aiming at tackling corruption in selected areas. In addition, a monitoring mechanism will be developed to track developments in each country in their fight against corruption.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY– JUNE 2017)

- 2 national stakeholder workshops were organised by project partners in Turkey and Kosovo. On 7 April 2017, TI Turkey organised a conference on "*Open Government and Judicial Transparency*" bringing together 65 participants and speakers from the public sector, academia and civil society. In Kosovo, on 26 January 2017, KDI organized a workshop "*How to govern better?*" for civil society members to discuss transparency and accountability of NGOs. This capacity building activity contributes to remedy the internal governance weaknesses of local CSOs (one of the findings in the NIS report).
- KDI published one policy papers on political party financing ("*Review of Practices of Law on Political Parties*" March 2017).
- Advocacy efforts at the national level were carried out by all partners throughout the reporting period. Advocacy highlights include the following activities:
 - Transparency Serbia monitored the Presidential elections. In March 2017, the country's Prime Minister announced to run for President. Constitutional checks and balances failed due to the absence of parliamentary oversight and lack of independent media. TS lead a successful advocacy campaign which contributed to the "self-suspension" of the Parliament and issued numerous press statements to point to loopholes in national legislation allowing for the abuse of power by public officials, particularly during electoral campaigns.
 - Transparency Serbia monitored the implementation of the Law on Public Enterprises adopted in 2016. The law was amended to bring professionalization of public enterprise management which is also one of the Government's major goals for 2012-2016. The 2016 Law, that rectified some shortcomings of the previous law, has not yet been enforced. In March 2017, after the deadline to finalize the recruitments for all public enterprises had passed, the Government had merely proceeded to publish the advertisements. Furthermore, some of the previously published advertisements were retracted without explanation.
 - TI Turkey has published over 10 comprehensive infographics and information notes on cases which reflect weak governance and portray concrete examples for the NIS findings. These case studies were widely shared and have created pressure to improve Environmental Impact Reports and to tackle the private sector's non-compliance with procurement standards (regarding budget and duration) for major infrastructure projects.
- A consultant was recruited to develop a methodology to assess the level of state capture in high risk sectors in the Western Balkans and Turkey and derive relevant recommendations to address the concrete problems identified. Within this reporting period, the consultant has completed the development of criteria for the selection of high risk sectors in the partner countries. The criteria are to guide project partners to identify which sectors to assess, and has also started to draft the

assessment methodology, to be finalised in July 2017. This important milestone will form the basis for the work in the upcoming period and the bridging grant.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Understanding of corruption risks by relevant stakeholders is improved. One policy paper focussing on particular areas where reform is most needed or achievable has been published;
- Commitment and engagement of decision-makers to address identified corruption risks is increased. Project partners based in Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the implementation of a set of recommendations (eight, two, two and three recommendations respectively) from the NIS Assessment by national institutions.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The methodology to researching State Capture in High Risk Sectors in the Western Balkans will be finalised
- On 5th July 2017, a regional workshop with the project partners for consultation on the state capture risk assessment tool and research methodology will be organised in Montenegro
- TI Turkey will host a regional workshop on Anti-Corruption Agencies on 20th September 2017
- Transparency Serbia will finalise and publish a policy paper on "*public sector media advertisements*" from the angle of public procurement, media legislation, state subsidies and fair competition
- Project Partners will continue to collect information for the tracking mechanism, concentrate on the respective advocacy priorities and proceed to identify high risk sectors for the state capture research to be conducted under the bridging grant

2.2 TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2016/373-757
Project title:	Strengthening Regional News Exchange from the International War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC)
EU contribution:	EUR 0.1 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with SENSE News Agency
Contract reference:	CN 2016/373-757
Duration of activities:	01/01/2017 – 30/06/2017
Links:	www.sense-agency.com
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To inform the public on the work and mission of the ICTY, and to raise public support for cooperation with the ICTY and the domestic prosecution of war crimes.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

- During the reporting period SENSE has continued coverage and audio-visual recordings of the remaining trials and appellate proceedings at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the Mechanism for International Criminal Courts (MICT). At the ICTY, the Trial Chamber is still deliberating the first instance judgement in Ratko Mladic case (expected to be delivered in November 2017). At the same time, the ICTY Appeals Chamber is dealing with the case of six former Bosnian Croats leaders (Prlic et al.) sentenced to a total of 111 years in prison for crimes committed during the Croat-Muslim conflict in 1993 and 1994. Both prosecution and defence appealed the sentences and the final judgment is also expected in November 2017.

In June 2017 the re-trial to Jovica Stanisic and Franko Simatovic – former chiefs of Serbian state security - started before the Trial chamber of the MICT. Both have been acquitted by the ICTY Trial Chamber, but the judgement was quashed in appeal and new trial was ordered. The MICT Appeals Chambers are currently dealing with two cases: Radovan Karadzic (sentenced to 40 years imprisonment) and Vojislav Seselj (acquitted).

- With its daily reports and weekly TV programs, SENSE is the only news agency bringing to the region regular and reliable information on trials for war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the work of the ICTY. [SENSE website](#) is a reference for international justice and human rights “watchers”, journalists, lawyers, academics, diplomats and general public.

- The aim of SENSE multimedia presentations, exhibitions and interactive narratives is to show how the crimes committed during the war in the former Yugoslavia 1991 - 1995 were investigated, reconstructed and prosecuted by the ICTY. During the reporting period SENSE produced and [promoted](#) its third Interactive Narrative (IN) [Targeting History and Memory](#) and set for the production the fourth one that will present how the crimes committed in Kosovo in 1999 were investigated and prosecuted at the ICTY.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Around 60 daily reports and analysis in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and English on one ongoing trial at the MICT (Stanisic-Simatovic), Appeals hearing at the ICTY (Prlic et al.) and other Tribunal's proceedings (contempt proceedings, motions etc.)
- Production of TV updates entitled “TV Tribunal”, on trials and other developments at the ICTY (723 in total since March 2000)
- Together with its partners in the region and Europe: Documenta - Center for Dealing with the Past, Zagreb; The Humanitarian Law Center, Belgrade; the Museum of History of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, and Europa nostra, The Hague, SENSE has organized a multimedia exhibition Targeting Monuments. The exhibition was held with great success in Zagreb (at Gliptoteka HAZU), in Belgrade (at Center for cultural decontamination) and in Sarajevo (at History museum of BH) and in February 2018 it will be shown in The Hague. The exhibition has been created as a joint project of five civil society organizations from Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and the Netherlands, supported by Remembrance program of the Europe for Citizens. Media reports, photographs and TV stories from promotions of Interactive Narratives and the openings of “Targeting Monuments” exhibition can be seen on SENSE web site and Facebook page
- During the reporting period SENSE has concluded the process of its gradual transformation from a News Agency to a Transitional Justice Center, an NGO based in the region which will continue the Tribunal's story on a different level. The aim of the Center is to make visible and permanently available the facts established by the ICTY about the events in the former

Yugoslavia and to give the voice to victims through the production of interactive narratives, documentary and educational films, exhibitions, and other forms of presentations

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The project ends in June 2017, but the activities of SENSE do continue in another way:

- Documentation Center Prishtina, created by SENSE Transitional Justice Center and its partner Humanitarian Law Center Prishtina, will be launched on 21st September 2017 with the opening of the permanent exhibition based on the SENSE Interactive narrative ICTY: KOSOVO CASES 1998 -1999. It will be SENSE's second Document center set in locations most affected by the wars in nineties.
- Inauguration of SENSE-Transitional Justice Center and opening of the exhibition Targeting Monuments is planed for 13th October 2017 in Pula. The opening will be followed by the international conference "THE DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION AND TRUST BUILDING". It will take place on 14th October in the premises of SENSE Center.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Joint EU and ICTY Training project for National Prosecutors and Young Professionals from the Former Yugoslavia
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/ 357-561
Duration of activities:	01/04/2015 – 31/12/2016
Contact:	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The objective is to strengthen the capacity of judicial authorities in the countries of the former Yugoslavia to effectively investigate and prosecute war crimes. National prosecutors for domestic war crimes cases and young professionals with a legal or other relevant background participate in the Action.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY– JUNE 2017)

- Final narrative and financial reports for the previous Action approved by the European Commission
- Second allotment for the Action received from the EU
- Prosecutor submitted a request for no-cost extension of the current Action until 31 December 2017
- EU Commission approved the request for no-cost extension of the current Action
- Third Addendum to the Action signed by the EU and the ICTY

Visiting National Prosecutors

- Three new Visiting National Prosecutors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia arrived to the ICTY
- The OTP supported the Visiting National Prosecutors during searches for investigative material which will be used in the investigation and prosecution of war crimes in their respective countries

Visiting Young Professionals component

- Group of 4 young legal professionals started their internship in May 2017
- The feedback on their work from the respective teams and supervisors is positive

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Visiting National Prosecutors component

- 41 Requests for Assistance received

Visiting Young Professionals component

- Visiting Young Professionals trained in the use of OTP databases and other available judicial tools
- Visiting Young Professionals actively participated in the preparation of the trials and appeals

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Visiting Young Professionals will finish their participation in the Action in December 2017.
- Activities regarding the new Action for the period 2017-2018 will continue.
- Preparation of the final narrative and financial report for the Action which will be completed on 31 December 2017.

In the area Rule of Law, the beneficiaries need in particular to join forces and cooperate to fight organised crime. This involves strengthening cooperation with international law enforcement organisations operating in criminal justice, police investigations and witness protection. IPA assistance in this area also encompasses transitional justice. The respect of human rights - including those of minorities – is a core European value enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. In the enlargement perspective, the protection of minorities and vulnerable groups effectively means complying with the Copenhagen political criteria. The EU has also identified policy areas and priorities relevant to the field of social inclusion in its enlargement strategy, e.g. the Regional Housing Programme.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2016/374-687
Project title:	ICTY Outreach Programme 2016-2017 – International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
EU contribution:	EUR 0.4 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)
Contract reference:	CN 2016/374-687
Duration of activities:	01/04/2016 – 31/12/2017

Links:	http://www.icty.org/en/outreach/home
Contact:	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To strengthen the Tribunal's legacy as its mandate draws to a close and to ensure that people across the region of the former Yugoslavia have access to, understand and foster its legacy.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Organised a four-day workshop for history teachers from the former Yugoslavia, in cooperation with the 'EUROCLIO', to form a group of history teachers/educational authors from BiH, Croatia and Serbia. The workshop was held in The Hague, in January. As a part of the workshop, a public event entitled *From the Tribunal to the Classroom* was organised to facilitate broader discussion on the usage of the ICTY Legacy in the history teaching and curriculum development
- Organised English language premiere screening of the documentary *Dubrovnik and Crimes against Cultural Heritage* and the panel discussion in February, in The Hague
- Organised screening of the two Outreach documentaries in Croatia and Serbia – *Through Their Eyes: Witnesses to Justice* was screened in Dubrovnik, Croatia; and *Dubrovnik and Crimes against Cultural Heritage* was screened in Zagreb, Croatia, and Belgrade, Serbia in April
- Planned and implemented activities related to the *ICTY Legacy Dialogues* including: Seminar on the Legacy of the ICTY and the Nuremberg Principles held in May in Nuremberg; ICTY public event *From Start to Finish: The journey of the ICTY told by its first and last Registrars* held in The Hague in May and the ICTY Legacy Conference held in June in Sarajevo
- Organised a conference on the ICTY Legacy in Sarajevo, BiH, in June 2017, as part of the *ICTY Legacy Dialogues* series of events
- Completed the documentary *Never Justified: ICTY and the Crime of Torture*. The documentary was screened at the "WARM Festival" in Sarajevo, BiH in June
- Completed short video feature *End of Impunity*. The video depicts the ICTY groundbreaking achievements over the past 24 years
- Continued production on the documentary *Crimes before the ICTY: Srebrenica*
- Provided broadcast of Outreach documentaries on regional TV networks and on UN TV
- Facilitated the establishment and opening of locally owned Information Centre (IC) in Sarajevo. Continued negotiations on the establishment of the IC in Srebrenica/Potočari, BiH. The MoU discussions with Croatian Ministry of Justice for an IC to be established in Zagreb, Croatia are initiated
- Organised visits to the ICTY for students and professionals from around the world, including the countries of the former Yugoslavia

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- 30 history teachers from the former Yugoslavia collaborated to devise an approach and methodology for responsible history education by utilising material available in the ICTY archive. Public discussion provided platform for over 50 practitioners to exchange on the usage of the ICTY Legacy in the history teaching and curriculum development

- The Hague premiere screening of the documentary *Dubrovnik and Crimes against Cultural Heritage* was attended by over 60 participants who engaged in productive discussion on the crimes against cultural heritage and the ICTY legacy
- Seminar on the legacy of the ICTY and the Nuremberg Principles provided rich discussion and recommendations in relation to practical usage of the ICTY Legacy, and the benefits of establishment of the ICTY Outreach Programme for the other international tribunals
- *From Start to Finish: The journey of the ICTY told by its first and last Registrars* provided over 70 participants with insight into achievements and challenges of the Tribunal's establishment
- ICTY Legacy Conference in Sarajevo included 5 panels and 8 side events held over three days period. The conference was attended by over 350 participants, government and judiciary representatives, victims, NGOs, academics and legal practitioners, from the region of the former Yugoslavia and worldwide, and provided platform for wide exchange of practice, opinion and recommendations in relation to the ICTY legacy in the region
- Furthering the establishment and opening of locally owned IC in Sarajevo is successfully facilitated with the City of Sarajevo through serial of meetings and public event held during the Legacy Conference
- Tens of thousands of citizens viewed the ICTY Outreach documentaries broadcast by local and regional TV networks in BiH, Serbia and Croatia
- Around 3,500 individuals visited the ICTY and received briefings on the work of the Tribunal and attended trials

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Planning and organising two large events related to the *ICTY Legacy Dialogues*: ICTY Legacy Symposium and the ICTY Closing Event to be held in December in The Hague
- Donor Coordination Meeting for Sarajevo IC to be organised in October in Sarajevo, BiH
- Facilitating discussions on the establishment of IC in Potočari-Srebrenica, BiH, and negotiating first steps in establishment of IC in Zagreb, Croatia
- Further broadcast of Outreach documentaries on regional TV networks and on UN TV
- Implementing the final cycle of the *Youth Outreach* project that will focus on training local actors in the countries of the former Yugoslavia to deliver presentations about the work of the ICTY, delivery of lectures at the Universities, the pilot establishment of ICTY virtual lectures for universities in the region, and the development of ICTY legacy digital toolkit – the multimedia web feature presenting the best practices and achievements of the ICTY
- Completion and organisation of the premiere screenings of the *Crimes before the ICTY: Srebrenica*
- Organising regional screenings of the documentary *Never Justified: ICTY and the Crime of Torture*
- Organisation of visits to the ICTY for students and professionals from around the world, including the countries of the former Yugoslavia

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility and Media IPA 2014 /031-605
Project title:	Strengthening and supporting the RECOM Process, Phase II
EU contribution:	EUR 0.7 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant contract with Humanitarian Law Centre, Belgrade (HLCB)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/364-189 (continuation of CN 2012/292-650)
Duration of activities:	20/08/2015 – 19/02/2018
Links:	http://www.hlc-rdc.org ; http://www.recom.link/
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Establishment of the Regional Commission for the facts about war crimes and other serious human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia (RECOM). The initiative was launched by the Coalition for RECOM which brings together about 2,050 civil society organizations from post-Yugoslav countries. The Coalition has won support from 580,000 citizens, drawn up a draft RECOM Statute and received strong political backing for the establishment of RECOM. The region's Presidents have affirmed their support for the establishment of a regional commission by appointing personal envoys to RECOM, who, in October of 2014, after a year's worth of collaboration and consultations with their respective Presidents and Presidency members, submitted the "*Amendments to the RECOM Statute*" to the Coalition for adoption. On November 14th, 2015, the Coalition Assembly voted to adopt the Amendments to the RECOM Statute without any objections, which marked the start of the transfer of the initiative to an inter-state level, where the decision to establish RECOM is to be made.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Advocacy for the idea to include the RECOM Initiative into the Declaration at the summit of the Western Balkans in Trieste in 2017 within the framework of the Berlin Process
- A regional street action to collect support signatures for the establishment of RECOM through the Berlin Process
- Presentation of the facts about war crimes established before Hague Tribunal, or using ongoing research about war victims, being conducted by HLCK in schools across Kosovo.
- Supporting the establishment of RECOM by conducting an empirical research on the individual fate of war victims from 1991 to the end of 2001, and camps and other places of imprisonment in BiH during the war, 1991-1995.
- Creation of video recordings of victim testimonies before Hague Tribunal available to the public via website [recom.link](http://www.recom.link)

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

In order to get support to include the RECOM Initiative into the Berlin process, representatives of The Coalition for RECOM had meetings with the several MS and EU Ambassadors in the region. All of them gave support to include RECOM into the Berlin process.

Also, within the framework of the ICTY Legacy Conference, held in Sarajevo from 22 – 24 June 2017, a panel was held on the progress of RECOM process, attended by the ICTY Prosecutor Serge Brammertz, professors and researchers of transitional justice, domestic judges and prosecutors and other participants of the conference. Public advocates of RECOM establishment pointed out that only

the Berlin process has the potential to gather and oblige the leaders of the Western Balkans to jointly compile a list of war victims and establish facts about all war crimes in the former Yugoslavia in the period 1991 – 2001. They asked assistance from the Prosecutor’s Office of the ICTY regarding the access to the documents and showing public support to establish RECOM in relation to the termination of work of the ICTY in December 2017. Mr. Brammertz expressed his readiness saying that The Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) will support RECOM work when RECOM is established. Moreover, he promised to hand over a part of the collected documents on camps and other imprisonment facilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Regarding the fourth Summit on the Western Balkans, held in Trieste on 12 August 2017, the Coalition for RECOM in May 2017 organized a regional street action of signing the petition whose purpose was to get support for the idea that RECOM should be established within the Berlin process. In just a few days, youth organization activists collected more than 50,000 signatures in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Pristina, Zagreb and Belgrade. The result of strong public support for the establishment of RECOM in the framework of the Berlin Process is the presentation of the RECOM process at a meeting with the WB foreign ministers during the Trieste Summit. Support to the RECOM Initiative is also highlighted in the Declaration of the Chairman of the WB Summit in Trieste.

The HLC Kosovo organized 16 one-day workshops in secondary schools, international and local universities, as well as workshops for activists in non-governmental organizations. In these workshops, 350 students/activists participated.

On behalf of the Coalition for RECOM, HLC and HLC Kosovo documented the fate of about 1,200 war victims and TJAR and CDTJ documented 150 places of imprisonment in BiH, in which over 8,000 civilians were detained.

The Coalition for RECOM has been producing short online excerpts with the testimonies of victims and witnesses before the ICTY regarding the most severe crimes against civilians and other protected persons in the war in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The witnesses are available on the website – recom.link, Youtube , Facebook and Twitter accounts of RECOM.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The Coalition for RECOM will organize seven debates on the EU’s Policy framework on support for transitional justice in order to formulate the recommendations to help strengthen the EU’s role in the establishment of transitional justice in the Balkans and its active backing of civil society, as well as four debates about the promotion of RECOM as an official through-telling instrument of Transitional Justice in post-Yugoslav countries. Also, Eleventh Forum for Transitional Justice will be held in December on the occasion of international Human Rights Day with a presentation of the research on human losses and war detention facilities in relation to the wars in the former Yugoslavia.
- The Coalition will hold meetings with the EU’s offices in the region, regional offices of OSCE Mission, ambassadors of United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, USA in the region, and with the prime ministers and presidents of regional states, with the aim of gathering and strengthening support for signing of the agreement about the establishment of RECOM at the next Western Balkans Leaders’ Summit within the framework of the Berlin Process scheduled for 2018.
- The editing of narratives on each of the 3,500 war victims in the municipalities of Dečani, Ferizaj, Gjilan, Glogoc, Gjakove, Istog, Mitrovica, Malisheve, Kacanik and Kamenica will be in the final phase of the translation into Albanian and English, so that, by the end of the project, 1,000 copies were printed in Serbian, Albanian and English.
- Total of 100 video recordings of victim testimonies before Hague Tribunal will be prepared and made available to the public via RECOM.link

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, 2013 / 024-091
Project title:	Historija, Istorija, Povijest (HIP) – Lessons for Today
EU contribution:	EUR 0.38 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant to Anne Frank Stichting
Contract reference:	CN 2014/ 351-243
Duration of activities:	07/11/2014 – 06/05/2017
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The action aims to raise awareness and encourage discussion about the recent history in the Western Balkans region that has divided and generated conflict over the past century. By promoting critical thinking about historical events and their relevance for contemporary challenges, the Anne Frank House with its local partners seeks to generate dialogue about the common past, thus fostering reconciliation.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- "*Anne Frank – History for Today*" exhibition continued travel in Bosnia herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (note: funding outside of the scope of the HIP project)
- Memory Walk workshops taking place in: Bosnia-Herzegovina (60 workshops completed in 12 towns); Croatia (58 workshops completed in 15 towns); Serbia (60 workshops completed in 13 towns); the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (40 workshops completed in 8 towns)
- Translation and finalization of all educational materials produced during the project, into the 5 local languages of the project (Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Albanian) – Memory Walk Teacher Manual, Memory Walk dvd/thirteen short films, Peer Guide Manual, Instructions for Local Exhibition Coordinators, 20 Lesson Plans on the topics covering the past 60 years of history in the Western Balkans region
- Participating in the ROM evaluation of the HIP project with two independent evaluators visiting project implementation sites, conducting interviews and observing activities (November 2016)
- Launching the HIP competition for teachers for additional original lesson plans on the topic of past 60 years of history in the region

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Several thousand visitors, both guided and independent, visiting the exhibition in all the countries of the project (specific numbers of guided tours and independent visitors will be compiled in the final report)
- 37 new submissions to the lesson plan competition within the HIP project, to be evaluated and the best ones selected and posted online on the HIP website
- More than 3000+ unique visitors to the HIP website and its educational, downloadable content
- More than 200 Memory Walk workshops involving over 4000 high school students in multiple locations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Evaluating the submissions of the HIP lesson plans competition, in order to choose the highest quality submissions and posting them on the HIP website (fall 2017); finalizing Memory Walk workshops in all the 4 countries and also conducting additional ones (beyond originally planned 60 workshops); further media outreach to promote the impact of the project in the region; coordinators meeting in Amsterdam to conclude the HIP project, plan its eventual continuation through additional fundraising and new activities. The project ended in May 2017.

2.3 ROMA INTEGRATION

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme IPA 2016/037-900
Project title:	ROMACTED – Promoting good governance and Roma Empowerment at local level
EU contribution:	EUR 3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with the Council of Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2017/384-651
Duration of activities:	01/05/2017 – 30/04/2020
Contact:	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To build up political will and sustained policy engagement of local authorities to enhance democratic local governance, build up capacity and stimulate the empowerment of local Roma communities; contribute to the design, implementation and monitoring of plans and projects concerning them. The project targets 50 municipalities (local administrations, elected representatives and officials) and Roma communities in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

The project starting date was 1 May 2017. At this stage it is in its 6 months inception period until 31 October 2017. The Key Activities under this inception period were:

- Inception Visits to Albania, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Kosovo
- Recruitment of the Project team in Strasbourg and launching of the recruitment procedure for Project Officers in the CoE's field offices (interviews underway – foreseen starting date for the selected applicants is 1 October 2017)
- Preparation of the administrative and communication tools and visual identity of the Programme
- Collection of data for the selection of municipalities and to and municipalities' baseline
- Preparation and launch of calls for Support Organisations and Focal Points in each beneficiary (closing date of call on 1 October 2017)

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Main output of this period is the improved knowledge and understanding of the various stakeholders about the approach and objectives of the ROMACTED programme in each beneficiary.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Inception visits to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia (September 2017)
- Training of ROMACTED Project Officers from the field offices (October 2017)
- Selection of Municipalities and assessment of the municipalities' baseline
- Conclusion of the inception phase and submission of inception report (31 October 2017)
- Meeting of the ROMACTED Steering Committee (October/November 2017)
- Launching of calls for the recruitment of the Programme's facilitators
- Conclusion of the selection of Focal Points, support organisations and facilitators – composition of National Support teams
- Training of the programme's Focal Points and Facilitators (November/December 2017)
- Meetings of National support teams
- First visits to municipalities and local interventions with the Roma communities in the selected municipalities

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2014/ 031-603
Project title:	Roma Integration 2020
EU contribution:	EUR 0,8 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with RCC
Contract reference:	CN 2014/369-226
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 31/12/2018
Links:	www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/home
Contact :	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Roma Integration 2020 (RI2020) project contributes to reducing the socio-economic gap between the Roma and non-Roma population in the Western Balkans and Turkey and to strengthening the institutional obligations of governments to incorporate and deliver specific Roma integration goals in mainstream policy developments. In line with this, the RI2020 aims to assist national governments to integrate Roma specific policy measures into: (1) mainstream socio-economic policies and public service delivery; (2) national budget planning and service delivery processes.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

The RI2020 Action Team organized country consultation meetings with its government partners (National Roma Contact Points and inter-ministerial bodies on Roma Integration) in the period January-February 2017 as well as in May 2017 to discuss the process on completion of the 2016 monitoring reports and agree on the assistance and expertise needed for this task. During these meetings, the team also elaborated on the 2017 activities that will be organized with the RI2020

project (in particular, the public dialogue forums and the regional workshops) as well as the type of contribution expected from each line ministry, whose participation is considered of extreme importance.

The team provided expert support to its government partners in improving the 2016 monitoring reports. The expert support assisted government officials in enhancing their capacities to efficiently fill out the regionally adopted monitoring template by providing the necessary data and information as requested in the template.

The RI2020 organized three public dialogue forums in Tirana, Belgrade and Podgorica during May-June 2017. These forums provided for presentations of the 2016 monitoring reports of the governments, discussions on the implementation of the adopted Roma Seminar operational conclusions, budget proposals and prioritization of measures for 2018, and consultations on relevant mainstream socio-economic policies to be used for advancing Roma integration. The conclusions of the public dialogue forums are available online at the RI2020 website, and have been widely shared with relevant stakeholders.

The RI2020 organized the regional workshop on the topic of Public Budgeting for Roma integration policies. The workshop gathered around 60 participants from the enlargement region, including the National Roma contact points, and representatives of line ministries working on education, employment, housing, health, civil registration, and finance; as well as Roma civil society representatives. The workshop's main objective was to effectively assist the governments to integrate measures from the existing national Roma integration strategies including sectorial policies (strategies, action plans) into the domestic budget planning through learning by doing exercises and group work, whereby government officials had to budget certain measures from the existing Roma Strategies and discuss them further with the representatives of Ministries of Finance.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Policy recommendation papers based on the discussions of the Public Dialogue Forums in Tirana, Belgrade and Podgorica on the implementation of the Roma Strategies, the Roma Seminar operational conclusions as well as the measures to be prioritised and budgeted in 2018
- Participated in meetings of inter-ministerial coordination bodies on Roma integration and provided policy advices to line ministry representatives
- Introduced 60 participants to different public budgeting methods
- Produced policy recommendations on how to use efficiently public funds for furthering Roma integration policies, programs and measures
- Coordinated and analysed the 2016 monitoring reports of the governments
- Launched the Roma Integration 2020 website
- Distributed the first issue of the Roma Integration 2020 newsletter

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Conduct country-consultation meetings with National Roma Contact Points and inter-ministerial bodies on Roma Integration to discuss the outcomes and policy recommendations from the public dialogue forums;
- Organize the second Task Force meeting of the RI2020 to review the progress of Roma integration and related developments at regional level, decide on topics of the project activities for 2018, and ensure a comprehensive monitoring and reporting on Roma Integration;
- Organize public dialogue forums in Ankara, Sarajevo, Pristina and Skopje;
- Organize two regional workshops on the topics of *Filling in the budget gaps for Roma Integration through donor coordination in the Western Balkans and Turkey* and *Combating anti-gypsyism*.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2016/ 037-900
Project title:	Regional Roma Survey
EU contribution:	EUR 0.75 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with UNDP
Contract reference:	CN 2017/383-793
Duration of activities:	01/11/2016 – 31/05/2018
Links:	www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home.html
Contact :	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Regional Roma Survey aims to narrow the gap in multi-dimensional poverty and access to socio-economic rights between marginalized Roma and non-Roma population in Western Balkans and Turkey. The project will produce a new generation of comprehensive and regionally comparable quantitative data about income and living conditions, education, health, employment, migration, access to personal documentation and values and norms. Quantitative data will be supplemented by qualitative studies on specific topics: position of Roma being returned to Western Balkans from EU; non-visible Roma with no personal documentation; access to work and experience with discrimination; exposure to environmental and health risks; violence against women and factors resulting in early marriages. Data will be used for evidence based policy making, programming and progress assessment.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

During the reporting period the following key activities were implemented:

- Inception workshops in each project beneficiary country presenting the project and soliciting feedback on quantitative survey and qualitative studies; and identification of possibilities for data use
- 3 training workshops for Roma on new methods for participatory grassroots level data collection
- Micro-narratives from and about Roma returnees from the EU collected in each WB country, as a pre-cursor for qualitative study and quantitative survey
- Workshop Regional Roma Survey and Methods and Tools for Welfare Measurement and Diagnostics for representatives of National Statistical Offices
- Tendering process of a company to conduct quantitative survey

The project also focused on creation of synergies with other international actors promoting Roma inclusion: the World Bank, Fundamental Rights Agency, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, Regional Cooperation Council /Roma Integration 2020, Council of Europe with a view to solicit feedback on the needs for data to be included in the survey of particular interest to these organisations. Based on these interactions survey design (methodology and questionnaire) were revised and further refined in consultations with national partners. The consultations with international and national partners resulted in assessing how to use data under different reporting frameworks, such as monitoring framework developed by Roma Integration 2020, but have also pointed out the need to discuss reporting needs under recently adopted 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Around 200 representatives of national governments, including national Roma focal points, civil society representatives and representatives of local authorities in each country participating in the project shared their feedback on project activities and learned how project contributed to meeting their obligations under different reporting framework
- 20 Roma from the WB trained on the use of innovative grassroots data collection methods. They used these skills to collect a total of 1175 stories from/about Roma returnees from EU to Western Balkans
- Report on micronarratives from Roma returnees from EU to Western Balkans finalised for comments
- 14 technical level staff from national statistical offices gained insights into survey design, contributed to refinement of methodology; agreed to cooperate with the project during fieldwork; and are better informed about data needs and potential for their use
- Discussion paper *Sampling for Roma Regional Survey 2107: Possible approaches* written and disseminated among partners
- Paper *Leaving No One Behind in Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Roma Inclusion in Europe* drafted

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Quantitative survey fieldwork
- Assessment of the re-integration policies and of the position of Roma with no personal documentation in selected localities in the WB. Finalisation of qualitative reports on Roma returnees to Western Balkans and non-visible Roma with no personal documentation
- Micro-narratives collection on Roma and access to employment and experience with discrimination – qualitative study
- Micro-narratives collection on Roma and exposure to environmental and health risks – qualitative study
- Production of videos on the situation of Roma in the region
- Dissemination of results events in selected countries participating in the project

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2016/ 037-900
Project title:	Supporting the Effective Reintegration of Roma Returnees in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 1.25 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with the World Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2017/384-989
Duration of activities:	01/04/2017 - 01/07/2019
Contact:	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The objective of the project is to identify relevant policy responses and implementation pathways for the effective reintegration of returnees in the Western Balkans, based on the evidence of re-integration experiences. A particular focus on Roma returnees is of importance as it is clear that a

substantial number of Roma are among the migrants who will be affected by the changed asylum regime towards WB countries and by the return policy of some EU countries.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

The Inception Phase involved:

- An in-depth desk review of various international and national return migration frameworks ("*Roma Returnees to the Western Balkans: Policy, National Frameworks and Programming on Migration & Return – 6 Country Studies*") assessing existing research and initiatives relating to the (re)integration of return migrants, with an explicit (but not exclusive) focus on Roma migrants
- Six separate country overviews of the domestic policy and institutional framework for return migration. Each country overview documents where Roma are given particular attention in the country's return migration framework
- Missions to Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, meetings with key Government officials and stakeholders

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Better overview of the complex state of existing policies, programs and services available to return migrants and offered by home country governments, third-country governments or NGOs/civil society in the WB countries
- Collection of information on the availability and access to reintegration services for returnees in the WB countries and in-depth answers for six WB countries to three main questions:
 - Who are those who migrated and those who are returned?
 - What is the international and national framework affecting migration and return?
 - How are Roma given particular attention in the national return migration framework?

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Inception Workshop with core members of the World Bank implementation team in Brussels to further discuss the methodology of the mapping exercises and next planned activities (September 2017)
- Meeting with DG NEAR to present the draft inception report (September 2017)
- Finalize TOR for analytical activities (mapping exercises) and hire the research team (September – October 2017)
- Conduct four mapping exercises which focus on a comprehensive assessment and identification of the challenges that (Roma) returnees encounter when returning to home countries - answering the following broad questions:
 - Who are the returnees and to what extent do their needs differ from those of the "regular" population? (**Vulnerability Mapping**)
 - How do repatriation processes take place between sending countries in Western Europe and the receiving WB countries? What practices work and where are gaps? (**Process Mapping**)
 - What are existing policies/ programs/ services provided to facilitate the reintegration of returnees by receiving country governments – and where are they lacking? (**Institutional Mapping**)
 - Who are important partners (governmental and non-governmental) for the implementation of solutions going forward? (**Stakeholder Mapping**)
- Conduct background research for four mapping exercises and develop qualitative research instruments (November - December 2017)

2.4 REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programmes, IPA 2011/023-537, IPA 2012/024-133 and 2013/024-134
Project title:	Regional Housing Programme (RHP)
EU contribution:	Contributions to the RHP Fund: EUR 121.25 million Implementation costs: EUR 26.88 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreements with CEB, UNHCR
Contract reference:	CN 2012/297-405; CN 2013/314-991; CN 2012/307-562; CN 2013/325-468 and CN 2013/325-470; CN 2015/369-230
End dates:	22/04/2014 (CN 2012/297-405) 30/11/2017 (CN 2013/314-991) 31/12/2019 (CN 2012/307-562; CN 2013/325-468 and CN 2013/325-470; CN 2015/369-230)
Links:	http://regionalhousingprogramme.org https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/10958444 https://twitter.com/RHP_RSP Films available in YouTube
Contact :	Daniel Hurtado, daniel.hurtado@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) addresses in a regional framework the housing needs of the most vulnerable refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) from the armed conflict in the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. The European Union is the biggest donor to this multi-donor financed programme, having committed in total EUR 148 million that should benefit an estimated 9 400 most vulnerable refugee or IDP families.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Main RHP figures (cumulated):

- **24** Sub-projects approved
 - **9 400** households / **28 000** beneficiaries concerned
 - **€ 217 million** Total estimated cost of approved sub-projects
 - **€ 183 million** Total grant amount approved
 - **€ 33 million** Total national contribution
 - **€ 69 million** Total grant amount disbursed
- In addition to managing the selection of beneficiaries and managing the provision of housing solutions, the project continued to contribute to institution building in the Partner Countries, including local authorities.

- RHP visibility action was intensified. Several visibility events were organised in the PCs to celebrate the delivery of housing units; a revamped RHP website was launched; RHP LinkedIn and Twitter accounts were set up; and a number of publications, videos, reports and promotional material were developed.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

MAIN RHP OUTPUTS (cumulated):

1 400 families granted housing:
 250 packages of building material delivered
 326 flats constructed
 88 flats purchased
 100 pre-fabricated houses completed
 190 houses re-constructed
 445 village houses purchased
 1 460 housing units under construction/being purchased

On a wider scale, RHP continued to have a positive impact on the regional cooperation, security and reconciliation of the people that were on different sides of the armed conflict 20 years ago.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Deliver 1 500 additional housing units during 2017. Project implementation will thus remain a priority during the next semester.
- Strong efforts will continue to be invested in enhancing RHP’s visibility. Some major events are planned:

Montenegro: Inauguration of 12 apartment buildings for 120 families in Konik and of a home for 68 elderly persons in Pljevlja; **Serbia:** Inauguration of an apartment complex in Ovca, Belgrade for 235 families (end 2017 or early 2018); **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Inauguration of new apartment buildings in Foca Ustikolina and Pale Praca; **Croatia:** Inauguration of 2 apartment buildings for 40 families in Knin, a residential building for 21 families in Benkovac and a home for 75 elderly persons in Glina.

2.5 MIGRATION

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Regional Support to Protection–Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey/ Component I
EU contribution:	EUR 5.5 Million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Contract reference:	CN 2015/369-697
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 31/12/2018
Links:	frontex.europa.eu/assets/Partners/Third_countries/Handout.pdf
Contact :	Emma Ascitti, Emma.ASCIUTTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

In the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) in cooperation with its project partners EASO, IOM and UNHCR, is implementing the project “Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey”, Component 1. The beneficiary institutions of the project are the respective national authorities of the six Western Balkans (WB) countries and Turkey responsible for border management, including border police, asylum offices, and other relevant stakeholders.

The main aim of the IPA II Project is to support the target countries in developing a protection-sensitive response to mixed migration flows, by strengthening their systems for identification, registration, and referral, as well as asylum procedures and return mechanisms, aligning them with EU policies.

ACTIVITIES JANUARY-JUNE 2017

The second Regional Steering Committee was organized on 6 April 2017 and hosted by DG NEAR in Brussels, Belgium. The meeting allowed to receive further feedback from the countries regarding the implementation of the Action and to present the concept of Phase II of the Action.

Two translator workshops were organized and two planning meetings took place in the areas of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings and Detection of falsified documents. Frontex training materials in these two areas were translated into the national languages of the Western Balkan countries, and the participants planned the upcoming national trainings which will be implemented in 2nd half 2017.

Field visits to the six Western Balkan countries were conducted in order to prepare a mapping and assessment of their capacities for the identification and registration of mixed migration flows.

A regional training for national escort multipliers was organized in May 2017 in Tirana, Albania. Moreover, a three-day workshop took place in Warsaw at the end of May 2017, during which the Western Balkan countries were familiarized with EU’s best practices for non-voluntary return operations.

In May 2017 a Regional training Module for Managers with all seven beneficiary countries of the IPA project took place. The training was also an opportunity to kick off the discussions on the establishment of a Practitioner’s Network.

The process of drafting and finalising the national Roadmaps to set up an asylum system in line with EU standards in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia continued. Additional missions to identify and address the needs in relation to international protection were conducted.

During the reporting period, the Action was subject to a Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) contracted by the European Commission. Moreover, all project partners were involved in programming and discussing with Commission the content of Phase II of the current Action, which will start in January 2019.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The second half of 2017 includes the organization of one national training per country in the following three areas: Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings, Detection of falsified documents and Training for escorts.

In relation to the registration of mixed migration flows, the next semester will see the finalisation of the country reports from the field visits to the beneficiary countries. Based on the specific reports from all visits the overall report providing final conclusions and recommendations for the Western

Balkan region will be prepared in the autumn. Also work on the finalization of the Gap Assessment of the current referral mechanism and establishment of national roadmap for Serbia will continue.

The National Steering Committees are scheduled to take place in September/October 2017, and the Advisory Group will likely meet at the end of November. The Project Partners will also work on revising the logical framework of the project, based on the outcomes of the ROM Monitoring report, and on developing together with DG NEAR the concept of Phase II of the project.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Regional support to Protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey (component 2)
EU contribution:	EUR 2.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Contract reference:	CN 2016/369-495
Duration of activities:	15/12/2015 - 15/12/2018
Contact :	Emma Ascitti, Emma.ASCIUTTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the action is to develop and operationalize a comprehensive migration management system in seven IPA beneficiary countries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey, in line with EU standards. The specific objectives aim to facilitate and strengthen some of the key areas of a migration management system, focusing on enhancing the exchange of non-personal information in the region, and contribute to establishment of assisted voluntary mechanism in the beneficiary countries.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- A comprehensive assessment of institutional needs and expectations in terms of regional data sharing has been conducted to identify the adequate approach to the continuation of activities under this outcome.
- Two workshops were organized to support the setup of national structures dealing with assistant voluntary return (AVR) of migrants and the development of capacities for practitioners who implement AVR operations independently and nationally.
- Establishment of an online roster of translators available to service providers in Serbia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been launched which would provide efficient interpretation between persons in need and all government and nongovernmental stakeholders.
- A consultative meeting was organized to initiate a process of transposing regionally accumulated knowledge into national training systems to ensure sustainability and future use of this knowledge resource.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Output of activity 1: Information exchange of non-personal data is strengthened at the intra-regional and inter-regional levels, as well as with EU agencies

Output of activity 2: Voluntary return and reintegration mechanism established at regional level and operational cooperation established and on-going with selected countries of origin.

Output of activity 3: Pilot project designed and implemented in coordination with MARRI, involving two key countries in the Western Balkans and three languages.

Output of activity 4: Transposing identification and screening procedures to national systems and identification and vulnerability assessment of migrants and refugees improved.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Continue working towards establishing a regional platform for the exchange of non-personal data on migration through the formulation of operational frameworks for data exchange and creation of a template for data collection
- Organising two workshops for AVRR practitioners and the development of national SOPs. The first workshop on establishing and enhancing relations with consular and diplomatic missions in relation to the operation of AVRR in the Western Balkans will be organized
- Initiating and continuing delivering interpretation services to service providers for three rare languages through an online roster of interpreters and recruiting and maintaining a number of interpreters/cultural mediators in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

2.6 HORIZONTAL FACILITY

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2015/031-60
Project title:	European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 20 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant agreement with the Council of Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2016/374-543
Duration of activities:	24/05/2016 - 23/05/2019
Contact :	Emma Ascitti, Emma.ASCIUTTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To support country-tailored reform process in the areas of rule of law, democracy and human rights with the aim for Council of Europe South-East Europe (SEE) member states/IPA beneficiaries to comply with European standards. Horizontal Facility (hereinafter: HF) follows a complementary two-fold approach: 1) technical co-operation to assist beneficiaries in achieving increased compliance with European standards and 2) the Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism (ECM), which forsee the provision of Council of Europe legislative expertise and policy advice in response to requests from the beneficiaries.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

In the reporting period, more than 283 activities were carried out under the 32 HF Actions, along with specific co-ordination / management activities and provision of expertise under the ECM. These activities can be summarised as follows:

a. **Co-ordination and management:**

- Joint launch of all Actions under the HF in Serbia was organised on 2 March 2017 in Belgrade. The event was attended by more than 150 participants and received good media coverage;
- Beneficiary Steering Committees have been formed in each of the 6 beneficiaries, which held their first meetings in the period March – June 2017;
- Regular meetings and briefings with the DG NEAR and EUDs/EUO were organised within the reporting period in order to ensure that all relevant parties are briefed on the implementation status of the Horizontal Facility;
- Restricted part of the Horizontal Facility website is operational and regularly updated with the latest governing and programming documents related to the implementation of the Horizontal Facility.

b. **Technical cooperation**

Under theme I – Ensuring Justice, a total of 173 activities have been implemented in 3 sectors Justice (52 activities), Human Rights (41 activities), Prisons and Police (80 activities). Some of the key activities are highlighted below:

- Rulebook on the recruitment of prison staff was completed and supplementary curriculum for the provision of training of trainers on prisons recruitment and management was also completed under *Action HF 1 - Prisons in **Albania***;
- Guidelines based on CPT standards regarding detention procedures for persons deprived of liberty were completed and endorsed by all 10 relevant police agencies, as well as finalisation of 6 health care protocols for prisoners under *Action HF 2 – Prisons and Police in **Bosnia and Herzegovina***;
- A Code of Conduct for prison staff in line with Council of Europe Recommendation CM/REC (2012) has been developed, moreover a Strategy for zero tolerance on ill treatment and a corruption mitigation plan were prepared and presented to prison governors under *Action HF 3 - Prisons*. Under *Action HF 4 – Police* an important milestone is noted, a proposal to set up the Police External Oversight Mechanism was submitted to authorities in May 2017 – which envisages the setting-up of specialised departments with the Public Prosecutor’s and the Ombudsperson’s Office to investigate allegations against law-enforcement officials and establishing civil review mechanism in **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**;
- The revised draft rulebook on recruitment of prison staff has been presented to prison management under *Action HF 5 – Prisons* in Kosovo. The draft rulebook includes specific provisions relating to gender equality;
- Guidelines on healthcare of detained and sentenced persons are amended focusing on medical screening upon admission to prison under *Action HF 6 – Prisons and Police* in **Montenegro**. In addition, the Action assisted CSOs in designing and launching the implementation of three pilot reintegration programmes focusing on women, Roma and drug addicts;
- Three draft training manuals related to European standards, domestic legislation and practice based on the HELP methodology have been designed under *Action HF 8 - ECtHR –*

Enforcement Court Decisions in order to build the capacity of the School of Magistrates and the School of Advocacy in **Albania**;

- Training modules (under the [HELP](#) umbrella) on the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time and on the prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment were developed and finalised with Judicial Training Center under *Action HF 10 – Ill-treatment and application ECtHR case-law* in **Montenegro**;
- Court coaching reports have been finalised for ten pilot courts under the *Action HF 12 – Efficiency of Justice* in **Albania**. Based on recommendations, all pilot courts have started implementing court-coaching projects. To this end, a guide to implement selected CEPEJ tools was produced in order to assist selected pilot courts to follow up on the recommendations;
- Similarly in **Kosovo**, under *HF 13 – Efficiency and Quality of Justice*, a draft assessment report on the functioning of the justice system which provides a solid base for addressing the identified deficiencies was presented to the beneficiaries.

Under theme II – Fighting Corruption and Economic Crime – a total of 55 activities have been implemented in 2 sectors, namely Economic Crime (45 activities) and Corruption in Education (10 activities). Some of the key activities are presented below:

- Under *HF 16 – Economic Crime* in **Albania**, the Parliament amended in May 2017 the Law on Political Parties, largely complying with the Action's recommendations. After the Central Election Commission adopted the reporting template on election campaign financing, the Action prepared a technical paper on the political finance disclosure system; and the Action trained non-governmental organisations and the media representatives on how to monitor election campaign finances;
- As a part of *HF 17 – Economic Crime* in **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, a training handbook has been prepared for Financial Intelligence Unit analysts, which draws on the experiences of Council of Europe member states. In addition, draft guidelines have been designed in order to support increased transparency of beneficial ownership for the private sector as a part of the efforts of improving the anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing preventive system.
- Under *HF 18 – Economic Crime* in **Montenegro**, comments were provided on the draft Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, which is expected to be adopted shortly. Additionally, the Action assessed the regulatory framework for the control of financing of political entities and election campaigns, which were presented to 30 representatives of the authorities, political parties and civil society. To support the institutional capacities, the Action finalised the Communication Strategy 2017 – 2019 for the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, identifying key messages to be presented to the public to raise their awareness on corruption-related issues.
- To provide more information on integrity and ethical behaviour in higher education a baseline study was carried out and shared with the main actors in education under *HF 19 – Corruption in Education* in **Kosovo**.
- Similarly to Kosovo, under *HF 20 – Corruption in Education* in **Montenegro** recommendations from the baseline study highlighted the need for the establishment of a transparent system of control of accreditation and licensing of educational institutions.

Under theme III – Promoting discrimination and the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups, a total of 47 activities have been implemented in 4 sectors, namely Education (18 activities), Trafficking in Human Beings (10 activities), National Minorities (10 activities) and Human Rights/Ombudspersons (9 activities). Some of the key activities are presented below:

- Eight qualified trainers from the Ombudsperson institution are equipped with the knowledge to deliver the trainings on the human rights and anti-discrimination issues as a direct result of the implementation of *HF 22 – Ombudsperson in Bosnia and Herzegovina*;
- Manual on Investigation of Hate Crimes towards LGBTI has been produced under *HF 28 – Anti discrimination/SOGI in Albania*. The manual has been made available to authorities;
- National Anti-trafficking Commission adopted the 2017 National Operation Plan on Anti-trafficking matters in April 2017, including the reference to the activities carried out by the *HF 29 – Trafficking in Human Being in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*.

c. **ECM**

In the reporting period, the HF activities provided for the processing of one request for assistance from the State Election Commission in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and further efforts were made to promote the ECM to the benefit of the beneficiaries. More specifically, the instrument was presented at the Beneficiary Steering Committees (hereinafter: SCs) and the relevant stakeholders were asked to assist in promoting the ECM. In five out of six SCs, the relevant stakeholders proposed in the conclusions of the committees to reiterate the importance of the ECM and need for its further use and promotion. In addition, the ECM brochure has been translated into local languages and printed in Serbian and Montenegrin. Other language copies will be available in the next reporting cycle.

d. **Visibility**

Summary of the principle activities in the promotion of the overall HF visibility:

- **HF website:** the website was further developed, in order to include new subheading (e.g. for the publications published under various HF Actions, such as the Baseline Assessment of Integrity in Higher Education in Kosovo published in February 2017).
- **HF Newsletter:** two issues of the quarterly HF e-newsletter were published in order to further promote the Actions and HF success stories. The first newsletter was published on 21 March 2017, highlighting Actions during January-March 2017, and the second newsletter covering Actions during April – June 2017 was published on 29 June 2017.
- **HF visibility events:** besides the HF launch (mentioned under coordination and management) organised in Belgrade, the HF was also presented to the permanent representations of member and observer States of the Council of Europe on 20 January 2017, during the Open Day of the ODGP at the Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg;
- **HF social media accounts:** in addition to the already existing Facebook (jp.horizontal.facility) and Twitter account ([@CoE_EU_HF](https://twitter.com/CoE_EU_HF)), a new HF Youtube channel ([Council of Europe/EU Horizontal Facility](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)) was also set up in this reporting period.
- **HF information leaflet** was translated in the local languages of the respective beneficiaries, in order to further promote the two-fold approach of the Horizontal Facility.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

In the reporting period, the ***management and coordination*** structure between the EU, Council of Europe and relevant beneficiary institutions has been further strengthened. This was particularly visible in the work of the 30 Action specific Steering Committees. Throughout the reporting period the results have been underpinned by the commitment, involvement and support from EUDs/EUO and relevant beneficiary institutions.

Overview of the key outputs in the three thematic areas of the ***technical cooperation component***, consisting of a total of 32 Actions:

Themes I- Ensuring Justice - under this theme, 15 Actions are tailored for the six Beneficiaries to support national reforms.

- In the prison and police field, seven Actions focused on improving legislative, policy and institutional frameworks for preventing ill-treatment and to better protect the human rights of detainees. Early support resulted in improving and harmonising legislative and institutional provisions and protocols on prison and police staff recruitment, health care and monitoring and inspection mechanisms (e.g. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo). In some cases, assistance efforts led to new structures being put in place to strengthen human rights policing (i.e. a Police External Oversight Mechanism in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) or institutional restructuring (transfer of prison health care services from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Health in Kosovo).
- In the field of human rights and the judiciary, the Actions contributed to improving the effectiveness of available domestic legal remedies and facilitated the execution of ECtHR judgments, notably in Albania and in Serbia (a need which has also been highlighted in the EC 2016 Reports on both countries). At an institutional level, the Actions contributed to strengthening the capacities of training institutions to sustainably train judges and prosecutors on the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and harmonising domestic court practices (for instance, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Serbia) with the ECtHR case-law.
- To increase the independence and accountability of justice, steps have been taken towards the implementation of the 2015 reform of the judiciary in Montenegro, through supporting the review of legislation, strengthening the capacity of training institutions and further increasing the knowledge of judges and prosecutors on European standards on ethical rules and disciplinary procedures. Support to the Serbian justice reforms was agreed with the domestic stakeholders with the Action starting from May 2017.
- To strengthen the efficiency and quality of justice, the Actions in Albania and Kosovo provided for the first time an overall picture of the functioning of the justice system in Kosovo drawing up targeted recommendations for improvements; helped establish a judicial map in Albania; and in Albania and Kosovo improved case management systems and the capacities to collect judicial statistics in line with the methodology and tools of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice ([CEPEJ](#)). Some courts in Albania and Kosovo have already started working on the identification and implementation of measures stemming from the recommendations of court coaching reports. For example, the Basic Court in Pristina (Kosovo) took measures to address the excessive length of proceedings in civil cases; and several pilot courts in Albania started preparing satisfaction surveys and collecting statistical data to improve the quality and efficiency of judicial services.

Theme II - Fight against corruption, organised crime and economic crime - 6 Actions to fight corruption and organised crime are being implemented in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia (where the Action was launched in April 2017).

- Important outputs in the legislative and institutional context were achieved to fight corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism in Albania, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and Montenegro. These efforts address shortcomings identified in the evaluations by the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) and the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). They are also reflected in the 2016 reports of the European Commission (EC) on EU Enlargement Policy. The Action in Albania was instrumental in preparations for the June 2017 elections with measures to improve the transparency of political parties and election campaign financing. In addition, the Prime Minister approved an Order prohibiting the use of state resources for party purposes during the June parliamentary elections in line with the Action’s recommendations; and

recommendations on legislative amendments to laws on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro were also developed and submitted to the authorities.

- Baseline studies to strengthen integrity and combat corruption in higher education were prepared in Kosovo and Montenegro. Recommendations emanating from the studies aim at improving the legal and policy frameworks and the application of ethical standards by participating institutions. Communication and consultation of all relevant stakeholders in order to obtain their support for the implementation of these kind of actions is essential, and in some cases may prove challenging (as in the case of the Pristina University). Recommendations and a related policy debate in Montenegro underpinned the decision of the government to establish an independent Quality Assurance Agency in higher education and to develop the Law on Academic Integrity.

Theme III – Anti-discrimination and the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups - 11 Actions have been designed to support beneficiaries in various segments of anti-discrimination.

- The Council of Europe achieved a more sustainable cooperation between the Ombudsperson Institutions, other public institutions and civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter:BiH). Moreover, the Action improved awareness and promotion of relevant European anti-discrimination standards through training of all relevant institutions.
- A participatory process, launched to combat discrimination in schools in Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, has already brought results. More specifically, the Action to fight bullying in schools in Albania raised the profile and visibility of bullying and led to an important policy shift through the integration of anti-bullying objectives into the National Agenda for the Rights of the Child 2017-2020. In Montenegro, an “Inclusive Day” for all schools has been scheduled for 11 October.
- As a follow-up to the recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) the Horizontal Facility increased inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation in implementing the Albanian national Action Plan on LGBTI people. The preparations of related training modules in Albania together with a translated manual on investigating hate crime against LGBTI people were completed.
- A dialogue with the national authorities, both in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Serbia, to establish a State Compensation Fund for victims of trafficking was opened.

Cross cutting issues: The Horizontal Facility strived to integrate a gender perspective in the activities in line with the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014 – 2017. To this end, several results can be highlighted in the reporting period:

- To enhance human rights protection, attention was paid to ensuring that the judiciary takes into account European standards on gender equality, including those set out in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention).
- In prison and police fields, the Actions took into account the needs of female detainees when developing offender behaviour programmes in Albania, BiH, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia or assessing prison health care in Kosovo.
- Gender mainstreaming is effectively applied in anti-discrimination Actions. The examples include education-related activities, in designing the survey on bullying in schools in Albania and considering the needs of Romani girls in anti-discrimination programmes in schools in Montenegro; awareness-raising of Ombudspersons’ staff on issues on gender stereotypes and

domestic violence in BiH; and analysing the situation of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia.

The importance of civil society engagement in the Horizontal Facility is widely recognised and promoted, although the approach to this engagement differs between Actions. This engagement takes the form of civil society participation in Steering Committees (i.e. all anti-discrimination-related Actions), legislative reviews (i.e. children rights legislation in Albania), public consultations and needs-assessment missions (i.e. the Actions on prisons in Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia, the police Action in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Actions on corruption in education), and campaigning and/or awareness raising activities (i.e. the Actions on education). In Montenegro, non-governmental organisations directly implement reintegration programmes for inmates of Romani origin and those with history of drug use.

As regards the **Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism**, the State Election Commission (SEC) from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia submitted a request for assistance for the SEC for the administration of the local elections, which had tentatively been planned for May 2017 (and was subsequently postponed to October). To this end, a Venice Commission expert has been seconded to the SEC in March 2017, who has worked on improving the efficiency of the SEC, its internal organisation and electoral dispute resolution / the complaints system.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Summary of the key activities under the coordination and management component in the forthcoming period:

- Horizontal Facility Steering Board meeting, 13 July 2017
- Horizontal Facility Beneficiary Coordinators meeting, tentatively planned for October 2017 – date and venue to be confirmed
- Six media trainings for the Horizontal Facility field staff, planned for the period between September and November – exact dates/locations to be confirmed
- Preparation of the fourth and fifth edition of narrative synopsis reports to be submitted at the end of September and November, respectively

CHAPTER 3: ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Support in the area of private sector development and investments aims to provide access to finance, raise regional competitiveness, increase competence of human capital, attract investments, facilitate trade and establish a business climate conducive to the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Private Sector Support Facilities established under the Crisis Response Package are also included.

3.1 PLATFORM FOR SME FINANCING AND SUPPORT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programmes, IPA 2011/021-964; IPA 2012/022-966; IPA 2013/024-091; IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF)
EU contribution:	EUR 103.3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreements (CA) with OECD and World Bank Group; CA and Delegation Agreements (DGA) with the European Investment Fund (EIF)-coordination, Guarantee Facility, ENEF and ENIF; DGA with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Contract reference:	CN 2012/295-825; CN 2012/306-154; CN 2012/306-653; CN 2013/319-472; CN 2012/306-667; CN 2013/333-444; CN 2013/318-776; CN 2013/331-504 ; CN 2014/334-654 05/12/2012 – 30/11/2025/; CN 2016/380-963
Duration of activities:	05/12/2012 – 30/11/2025
Links:	www.wbedif.eu
Contact :	Aleksandra Kostova, alexandra.kostova@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

WBEDIF is a joint initiative of the EU, together with EIB, EIF, EBRD, World Bank, OECD as well as other investing FIs such as KfW, OeEB, DEG, Italy, and the Western Balkans Economies themselves. Through the combined efforts, expertise and skillsets of the partners WB EDIF aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the SMEs across the region. The facility is by both improving access to finance and providing advisory services for boosting the entrepreneurial capacity and the business ecosystem.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

There was good progress under the whole WBEDIF platform during H1 2017, including:

For the financial instruments:

- The Guarantee Facility: the first round of financing (GF I) has been almost entirely utilised and the banks are now in their run off phase. Under the second round of financing (GF II) the first aggregate absorption results from the banks with which the European Investment Fund (EIF) signed financing agreements during Q4 2016 show very promising uptake across the 5

countries covered from this additional budget (Montenegro, Kosovo, FYROM, Serbia and Albania). Furthermore good progress has been made with regards to upcoming new evolutions of the product, for the Guarantee Facility Serbia and the Youth Employment Guarantee, expected to come online in 2018

- The Enterprise Innovation Fund is progressing well and in line with expectations in its investment pace, with 8 investments as at end of June, with circa 25% of the ENIF funds invested so far. The geographical exposure is so far limited to Croatia, Serbia and FYROM since more numerous and better quality applications stem from these countries. Nevertheless the Fund Manager (South Central Ventures) is striving for good geographical diversification and is busy screening its pipeline for more opportunities. Albania and Bosnia Herzegovina have yet to invest in the Fund as originally indicated whilst the remaining countries (including Croatia) have done so.
- The Enterprise Expansion Fund has seen recent improvements in deal flow and portfolio investments (over the last year). As at end of June the Fund has 7 investments in six countries across the region, which also brings ENEF's utilisation to circa 25%.

In addition the EBRD is progressing in its structuring of a new lending instrument called the Competitiveness Programme, to come online in 2018. This additional component in WB EDIF will provide funds to local banks for on-lending and incentives to SMEs.

For the Support Services:

- The World Bank – via its Investment Readiness programme – has been planning a follow-up exercise with beneficiaries to measure the long term effects and – under the VC ecosystem programme - has also made policy recommendations in Albania, Serbia and Croatia for reforms to enable improved and further development of the VC ecosystem.
- Under the EU-REPARIS programme, the World Bank organised a series of workshops, meetings and forums on acquis alignment and accounting education. It also disseminated a benchmark study on education and another one on SME financial reporting.
- The EBRD's Advice for Small Business (ASB) continued to be deployed in the region, which has now reached 5 countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia) via a total of 145 projects with local consultants and 26 with international advisors.
- The EIB launched two studies; a feasibility study for establishing a regional Centre of Excellence for the Western Balkan countries, and a study on Intangible Assets and Intellectual Property in the region, some preliminary findings were presented in June.
- The OECD worked on the design of a revised SME Policy Index methodology to inter alia improve the focus also on newly emerging topics such as greening of SMEs and bankruptcy prevention among others

In addition, EIF as Platform Coordinator worked closely together with the EC to prepare the WB EDIF showcase session during the Western Balkans Summit in Trieste.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Access to finance for SMEs: good absorption for the guarantee facility as well as healthy uptake of the equity instruments, WB EDIF's financial outreach to SMEs is always increasing.

Reach of Support Services: through its complementary soft measures, WB EDIF has reached multiple stakeholders.

Awareness-raising at Platform level: the Western Balkans Summit (July 2017) was a key event to promote the valuable work being undertaken by the various IFI partners in increasing access to

finance and improving conditions for SMEs in the region. therefore a special success stories booklet, a WB EDIF flyer, and a video were all produced in June 2017 to show case WB EDIF.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

For the financial instruments:

- The Guarantee Facility II will receive detailed data with regards to the portfolios which the 5 banks have been building up since end 2016. It is also expected that contracts are concluded by the end of the year to allow the new Serbian Guarantee Facility and the Youth Employment Guarantee Facility which are planned to reach the market in 2018,
- Both ENIF and ENEF plan to continue to screen new deals across the region in order to continue with their investment targets,
- The EBRD plans to continue to structure its Competitiveness Programme under the umbrella of WB EDIF whereby both national and regional IPA resources will be channelled. The contract under the WB EDIF umbrella is planned to be signed by the end of 2017,
- The EIB plans to finalise its abovementioned two studies for circulation before the end of the year,
- World Bank plans will launch the second phase of the VC ecosystem (contract to be signed by the end of 2017) and begin organising a second 'Pioneers of the Balkans' competition. The prolongation of the World Bank's EU REPARIS programme is also under discussion.
- EBRD plans to continue implementing ASB across the region, with Albania to be included by the end of the year, via WB EDIF funding. The prolongation of the programme is under discussion,
- OECD plans to launch the Small Business Act assessment process & presentation of the revised methodological framework, together with related dialogue meetings and launch events in the countries,

At Platform level more efforts will be focussed on promoting the visibility, the efficiency and the impact of WB EDIF, also in line with DG NEAR's priorities, including the Regional Economic Area. A 5th WB EDIF Anniversary event will take place in November 2017.

3.2 EUROPEAN FUND FOR SOUTHEAST EUROPE (EFSE)

Programme reference:	CARDS 2006/018-264 and Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2007/019-344, IPA 2008/020-300, IPA 2009/021-373 and IPA 2013/024-091, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE)
EU contribution:	EUR 85.1 million
Beneficiary region:	14 countries including Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreements with the European Investment Fund (EIF)
Contract reference:	CN 2006/124-240; CN 2008/154-338, CN 2009/201-622, CN 2009/222-012, CN 2011/268-296, CN 2016/381-821
Duration of activities:	04/08/2006 – 31/12/2023
Links:	www.efse.lu
Contact :	Alkesandra Kostova, alesandra.kostova@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

EFSE extends loans to selected financial institutions in the region of Southeast Europe (at present 43 in the IPA Region), including the European Eastern Neighbourhood Region, for on-lending to micro and small enterprises and low-income private households with limited access to financial services. EFSE's partner lending institutions include commercial banks, microfinance banks, microcredit organisations and non-bank financial institutions.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

By 31 December 2016, the outstanding investment portfolio in the EFSE amounted to EUR 924.3 million, thereof EUR 523.7 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey*. During H1 2017, EFSE signed 13 investments totalling EUR 70.8 million, of which EUR 65.8 million with 7 Partner Lending Institutions (PLIs) were in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This brings the total number of PLIs with active investments to 67 and an outstanding investment portfolio by 30 June 2017 of EUR 871.2 million – EUR 514.1 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

In terms of the sub-loan portfolio, by 30 June 2017, the outstanding sub-loan portfolio amounted to EUR 899.2 million, including EUR 505.4 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This translates into an on-lending rate of 103%[†] for the total Fund and 96% for the Western Balkans and Turkey by 30 June 2017.

More than 880,000 sub-loans have therefore been financed since EFSE's inception, accounting for EUR 6.2 billion in lending, with a clear focus on microloans below EUR 20 000.

On the TA side, the EFSE Development Facility has 76 projects under management in the Western Balkan region and Turkey with a total volume of EUR 6.3 million. For example, in South East Europe, the EFSE DF supports the development of sustainable businesses in cooperation with regional business support organizations such as Mozaik Foundation, Innovation Centre Kosovo or Smart Kolektiv. Through regional networking, conferencing, coaching and targeted capacity building of social entrepreneurs, mentors and trainers, the EFSE DF aims at promoting sustainable and social enterprises in the region and to build the ecosystem for social enterprises.

Following the successful raising of IFI and private investor funding during 2016, the Fund has been well funded in H1 2017, including estimated 17% Notes from private investors as of 30 June 2017. This was also enabled by the Fund's strong performance also in the Western Balkan region and Turkey. Overall, the Fund's performance remains very solid with continuously low impairment levels, very good financial performance, and continued leveraging the Fund's C Shares.

OUTPUTS

EFSE investment portfolio figures as at end Q2 2017*	
1. Total Invested Portfolio (Q2 2017 figures)	EUR 871.2 million

* Includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

[†] It is possible that the overall on-lending rate is greater than 100%. This can be the case because of the Fund's investment into subordinated debt for a part of the investment portfolio. Due to its leverage capacity, the Fund has higher on-lending requirements than 100% for subordinated debt investments.

2. Number of current Partner Lending Institutions (Q2 2017 figures)	67
4. Type of Partner Lending Institution (Q2 2017 figures)	67% Commercial Banks, 14% Micro-finance Institutions, 19% Non-Bank Financial Institutions
EFSE sub-loan figures as at end Q2 2017*	
5. Active End Borrowers (Q2 2017 figures)	141,314
6. Reached End Borrowers since inception (Q2 2017 figures)	887,337
7. Average sub-loan outstanding (Q2 2017 figures)	EUR 6,363
8. Disbursed sub-loans since inception (Q2 2017 figures)	EUR 6.2 billion

* Figures shown are aggregate for both, the region of Southeast Europe and the European Eastern Neighbourhood Region.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

An intensive monitoring regime for the Fund's investments in Turkey continues to be in place and up to now, the Fund's investments in Turkey are all performing according to schedule. Against the background of those turbulences and the overall high degree of volatility in the operating environment, including the continued economic stagnation and low-price environment in Southeast European countries and the political and economic crises in the ENR region, significant investment management efforts will be required for reaching the Fund's portfolio goals for 2018. The threefold objective to achieve development impact, good financial performance, and prudent credit and concentration risk forms the basis of the Fund's strategy in 2018. In addition, the Fund is actively working on selective innovation initiatives in the areas of local currency investments, geographical focus, and entrepreneurship in which the Fund has made significant progress and contributions.

The focus of the EFSE Development Facility in the second half of 2017 will be on addressing systemic issues in the ecosystem for entrepreneurship. For example, the continued partnership with Cepor in Croatia will provide match making solutions for business succession. The EFSE DF will also work closely with partner PLIs such as TBC in Georgia to provide online and offline capacity building to existing and potential MSE clients. A key focus of Responsible Finance activities will be the promotion of Agrifinance. In partnership with the Central Bank of Macedonia, the EFSE DF will facilitate a round table with commercial banks to assess their potential to promote Agrifinance. In Fintech, the EFSE DF will organise a bootcamp for Fintech startups of the Fincluders event in October. Several individual TA projects with existing PLIs are in preparation that will support business operations and processes, such as a new CRM system with Mi-Bospo in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3.3 CRISIS RESPONSE PACKAGE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2009/021-373
Project title:	Private Sector Support Facility for Turkey - Crisis Response Package
EU contribution:	EUR 22.5 million

Beneficiary region:	Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with EBRD
Contract reference:	CN 2009/228-868
Duration of activities:	18/12/2009 – 30/11/2021
Links:	www.turseff.org ; www.midseff.com ; www.msmeturkey.com
Contact :	Domagoj Denacic, Domagoj.DENACIC@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The EU/EBRD programme "Turkey Private Sector Support Facility" (PSSF) assists economic actors in Turkey through loans, grants and technical assistance (TA) in increasing their competitiveness in products and services to face the challenges of the economic and financial crisis in the short and long term. To this end, it provides necessary financial and human resources as well as technical skills.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

An official amendment to the Contribution Agreement (CA) was issued in March 2017 to: a) reallocate funds from MSME Window to EE and SBS Windows; b) expand the scope of eligible projects within the EE window; c) remove the role of the independent Verification Consultant from the EE Window.

MSME Finance Window – Activities were focussed on phasing out the TC (Technical Cooperation) Programme which came to an end on 30 May 2017. The Project Consultant concentrated efforts on completing data updates to TARDES, as well as marketing and promotion of the Programme outputs. In total, 20 client visits were completed to collect success stories from which 7 stories were gathered for a video clip for promotional use. During the period, the PC organised and hosted, with cooperation from EBRD and Isbank, an international conference in Istanbul titled ‘Sustainability in Agricultural Finance’, and participated as panelists in Bloomberg’s ‘Agricultural Summit Conference’ with KKB. In addition, considerable time and effort was devoted to conducting an impact study to assess the overall achievements and impacts of the MSME Lending and TurAFF programmes on the Turkish agriculture and financial sector.

Energy Efficiency Window - The first phase of TurSEFF (Turkish Sustainable Energy Financing Facility) was successfully finalised in early 2013 and no further activities were undertaken. Funds reallocated from the MSME window in the March 2017 CA amendment will now be utilised for the newly launched programme TurSEFF III. The Project Consultant for TurSEFF III was procured and contracted in April 2017 and the programme officially began in June 2017 with a kickoff meeting with one partner bank. Under MidSEFF (Turkish Mid-size Sustainable Energy Financing Facility), the preparation and financing of sub-projects continued with the aim to fully allocate the remaining funds.

Advice for Small Business (ASB) - Since the inception of the Programme, 18 Enterprise Growth Programme (EGP) projects were started under EU PSSF (Private Sector Support Facility) for Turkey. Out of these, 14 projects were completed and 4 projects were cancelled due to a lack of commitment of the company management. The total number of BAS projects implemented is 167 (1 cancelled), 165 of the projects have been evaluated one year following completion, and one is pending evaluation.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

MSME Finance Window The agronomic data update on TARDES (Agricultural Loan Evaluation System) has been successfully completed and tech-cards produced for 4,536 products for 222

different crops and animal husbandry activities. TARDES is now actively being used by 6 banks, and 3 additional banks are currently assessing the tool for their own use. In total 185,555 agricultural loan applications had been evaluated using the tool. The Project Consultant has also developed an IT system called Agricultural Data Management System (ADMS) to improve agricultural data processes, and completed an Impact Study for the MSME Lending and TurAFF (Turkey Agribusiness SME Financing Facility) programme.

Energy Efficiency Window - Under TurSEFF III, EUR 50M of EUR 400M funds have now been allocated to one PFI. MidSEFF funds are effectively fully allocated to partner financing institutions (PFI), and 5 new solar power plant projects were requested for assessment in the first half of 2017.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

MSME Finance Window – TC interventions came to an end on 30 May 2017 and no further activities are planned under this window.

Energy Efficiency Window - The TurSEFF III Project Consultant will work with the signed PFI to market the programme and develop a pipeline of projects. The MidSEFF Project Consultant will work towards allocation of all remaining MidSEFF funds and continue to monitor the implementation of active MidSEFF projects

Advice for Small Business (ASB) – A re-allocation of funds in the amount of EUR 200,000 from the MSME Finance Window will be used to generate 4 EGP projects in 2018. As the activities under the MSME Window were completed in first half 2017, the EBRD is exploring possible funding options, within the scope of the Action, to optimise the impact of the Programme through the use of TA funds. EBRD is considering submitting a proposal for an additional reallocation of funds from the MSME to the ASB Window to further strengthen the relationships with its SME clients, foster the clients’ linkages to local banks and engage with both local and international consultants in order to support the small business sector.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2009/021-373
Project title:	SME Recovery Support Loan for Turkey – Crisis Response Package
EU contribution:	EUR 30 million
Beneficiary region:	Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with EIB
Contract reference:	CN 2009/228-929
Duration of activities:	22/12/2009 -21/12/2017
Links:	http://www.eib.org/projects/pipeline/2009/20090580.htm http://www.eib.org/projects/press/2010/2010-131-eib-provides-EUR-150-million-innovative-recovery-support-loan-to-smes-in-turkey.htm
Contact :	Domagoj Denacic, Domagoj.DENACIC@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the SME Recovery Support Loan is to mitigate the crisis impact for SMEs and contribute to the development of the Turkish economy and employment sector. The main objective is to support SMEs with concrete productive investments by providing access to attractive and longer-dated debt financing.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

The SME Recovery Support Loan is combined with an EIB loan for SMEs (together, the Facility) and fully disbursed to the two selected financial intermediaries since April 2011.

Halkbank: their share of the Facility (EUR 74.82 million) is fully allocated to 148 SMEs since the end of 2011. The average size of allocation is EUR 0.51 million.

Akbank: their share of the Facility (EUR 74.82 million) is fully allocated to 89 SMEs since the end of June 2012. The average size of allocation is EUR 0.8 million.

A Steering Committee meeting was held on November 2016, to present the activities implemented in the last 12 months and present the proposal for a second round of loans, which was approved. It has been proposed to extend the Contribution Agreement for 12 months from 22 December 2016 to 22 December 2017 to allow the EIB to define, approve and deploy the second round. However, the proposal has not yet been approved by the relevant EIB decision-making bodies. Consequently, there were no actions to report in the period January – June 2017. In case the proposal will not be approved the CA will expire on 22 December 2017.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Due to a delay in approval of the second round of loans here are no outputs to report in the period January – June 2017.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

No further activities are planned without the approval of the second round of loans.

3.4 OECD SUPPORT TO ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	OECD Support to Economic Competitiveness in South East Europe
EU contribution:	EUR 10.7 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with OECD
Contract reference:	CN 2016/373-821
Duration of activities:	11/05/2016 – 10/11/2019
Contact :	Gabriela Negut, gabriela.negut@gmail.com

PURPOSE

Assist the Western Balkan and Turkish economies in reinforcing their economic competitiveness and growth by identifying policies for enhanced competitiveness and long-term growth and by building capacity to further develop and implement these policies.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY –JUNE 2017)

Economic Reform Programmes: The OECD held a capacity building workshop on industrial policy in Belgrade (January). The OECD prepared the ERP Monitoring Tool and co-organised together with the EC the Regional Meeting of ERP Coordinators in Brussels (May) to launch the 2018-2020 ERP cycle. The first ERP kick-off meeting was held in Skopje (June).

Competitiveness Outlook: The assessment phase was completed and all government self-assessments and independent assessments received by the OECD. The reconciliation phase was carried out, consisting of a capacity building meeting with the CO co-ordinators to prepare them for this phase. Reconciliation meetings took place in each beneficiary economy to fill remaining information gaps and discuss discrepancies between the two parallel assessments. During the Competitiveness Outlook Week key stakeholders discussed and validated draft assessment scores and regional recommendations. The drafting process of the Competitiveness Outlook publication started.

The OECD finalised the regional study “*Tracking Special Economic Zones in the Western Balkans*” and presented the results during the High Level Conference on “*Fostering Investment for Competitiveness in South East Europe*” in Paris (April). The conference entailed capacity building sessions on investment policy and promotion for ERP coordinators and line institutions.

SBA Assessment: The SME Policy Index methodology had been revised by refining the scope and assessment framework. The OECD discussed all changes to the SBA Partner Organisations in a meeting held in Paris (June). In addition, the second regional policy dialogue, which was organised in April as part of the SEE Investment Conference, revolved around attraction of quality investment in order to maximise the inclusive and sustainable local development with the help of SMEs. The OECD shared expertise in two workshops on technology transfer and innovation (Belgrade and Thessaloniki) organised by the EC – JRC.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY –JUNE 2017)

Economic Reform Programmes: The third ERP Tool will support ERP co-ordinators in the reporting of the ERP implementation by providing guidelines and concrete examples. The capacity-building seminars allowed an in-depth reflection and discussion on specific priority areas.

Competitiveness Outlook: Two sets of completed assessments were received across 16 dimensions and six economies: one set from the six beneficiary economies governments and one from independent, local experts. The capacity of senior government officials and statistical offices was enhanced during the reconciliation capacity building meeting. More than 150 reconciliation meetings were held with over 1000 stakeholders during the reconciliation phase, leading to refined assessments, enhanced stakeholders coordination and awareness. One Competitiveness Outlook Week was successfully completed, validating draft assessment scores and regional results. The regional study on SEZ provided new insights for the future approach on investment incentives.

SBA Assessment: The revised assessment frameworks reflect new policy assessments relevant for SME development. The regional policy dialogue helped SBA co-ordinators increase their understanding of developing appropriate policies to maximise the benefits of foreign investment and to stimulate linkages among SMEs and large foreign firms.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Economic Reform Programmes: In-country kick-off events and a number of capacity building seminars will be organised in each WB capital. OECD experts will guide the ERP 2018-2020 preparations and provide written inputs on the new draft versions.

Competitiveness Outlook: 17 Competitiveness Outlook chapters will be drafted. They will be reviewed by internal and external stakeholders. The Competitiveness Outlook manuscript will be professionally edited and prepared for publication.

SBA Assessment: The new SBA cycle will be launched in September and followed by seven in-country launch meetings to engage local stakeholders. Upon organisation of all the in-country launch meetings, the assessment phase will start off. A policy dialogue meeting will be organised in

September, focussing on bankruptcy and second chance policies, an area where the region continues to score poorly. A study visit to Istanbul will be organised in December with the objective of sharing the Turkish experience in techno-parks as a tool to foster the SME sector.

3.5 HUMAN CAPITAL

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Support to facilitation of trade between CEFTA parties
EU contribution:	EUR 3 million
Beneficiary region:	CEFTA signatory parties
Type of contract:	PA Grant Agreement with Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the International Trade Centre (ITC)
Contract reference:	CN 2016/383-050
Duration of activities:	01/01/2017 – 31/12/2019
Links:	http://cefta.int/priorities/trade-facilitation/
Contact :	Gabriel Blanc, gabriel.blanc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the project is to improve capacities of the public and private sector in the CEFTA Parties to address the obstacles to deeper trade integration in the CEFTA region. This goal will be pursued by supporting the implementation of the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 on Trade Facilitation.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JULY 2017)

In the reporting period the following key activities were carried out:

- During the first 6 months of project implementation, the management, implementation and steering structures were put in place to make the project operative in the 7 CEFTA Parties. This also includes communication tools and administrative procedures.
- The project's kick-off meeting and the first Steering Committee (SC) meeting were held in April 2017 in Belgrade. The project was thereby officially launched and presented to the CEFTA Parties' representatives. The kick-off event was covered extensively in local media and on the internet.
- In June 2017, the inception report was presented to the contracting authority, presenting all the activities conducted up until that moment, with the suggestion of some minor necessary adaptations to the project design.
- In July 2017, workshops on non-tariff measures (NTMs) were conducted in all 7 CEFTA Parties. The workshops were attended by representatives of both public and private sector, i.e. Government's representatives, individual company representatives, as well as the chambers of commerce.
- Significant effort was dedicated to a transparent and goal-oriented selection of the two supply chains which will form the focus for the activities in components 1 and 2. The project team, in consultation with the project partners, elaborated a methodology to support the

supply chain selection in a way that responds well to the project's mandate and objectives. Based on the pre-selection of sectors according to the methodology, each CEFTA Party has proposed two priority sectors in the areas of agriculture and industry.

- A methodology for mapping documentary requirements at all clearance stages of border-crossing transactions has been developed by the International Trade Center (ITC) in order to start the mapping exercise in the fall of 2017.
- For the launch of the component on "*Simplification of customs clearance procedures*", preparatory activities have taken place (1) to ensure the successful conduction of national assessments of the current status of implementation of the national programs for Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) in the region, and (2) support the drafting process for the implementing provisions for a mutually recognised AEO program in the CEFTA region.
- Preparation of the first newsletter covering the first quarter of the project implementation.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JULY 2017)

- Project management and implementation structures have been established in 7 countries and communication tools developed (newsletter, website).
- The awareness and knowledge of private and public sector representatives on NTMs have been increased and their capacity to identify NTMs enhanced through seven national workshops on NTMs in each CEFTA Party.
- Business Process Mapping methodology for mapping documentary/data submission requirements in line with best practices was developed by ITC.
- The first newsletter is prepared and ready to be distributed in September 2017, once the supply chains are selected.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Two supply chains will be selected by early September 2017 for the implementation on the components on "*Harmonization of Norms and Practices*" (identification of the most trade-distortive market access barriers) and "*Streamlining of document and data submission requirements*".
- Research and analysis of the selected supply chains to gain better understanding of relevant stakeholders to be invited to participate in national private sector consultation meetings will be conducted in September 2017.
- National private sector consultation meetings in the two selected supply chains will be organised in October and November 2017.
- National Stakeholder consultation meeting under the umbrella of the National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs) will be organised in October and November 2017.
- Elaboration of national reports for both supply chains which identify and prioritize the main difficulties economic operators encounter when accessing other CEFTA markets will be carried out in November and December 2017.
- Trainings of relevant public authorities will be conducted in order to improve their knowledge on the methodology for mapping documentary requirements. The mapping of the documentary requirements will be initiated and relevant documents and data submission requirements will be collected by CEFTA parties.

- Within the field “*Simplification of customs clearance procedures*” national assessments of the current status of implementation of the national programs for AEO in the region will be conducted and validation workshops held. The project will provide expert input to the drafting process for the implementing provisions for a mutually recognised AEO program in the CEFTA region to be approved in November 2017.
- Preparation and continuous use of the communication tools (project newsletter, website) to foster visibility of the project and provide regular update on the project, its priorities and achievements.

3.6 TRADE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Support to CEFTA Secretariat 2016-17
EU contribution:	EUR 282,623 EUR 285,000
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Moldova
Type of contract:	Operating grants with the CEFTA Secretariat
Contract reference:	CN 2016/368-970 and CN 2017/384-220
Duration of activities:	01/04/2016 – 31/03/2017 03/04/2017- 02/04/2018
Links:	http://cefta.int/
Contact:	Gabriel Blanc, Gabriel.BLANC@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to enhance economic development through supporting liberalisation and facilitation of intra-regional trade in the context of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). The Project supports the operation of the CEFTA Secretariat, which provides technical and administrative support to the CEFTA Structures (Chair in Office – CiO, the CEFTA Joint Committee – JC, the CEFTA Subcommittees, CEFTA Working Groups and CEFTA Committee for Trade Facilitation).

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

The CEFTA Secretariat assisted the CEFTA Parties in the implementation of priorities outlined in the 2016 Work Programme and facilitated the organisation of approximately 22 planned meetings of the CEFTA Structures, including Negotiation Rounds on Additional Protocol on Liberalisation of Trade in Services, and legal scrubbing sessions for Additional Protocols on Trade Facilitation and Liberalisation of Trade in Services.

In particular, the CEFTA Secretariat provided a significant support to CEFTA Parties in the preparation of trade-related part of the Multi-annual Action Plan for the development of a Regional Economic Area, which was approved at the occasion of the Western Balkans Summit in Trieste on 12 July 2017.

The Additional Protocol 5 (AP 5) on Trade Facilitation was adopted by the CEFTA Parties on 26 May 2017. Regarding the preparations for the adoption of AP 5, the CEFTA Secretariat has mobilised its legal counsel to prepare a check list for all the procedural steps to be fulfilled by the CEFTA Parties regarding the adoption of AP 5.

In the area of customs, the PEM Joint Committee has unanimously agreed (meeting on 16 and 17 May 2017) to CEFTA's request for derogations on possibility of duty drawback and of full cumulation in the trade covered by CEFTA.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

- Additional Protocol 5 was adopted by CEFTA Parties on 26 May 2017
- Follow-up for elimination of NTBs identified by the private sector and validated by the CEFTA Parties in cooperation with UNCTAD and ITC was made
- CEFTA Parties received derogation from the PEM Joint Committee to introduce full cumulation and duty drawback in the intra-regional trade on 16 May 2017
- List of actions stemming from the AP 5 which need to be undertaken by CEFTA Parties was prepared and presented to CEFTA Parties on 25 April 2017
- Development of the IT solution for the Reporting System of data on trade in service, FATS and FDI
- First draft of the regional CEFTA Investment Report finalised
- Review of the regulatory frameworks for Professional Qualifications and mapping of the positions on MRAs for the prioritised professional qualifications
- Recommendation to open negotiations on mutual recognition of professional qualifications for doctors of medicine, dentists and civil engineers and architects
- Existing regulatory bodies in charge of services screened, priority sectors suggested for future regional cooperation

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The CEFTA Secretariat will keep providing technical and administrative support to the Chair in Office for the implementation of the Chairmanship Programme for 2017 and will continue assisting the CEFTA Parties in the organisation of all the regular meetings of the CEFTA structures and in conducting negotiations.
- In particular, the CEFTA Secretariat will mainly provide support on the following areas:
 - Preparation of Implementing Provisions for Mutual recognition of Border Documents and AEO Programmes according to the AP 5
 - Planning and agreeing on a single date for application of full cumulation and duty drawback in CEFTA according to the Ministerial Decision 3/2015
 - Encouraging CEFTA Parties to conclude signing the Memoranda of Understanding between Customs Authorities and other Competent Authorities of CEFTA Parties involved in the clearance of goods
 - Encouraging to coordinate the positions of CEFTA Parties in the revision exercise of the PEM Convention and to undertake the concerted actions to propose the modifications of the bilateral free trade agreements with the EU, EFTA States, and Turkey to include full cumulation and duty drawback
 - Agreeing with CEFTA parties about the possible scope of SEED + Project for the electronic exchange of documents
 - Adoption of the Additional Protocol 6 on Trade in Services and its subsequent ratification

- Fully functional Platform for Goods, Services and FDI Statistics
- Proposals on potential arrangements on intraregional cooperation amongst regulatory bodies to be agreed upon
- Finalisation of the final draft of the Investment Report and its promotion in November 2017
- Opening negotiations for recognition of professional qualifications in sectors and professions of mutual interest

3.7 COMPETITIVENESS

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2016/037-900
Project title:	Western Balkans Regional Investment Policy and Promotion, EU Single-Donor Trust Fund
EU contribution:	EUR 2.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with the World Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2016/379-787
Duration of activities:	18/04/2017 – 18/04/2020
Contact:	Gabriela Negut, gabriela.negut@gmail.com

PURPOSE

In the context of the work on deepening Regional Economic Area in the Western Balkans, the overall objective is to contribute to greater convergence of regional investment policies in the Western Balkans and greater alignment with the relevant EU and international standards. This will improve the attractiveness of the region for foreign investors (extra- and intra-regional) and ultimately lead to increased investment.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

During the reporting period, the project engaged in preparatory activities with key counterparts in the Western Balkans (WB6) economies in the context of meetings organised under the South East Europe Investment Committee (intergovernmental group under the regional cooperation council) to ensure buy-in and support for a rapid ramp of project activities in the next reporting period.

The project team contributed significantly to the development of the investment dimension of the Multiannual Action Plan (MAP) endorsed by the WB6 economies at the Trieste Summit in July 2017 – this entailed the development and refinement of drafts and participation in several preparatory meetings.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Core staff and team members on board for project implementation, initial procurement plan in place for consultant services.

Draft project roadmap and implementation plan in place and shared with client counterparts in the context of SEEIC meetings.

Draft action plan and rationale for investment policy harmonization delivered as an input to the MAP endorsed by the WB6 economies at the Trieste Summit in July 2017.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Agree and endorse project roadmap incl. general timeline and deliverables with the Western Balkans 6 and the Commission.
- Complete detailed M&E plan for the project incl. final indicator framework, collection of and verification of baseline data and targets.
- Identify and nominate country focal points in the WB6 administration to support project implementation.
- Conduct a mapping of FDI flows in the WB6 to identify different types and patterns of investment in the region.
- Complete a mapping of investors in the region and compile an inventory of key investors from EC and other source countries.
- Initiate investor surveys and targeted focus groups with investors, to identify key investment barriers.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORT AND ENERGY

INFRASTRUCTURE, NUCLEAR SAFETY

One of the priorities for IPA assistance is to help Beneficiaries to overcome the economic and financial crisis and to prepare for sound recovery by jointly working on increasing competitiveness and investments in infrastructure. Interventions in this sector have the ultimate goal of supporting the modernisation of their economies, also with a view to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy. Under the Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Projects Facility, grant co-financing is provided for investment projects in the fields of environment (water supply, wastewater collection and treatment), energy (district heating) and transport (urban transport). Close coordination with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) is essential.

4.1 WESTERN BALKANS INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK (WBIF)

The Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) was established in 2009 as a regional tool for EU enlargement. It supports socio-economic development and EU accession across the Western Balkans through the provision of financing and technical assistance to strategic investments. It pools resources from the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) with those of the involved Financial Institutions (FIs), bilateral donors and the governments of the Western Balkans. The WBIF increases the region's capacity to finance crucial infrastructure and priority investments in line with accession priorities and enhances the overall coordination of assistance. The WBIF seeks to maximise the impact of grant financing by using it to leverage lending by the involved Financial Institutions to priority strategic investments as identified by the Western Balkan beneficiaries.

Since its launch, the WBIF has developed a pipeline of priority investments of approximately EUR 15.7 billion. A grand total of 240 technical assistance (TA) and investment grants (INV) have been awarded to 151 investment projects for a cumulative value of EUR 645 million. The grants are used for project preparation, implementation, and co-financing of infrastructure investments for which financial support is provided by the partner organizations – CEB, EBRD, EIB, KfW, as well as by the World Bank Group in its capacity of participating organisation.

The grant assignments are implemented by the Lead FIs or the European Commission. The implementation of EU grants, is carried out either under Commission awarded TA contracts - the Infrastructure Project Facility (IPF), contribution agreements with the Lead FIs for the implementation of the Municipal Window or contribution arrangements with the WBIF Joint Fund Managers (EBRD&EIB) for the co-financing of connectivity projects.

The European Commission is the largest contributor to the WBIF with a total of EUR 567 million in grants channelled through the WBIF framework. More than half - EUR 318 million - have been allocated to the co-financing of investments in the energy, transport and environment sectors under the connectivity agenda and the Municipal Window. Between 2008 and 2017, bilateral donors have contributed more than EUR 60 million to the EWBJF and the involved FIs have set aside EUR 10 million each in grant and other contributions. Grants provided to the WBIF from bilateral donors and the FIs are implemented directly by the FIs.

Programme reference:	Multi-Country Programme for Connectivity 2015-2016 IPA 2015/038-055 & 2016/038-727
Project title:	Co-financing of Connectivity Projects in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 138.1 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution Arrangement with respect to the European Western Balkan Joint Fund under the Western Balkans Investment Framework
Contract reference:	CN 2016/375-830 and CN 2016/375-855
Duration of activities:	16/06/2016 – 31/12/2024
Link:	www.wbif.eu
Contact:	Wolfgang Schläger, wolfgang.schlaeger@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The WBIF has three objectives:

1. To create a one-stop-shop, where a request for project support can be presented, screened, assessed, and, eventually, provided with the required financing for its implementation;
2. to pool different sources of funding (FIs, EC and bilateral donors) and work out an appropriate blend of grants and loans for various actions; and
3. to strengthen the strategic and policy coordination of actions by multiple donors and investors that addresses the socio-economic priorities for the region. These socio-economic priorities are accession-driven and relate to the alignment of the WB6 candidate countries and potential candidates with the EU acquis. WBIF activities are supported by the EC-financed IFI Coordination Office – see below for a more detailed description of its activities.

The identification of priority projects is a result of consultations with other relevant DGs (Environment, Climate Action, Move, Energy, Regional Policy, Economic and Financial Affairs) thus ensuring coordination with their activities in the region.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Key activities under the WBIF work programme for the first half of 2017 included in particular the 17th TA call for proposals, and the identification of 6 mature investment projects for co-financing under the connectivity agenda.

Round 17 Technical Assistance (TA) call for proposals was launched in December 2016 and 24 applications were received. The Project Financiers' Group (PFG) met in May 2017 in Brussels to discuss the screened and assessed grant applications.

The 16th Steering Committee (SC) meeting of the WBIF took place in Stockholm, June 2017, and was hosted by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). Based on the recommendations of the PFG, the SC approved 12 TA grant requests for a total of approximately EUR 11.3 million to projects in the energy (energy efficiency, hydro power, and electricity transmission), environment (water and wastewater systems, waste management), social (health, and justice), and transport (road, rail, and the Durres seaport) sectors in all the beneficiary countries. The SC also approved one EUR 9 million INV grant for a waste water treatment plant in Montenegro. As usual, new calls for proposals were announced: Round 18 TA and Round 3 INV. The respective deadlines are 4 September TA and 30th of November 2017 INV.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The indicative work programme for the second part of 2017 includes the assessment and approval of TA Round 18 as well as the approval of INV Round 2. Due to limited fund availability, the submitted TA requests will have to be prioritised. The INV grant call for proposals is open to all four sectors although the approval of environment and social sector projects is subject to availability of funds from bilateral donors' resources as IPA funds are limited to the financing of connectivity projects only.

The next PFG meeting will be held in Sarajevo in November 2017. The next SC meeting will take place in December 2017 in Frankfurt and will be hosted by the KfW.

Contact: Stine Andresen, Stine.Andresen@ec.europa.eu and near-wbif@ec.europa.eu

4.2 HORIZONTAL SUPPORT TO IFI COORDINATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091 & IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Horizontal Support to Coordination with International Financial Institutions – IFI Coordination Office
EU contribution:	EUR 7.76 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with Mott MacDonald Limited
Contract reference:	CN 2014/340-622 and CN 2016/372-315
Duration of activities:	01/04/2014 – 31/01/2018
Link:	www.wbif.eu
Contact:	Stine Andresen, Stine.Andresen@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The IFI Coordination Office refers to the consultancy service contract awarded by DG NEAR aiming to ensure better coordination and cooperation between the beneficiaries, the EC, the IFIs and bilateral donors. The IFI Coordination Office (IFICO) provides a range of technical, management and communication services to support coordination among all WBIF stakeholders. It delivers analytical and operational services to the EC, IFIs and bilateral donors in the main WBIF sectors to facilitate better programming and planning of assistance including investments.

IFICO supports WBIF structures, particularly the WBIF Secretariat and the WBIF Steering Committee and has developed a range of WBIF related communication activities including the WBIF website and MIS.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY– JUNE 2017)

- Preparation and follow-up of the WBIF Project Financiers' Group meeting in Brussels in May and Steering Committee meeting in Stockholm in June 2017
- Input regarding the finalisation of the *Vademecum - a Guide to the WBIF*
- Assistance to the beneficiary countries with the implementation of the new WBIF methodology, the National Investment Committees (NICs) and the preparation of Single Project Pipelines (SPPs)

- Support to the EC and the WBIF Secretariat in the screening of the grant applications to be financed from INV Round 2
- Support to the Beneficiaries applying for project grants for TA Round 17
- Preparation of Terms of References for approved TA projects

OUTPUTS (JANUARY– JULY 2017)

- Supported preparation, organisation and follow-up of WBIF related meetings, in particular the Project Financiers Group meeting in Brussels in May and the WBIF Steering Committee meeting in Stockholm in June 2017
- Supported the EC and the WBIF Secretariat in the screening process for applications from TA Round 17 and INV Round 2
- Maintained and developed new features for the WBIF website and MIS
- Drafted and submitted Terms of References for selected TA projects
- Delivered the bi-annual Monitoring Report in May 2017, and bi-monthly reports of active WBIF projects
- Finalised the WBIF Annual Report 2016 and other communication material including bilateral donor and sector factsheets
- Produced the WBIF connectivity information material for the Trieste Summit.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Support preparation, organisation and follow-up of WBIF related meetings, in particular the Project Financiers Group meeting on Sarajevo in November and the WBIF Steering Committee meeting in Frankfurt in December 2017
- Support the EC and WBIF Secretariat in the screening of applications from TA Round 18
- Support to the EC and the WBIF Secretariat in launching the INV Round 3
- Update the WBIF website, quality control of data in the MIS and develop additional modules
- Prepare a final report on the NIC and SPP framework
- Start preparing the WBIF 2017 Annual report
- Focus on visibility & communication activities

4.3 WBIF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS FACILITIES (IPF)

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programmes, IPA 2011/022-964 & 2012/022-966
Project title:	Infrastructure Projects Facility 3 – Technical Assistance Window
EU contribution:	EUR 22.422 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with Mott MacDonald Limited
Contract reference:	CN 2012/293-208 and CN 2013/331-494
Duration of activities:	20/06/2012 – 19/06/2018

Links:	www.wbif.eu
Contact :	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe @ec.europa.eu
Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Support to the Western Balkans Investment Framework projects – Infrastructure Project Facility (extension IPF 4 and IPF 5)
EU contribution:	EUR 35.54 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Specific Grant Agreement with the European Investment Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2015/368-253
Duration of activities:	17.12.2015 – 31.12.2020
Links:	www.wbif.eu
Contact :	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe @ec.europa.eu
Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Support to the Western Balkans Investment Framework projects – Infrastructure Project Facility 2015 (IPF 6)
EU contribution:	EUR 26.12 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Specific Grant Agreement with the European Investment Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2016/379-644
Duration of activities:	23.11.2016 – 31.12.2021
Links:	www.wbif.eu
Contact :	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe @ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Infrastructure Projects Facilities (IPFs) are consultancy services contracts implementing the Western Balkans Infrastructure Framework (WBIF) technical assistance grants for priority infrastructure projects in the transport, environment, energy and social sectors.

Technical assistance is most largely requested for pre-feasibility studies, general designs, feasibility studies, preliminary designs, financing plans, cost-benefit analysis, tariffs plans, environmental impact assessments, detailed designs, etc., that is to say for the preparation of project documentation. Technical assistance may also occasionally be provided during the implementation phase, for the preparation of tender dossiers and for the supervision of works, providing therefore support throughout the project cycle. In some exceptional cases, IPFs may be asked to provide ad-hoc advisory and technical assistance, for example for regional sector development studies.

To date, six IPFs have been deployed. The European Commission has been managing directly the first three Facilities, with the activities of the first two already completed. To ensure the implementation of WBIF technical assistance grants in the most efficient manner while minimising the administrative

weight on the European Commission, it was decided that the EIB would manage the facilities from IPF 4 and onwards.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

IPF 3 has been assigned a total of 26 technical assistance grants, using fully its resources. IPF 3 portfolio is well advanced, with 13 projects completed and 13 projects still under implementation. Though the end date of their activities is foreseen for mid-2018, their tasks should be mostly completed by the end of 2017. In addition to the implementation of WBIF TA grants, IPF 3 has prepared a Regional Connectivity Gap Analysis and is now developing a Regional Strategy for Sustainable Hydropower in the Western Balkans.

IPF 4 has been assigned the implementation of 18 technical assistance grants, using fully its resources. Their activities are in full swing, with eight projects completed and an end date of activities for end 2018. In addition to the implementation of WBIF TA grants, IPF 4 has also prepared a Regional Gap Analysis on Floods Prevention and Management.

IPF 5 started their activities in July 2016 and are currently implementing six projects, while IPF 6, which initiated their activities in February 2017, are implementing one project and preparing terms of reference for four projects. The IPF 5 and IPF 6 limited pipelines are due to difficulties encountered in the preparation of the terms of reference for some of the grants approved by the WBIF Steering Committee.

The EIB has initiated the tender procedure for IPF 7.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Preparation and implementation of priority transport, environment and energy infrastructure projects.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

4.4 JASPERS

Programme reference:	Multi-country programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	JASPERS IPA II
EU contribution:	EUR 4 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Specific Grant Agreement with the EIB
Contract reference:	CN 2016/368-304
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 31/12/2018
Links:	www.jaspers-europa-info.org
Contact :	Élodie LOPPE, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

JASPERS is a technical assistance partnership between the European Commission, the EIB and the EBRD, created to support the new Member States which joined the EU to access EU Structural Funds.

Originally, the beneficiaries were the Member States who joined the EU in 2004, 2007 and 2013, as well as Greece. With the new Framework Partnership Agreement signed in 2014 with DG REGIO, all 28 Member States are now eligible. Besides, JASPERS is now also supporting the countries eligible for the Cohesion Funds in the context of the Connecting Europe Facility.

Since 2013, JASPERS has expanded its services to three pre-accession countries, namely the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. In view of the positive experience in these countries for the preparation of high quality infrastructure investments, it was decided to extend the opportunity of JASPERS' support to all IPA II beneficiaries from the 1st of January 2016.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

JASPERS contributes to bring high quality major infrastructure projects to maturity by offering support to develop, manage and review the quality of the projects, making them eligible for IPA II financing. In addition, JASPERS offers assistance to the beneficiaries for the preparation of their sector strategies and projects pipelines for IPA II financing, to improve programming and subsequently the timing and quality of the projects.

JASPERS continued to provide their services in Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as initiated under their previous agreement with DG REGIO – activities in Serbia are falling under a separate agreement between JASPERS and the EU Delegation. They also initiated activities in Turkey in relation with environment projects. In parallel, JASPERS established contacts with the national authorities and the EU Delegations in Albania and Kosovo.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- 48 active projects
- 6 completed projects
- 15 projects initiated

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Continuation of the implementation of technical assistance in IPA II beneficiaries.

4.5 ENERGY EFFICIENCY, GREEN FOR GROWTH

Programme reference:	Management of Participation in the Green for Growth Fund
Project title:	Green for Growth Fund, Southeast Europe (GGF)
EU contribution (IPA only):	EUR 38.6 million - Shares, EUR 5 million - Technical Assistance (TA)
Beneficiary region:	19 countries including Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Delegation (Trusteeship) Agreement with the European Investment Fund (EIF)
Contract reference:	CN 2016/381-814. Previous: CNs 2009/228-008; 2009/228-006; 2011/267-146; 2010/257-202; 2010/257-202
Duration of activities:	17/12/2009 - 31/12/2023
Links:	www.ggf.lu
Contact:	Davor Kunc, davor.kunc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The GGF is a public-private partnership that provides refinancing to financial Institutions (FIs) to enhance their participation in the energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE) sectors and makes direct investments in EE/RE projects in Southeast Europe (SEE), ENR-East and ENR-South. The complementary GGF TA Facility supports the Fund in reducing energy consumption and CO2 emissions through capacity building with FIs/projects and awareness raising.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

GGF continued to build-up a diversified portfolio and increased impact by transferring best practices across a broad spectrum of Partner Institutions (PIs). During first half of 2017, the GGF signed and/or disbursed 8 new investments to financial institutions, direct investments and corporates, totaling EUR 17.3 million. These disbursements were in Kosovo (where the Fund now has three PIs) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia among others.

GGF continued to build upon its strong momentum, increasing the environmental impact of the Fund through considerable on-lending and outreach. GGF's cumulative sub-loan portfolio reached EUR 392.7 in SEE and EUR 479.9 million int total by the end of Q2.

On the funding side, EUR 7 million new perpetual first-loss capital was provided by the BMZ, whereas substantial progress was achieved in the documentation of further public and private funding. Private capital accounts for 17% of the total and is expected to increase by year-end.

The TA Facility was active with 29 projects for a total budget of EUR 957,527 approved during the first half of 2017. The current funding of the TA Facility benefited from a EUR 1 million contribution from the BMZ and EUR 0.5 million provided through the Fund's waterfall.

As the majority of the funding for the Fund and TA Facility is already allocated to existing or planned investments or projects, respectively, both are actively seeking additional funding to secure its activities for the future, whereby EUR 20 million for Shares and EUR 5.8m for TA will be finalised with DG NEAR for allocation to the WB6 in the second half of 2017.

The Fund continues to actively attend industry events, and to participate in the Energy Community's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy coordination group meetings.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

GGF figures as at end Q2 (aggregate for the region of Southeast Europe):

- Total cumulative investment portfolio since inception: EUR 363.5 million.
- Number of active Partner Institutions (Q2): 24.
- Number of active target countries (Q2): 8.
- No asset impairments have been accorded.
- CO2 Savings / CO2 Reduction (Q2): 350,696 tons of CO2/year (54%).
- Energy Savings (Q2): 1,307,067 MWh/year (52%).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The Fund will enter the second half of 2017 with a strong pipeline, with investments under consideration, in particular in Serbia (two approved wind projects and one FI investment), Kosovo, and Bosnia & Herzegovina.

To further leverage the investments of the donors the Fund is seeking additional capital and is in active discussions with several potential private and public investors.

In 2017, GGF will explore the broadening of the Fund to pursue diversification in new sectors, including “nexus” sectors that are related to energy but which also provide additional climate change mitigation/adaptation benefits (e.g. water, resource efficiency).

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans - REEP
EU contribution:	EUR 20 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with EBRD
Contract reference:	CN 2013/311-406
Duration of activities:	24/06/2013 – 31/12/2019
Links:	www.wb-reep.org
Contact :	Davor Kunc, davor.kunc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall aim is to establish a sustainable market for energy efficient financing of private and public sector. It will enable the public sector to take leadership in energy efficiency investments and facilitate access to medium and long-term credits for municipalities needed to implement infrastructure investments and improve the investment climate for business development.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Window 1 - Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Policy Dialogue, Institutional Capacity Building and Business Development Programme

Theme 1 ESCO Support

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

In Serbia a manual (roadmap) for public authorities has been prepared that facilitates the project identification, preparation, approval process and contracting of ESCO projects. It includes templates that e.g. municipalities can use for preparing requests for approval. It has been discussed with different stakeholders and the Ministry of Mining and Energy has in principal accepted it and will publish it on its website once the translation is provided in Q3. Contract preparation in the remaining countries has started.

ESCO project preparation work

Project preparation is progressing. In Serbia preparation started for 1 district heating ESCO project. In Bosnia Herzegovina preparation of 2 district heating ESCO projects started. In Croatia by now 17 ESCO street lighting projects have been prepared.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

All REEP policy deliverables (28 in total) were completed and submitted to the beneficiaries by December 2016. The deliverables are currently at different stages of adoption and implementation, so the focus of the REEP team in H1'2017 was to follow up with the beneficiaries to clarify and assist, where possible, in the cases of delayed adoption.

Window 2 (part of the WeBSEFF programme) – Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

- The Project Consultant (PC) assessed a total of 31 projects during the period ;
- In the period 6 verification site visits were conducted and 38 Verification reports issued in total by the Verification Consultant (VC);
- 3 workshops/seminars and 2 presentations at conferences/fairs were organised in H1 2017 in Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia.

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility:

There were no new projects approved and/or signed during the first half of 2017. However, one project was approved at the concept review stage and the structuring of another one advanced significantly during the period. The main reasons for the slower pipeline development included the limited available headroom and the strategic preference to use it for less popular technologies in countries that have not seen much development of renewables (at least from the WeBSEFF perspective). The efforts to identify suitable ESCO projects continued without significant progress. In addition to the business development activities, further work was done on verifying the completion of projects with two new verifications starting during the period.

At the end of the reporting period, the pipeline of potential projects, included one biogas project in Serbia and a biomass-fired combined heat and power generation project in Serbia. These are taking shape and it should be possible to have them approved and signed in the second half of 2017.

During the period, no incentive payments were made to borrowers

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Window 1 Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Policy Dialogue, Institutional Capacity Building and Business Development Programme

Theme 1 ESCO Support

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

For Serbia a manual (roadmap) for the identification, preparation, approval and contracting of ESCO projects was prepared and accepted by the Ministry of Mining and Energy. This roadmap targets municipalities and other public actors and aims to enable them to prepare projects with reduced EBRD/REEP support to gradually establish a sustainable market.

Also in Serbia a contract template for energy supply contracting (ESC) was accepted in principal by the Ministry of Mining and Energy.

Other outputs were legal opinions on secondary legislative issues, including legal harmonisation of conflicting laws, on project approval procedures and processes.

ESCO project preparation work

In Serbia a feasibility study for a district heating ESCO project was prepared. Also a feasibility for 2 larger street lighting ESCO project was prepared and one of them accepted. Work in other countries is on-going and deliverables are expected for Q3-Q4.

In Croatia during the reporting period 5 ESCO street lighting projects that received different type of support were implemented and started performing

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

No REEP policy outputs in H1'2017, as the work transitioned into REEP Plus (please see the REEP Plus section).

Window 2 Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

EUR 92 million funding to PFIs is fully allocated of which EUR 88.6 million has been on-lent to finance eligible sub-projects.

By the end of H1 2017 285 sub-projects have been approved and loans signed for a cumulative total of EUR 73.598 million. Of those, 21 were signed in H1 2017 for EUR 5.468 million.

38 sub-projects were successfully verified by the Verification Consultant in H1 2017. To reporting end date EUR 4,069,319 has been paid in investment incentives to sub-borrowers, of which EUR 974,974 was paid in H1 2017. To date the total (equivalent) primary energy savings is 486,098 (MWh/y), with CO2 emissions saving of 114,345 (tonnes/y).

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

As at 30 June 2017, the EBRD had approved six projects under the second phase of the WeBSEDFF: four small hydropower plant projects in Albania, BiH, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, a biomass project in BiH, and a biogas project in Serbia. The amount of finance provided is EUR 28.1 million. Their implementation will add 24.3 MW of electricity generation capacity, with annual production of 241.7 GWh and will lead to estimated CO₂e emission reductions of 331,427 tonnes a year. Of these six projects, three have been completed and verified, and two more verifications were underway. In total, they will qualify for up to EUR 1.76 million worth of incentive payments.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Window 1 Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Policy Dialogue, Institutional Capacity Building and Business Development Programme

Theme 1 ESCO Support

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

In Serbia, during the next revision of the Law on Rational Use of Energy this contract might be adopted as part of the bylaw that already includes the street lighting ESCO contract template.

An EBRD initiative is supporting the improvement of PPP/ESCO framework conditions. The initiative intends to coordinate various activities under REEP and beyond.

Contract templates will be prepared for Macedonia and the other remaining countries though this work might drag into 1H/2018.

ESCO (project preparation work)

In Serbia ESCO projects in 4 hospitals will be initiated. The tender for a district heating project will be prepared. Though out of control of EBRD, Belgrade might publish its street lighting ESCO tender for its suburban municipalities.

In Bosnia Herzegovina at least 1 district heating ESCO project should be tendered. A street lighting ESCO project should be initiated.

In Macedonia the preparation of ESCO projects might be initiated.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

The progress in adoption of the deliverables will be continuously monitored by the REEP team, so as to take timely action to prevent delays, as appropriate.

Window 2 Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

The activities will focus on continuation of project assessments and sub-loan signings by PC/PFIs in order to fully utilise the EBRD funding.

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

During the second half of 2017, efforts will be made to progress with the approval of the projects in the pipeline, as well as on finishing the verification of the completion of the remaining unverified projects and make the incentive payments to the borrowers. The efforts to identify and structure a suitable ESCO project will also continue and if they fail to bear any fruit, options to provide finance to municipalities for energy efficiency measures will be also explored.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2016/039-858
Project title:	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans – REEP Plus
EU contribution:	EUR 30 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution Arrangement with the WBIF Joint Fund
Contract reference:	CN 2017/383-636
Duration of activities:	21/06/2017 – 21/06/2021
Links:	www.wb-reep.org
Contact :	Davor Kunc, Davor.kunc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The REEP Plus programme builds on of the success of REEP in its aim to establish a sustainable market for energy efficient financing of private and public sector in the Western Balkans. REEP Plus will scale up previous investments in sustainable energy opportunities and expand the scope of support to allow for the continuation of on-going activities as well as extending the programme to include the residential sector.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Window 1 Policy Dialogue and ESCO development

Theme 1 ESCO Support: ESCO technical assistance continues using the remaining REEP resources and will seamlessly transition to REEP Plus funding in future.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue: - calls for expressions of interest were sent to all countries (December 2016); - twenty four Expresssions of interest were received during January and February 2017; - The REEP Plus team (ECS, EBRD, Consultant) held prioritization missions with six beneficiaries in five countries; - Seven priority assignments were identified and are currently at different stages of implementation.

Window 2 (part of the WB GEFF programme) – Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

EUR 85 million of funding was made available by EBRD for on-lending to PFIs in May 2017. The Project Consultant (PC) Kommunalkredit Public GmbH (Austria) was selected and contracted in June 2017, and established its' first regional GEFF office in Sarajevo, BiH. The first three Loan Agreements with PFIs were signed in this period for a total of EUR 17 million, as follows:

- Unicredit Banja Luka (UCBL), BiH – EUR 5 million (06 June 2017)
- Unicredit Bank Mostar, BiH – EUR 7 million (06 June 2017)

- Sparkasse, BiH – EUR 5 million (29 August 2017)

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

Implementation of this Window has not begun in earnest yet, as there is still availability of funding under the REEP programme.

Window 4 Direct Lending to Municipalities

Marketing of Window 4 commenced in this period in several WB countries and the first pilot loan was identified – a potential sovereign EBRD loan of ca. EUR 10 million for EE retrofit of a hospital to allocate up to EUR 1 million (10% grant).

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

Window 1 - Policy Dialogue and ESCO development

Theme 1 ESCO Support: No outputs under this theme to date.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue: - issued call-offs: Montenegro (Eco design); Kosovo, BiH Republic Srpsaka (EPBD); - ToRs finalisation with beneficiary : Serbia (EED art.7); BiH Federation, Serbia, Albania (EPBD).

Window 2 (part of the WB GEFF programme) – Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

Residential (EBRD): EUR 17 million funding has been allocated to 3 PFIs in BiH.

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

No outputs under this window to date.

Window 4 Direct Lending to Municipalities

No outputs under this window to date.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Window 1 Policy Dialogue and ESCO development

Theme 1 ESCO Support

Primarily project preparation: The first focus will be deepening the market by improving framework conditions and reducing transaction costs during the project identification, preparation and approval process. This should allow to currently difficult project types (e.g. buildings) becoming easier. In parallel preparing these currently more difficult project types should support the deepening of the market. The second focus will be on broadening the market by pushing into new markets, including new countries.

Both activities are expected to identify currently unknown barriers that will be analysed and recommendations will be shared with the legislatures.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

- Montenegro: Deliver draft regulations of up to 5 ecodesign rulebooks for adoption (Oct / Nov) and associated technical consultation workshops (Oct).
- Kosovo: Prepare and deliver draft regulatory amendments for EPBD and finalize SBEM software (Nov).
- Issue the remaining call-offs for all priority assignments (Sep – Nov) and hold kick-off workshops;

- Pending progress in adoption of REEP deliverables and status of first round of assignments - organise country missions to discuss timing and topics for the second round of policy assignments;
- Planning of local/regional awareness-raising event on the energy efficiency policy work.

Window 2 (part of the WB GEF programme) – Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

In the next semester EBRD will continue ongoing discussions with 3 PFIs in Albania, 2 in FYR Macedonia and 1 in Kosovo with the aim of signing an additional EUR 13 million in financing by end of 2017. The GEF BiH website and technology selector will go live in September, and a launch event will mark the opening of the Sarajevo office. In addition, a regional office in FYR Macedonia will be established during the period.

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

During the second half of 2017, efforts will begin to identify potential projects for financing and develop a pipeline. There are some early opportunities in Albania and FYR Macedonia.

Window 4 Direct Lending to Municipalities

EBRD will continue to identify projects for funding under this window. The first pilot project has been identified with the aim of signing the loan and grant agreements in H1 2018.

4.6 RADIATION PROTECTION

Programme reference:	Horizontal programme on nuclear safety and radiation protection, IPA 2011/023-384
Project title :	Further enhancement of the technical capacity of nuclear regulatory bodies in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia)
EU contribution:	EUR 2.7 million
Beneficiary region :	Western Balkans
Type of contract :	Service contract with ENCO
Contract reference:	CN 2015/362-673
Duration of activities :	25/06/2015 - 24/06/2018
Contact :	Slim Chtioui, slim.chtioui@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of this regional project is to improve the protection of the population and the environment from the harmful effects of ionising radiation, by enhancing the capabilities and capacity of regulatory bodies in 6 Western Balkan countries in the area of radiation protection, nuclear safety and security. To achieve this overall objective, the project aims to complete the transposition of the *EU acquis* into the legal system of 6 Western Balkan countries, support the development of specific regulations and arrangements, enhance the functioning of the regulatory bodies by implementing modern management systems and establishing strategic plans, provide needed training to the regulatory staff as well as resolve specific identified weaknesses. In short, the overall objective is to complete the transition process in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia towards modern, EU aligned and IAEA compliant, safety standards.

ACTIVITIES

The activities of the project are in progress. Task 2 – transposition of the *EU acquis* and Task 3 - development of regulatory procedures are underway.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Continuation of activities as per programme.

CHAPTER 5: ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

5.1 FLOOD RESPONSE

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/037-853
Project title:	Prevention, preparedness and response to floods in the Western Balkans and Turkey - Lot 2
EU contribution:	EUR 4 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant
Duration of activities:	22/07/2015 – 21/01/2018
Links:	http://ipafloods.ipacivilprotection.eu/
Contact:	Biljana Zuber, biljana.zuber@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To increase Beneficiaries' capability to develop effective national civil protection systems and collaborate in a coherent manner in dealing with floods at regional/European level (prevention, preparedness and response). Capacity building for flood preparedness and response through establishment of multinational Civil Protection Modules for flood response – High Capacity Pumping (HCP) and Flood Containment (FC).

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY –JUNE 2017)

- 3rd IPA FLOODS Steering Group Meeting on 24th January 2017 in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the formal closure of the IPA Floods Lot1
- Two operational trainings for Hig Capacity Pamping (HCP) and Flood Containment (FC) modules were organized in March and April in Southern Germany.
- Awarded supply contracts for the equipment to the selected providers on end January 2017.
- 1st planning conference for the regional exercise was organized on 27 June in Varazdin, Croatia in 2017.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY –JUNE 2017)

- Hig Capacity Pamping (HCP) and Flood Containment (FC) modules have recived the equipment.
- The work package "Establishing border crossing protocols and Host Nation Support protocols" were developed. To be tested at the field exercise in October 2017.
- Newsletter no 7 and 8 were produced.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Final planning conference for the Exercise "Varazdin 2017", 14 September
- Field Exercise "Varazdin 2017" in Croatia on 9-13 October

5.2 DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2015/038-052
Project title:	Disaster Risk Assessment and Mapping
EU contribution:	EUR 2 999 250
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Procurement
Duration of activities:	01/12/2016 - 01/12/2019
Links:	http://www.ipadram.eu/
Contact:	Biljana Zuber, biljana.zuber@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Improving beneficiary countries' national systems for disaster loss data collection, risk assessment and mapping, and alignment with and integration into the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY –JUNE 2017)

- January – February 2017 first visits to the beneficiary countries (7 visits)
- March – May 2017 fact finding missions to the beneficiary countries (7 visits)
- 12-13th June, 1st Steering Group Meeting, Montenegro
- 13-15th June, 1st Regional workshop, Montenegro

OUTPUTS (JANUARY –JUNE 2017)

- Fact finding reports were developed for each beneficiary.
- The baseline report was developed taking into account strengths and potential needs for each partner country in: risk assessment, risk mapping and loss data recording.
- Baseline indicators were defined based on the disaster risk management capability assessment guidelines and the risk assessment and mapping guidelines, both European Commission products.
- Common regional risks were identified.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- A two-day study-visit in September to Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency .The objective is to increase understanding and knowledge of decentralised approaches to risk-, vulnerability- and capability assessments by providing a full overview of a working example of a decentralised risk assessment system.
- September –October: The plans of action for each beneficiary will be developed. They will specify actions needed to develop and improve national and regional risk assessment and mapping, the disaster loss data collection and sharing and the use of the ERRA.
- Developing on line platform.

23 November 2nd steering Group Meeting

CHAPTER 6: CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA

The overall objective of this support is to strengthen civil society organisations and their role in the political as well as the European integration process of the IPA beneficiaries. This should result in an improved dialogue on legislation and policies between governments and civil society as well as the strengthening of social partnerships underpinning reforms.

This support is mainly being delivered through the Civil Society Facility (CSF) and will ultimately result in a more civil society-friendly environment, a consolidation of the democratic process and good governance.

Media freedom and freedom of expression are also seen as important in this context. In 2014 DG Enlargement has developed two sets of guidelines aiming to support the civil society and media sectors in the region through an inclusive and participative approach with contributions from all relevant stakeholders, CSOs, journalists' and media professional organisations of the region.

"The Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" complemented by a result framework with clear objectives and indicators to be monitored in the years to come have been finalised and constituted a reference document for the MCSP 2014-2020.

The "Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" that are built on the policy vision as set out in the Conclusions of the Speak-up! Conferences were finalised in March 2014.

Link to the guidelines:

http://www.tacso.org/documents/otherdoc/?id=9887&template_id=73&langTag=en-US

Civil Society Facility

The CSF is a single facility for the benefit of the whole of the Western Balkan region and Turkey. It is a single programme but financed and implemented separately by the multi-beneficiary IPA programme and the various national IPA programmes.

The CSF consists of three strands of activities which aim at strengthening Western Balkan and Turkish civil society's commitment and involvement in the transformative process in view of their eventual integration into the EU:

- Support/technical assistance (TACSO) for local civic initiatives and capacity building, thereby enforcing the role of civil society at national level;
- Actions to build partnerships and develop networks between CSOs, businesses, trade unions and other beneficiary social partners and their counterparts in the EU to promote transfers of knowledge and experience. The main instruments (implementation modalities) of the action at regional level are the Framework Partnerships Agreements (FPAs), functional to create long-term CSOs coalition building and re-granting schemes for smaller organization;

A "People 2 People" (P2P) programme to bring a variety of organisations in the ELARG region into contact with EU institutions and European-level counterparts. These include CSO representatives, human rights and minority defence activists, NGOs dealing with *acquis*-related subjects, journalists, young politicians and trade union leaders. TACSO has taken over the management of the third strand, the P2P programme applying a demand driven approach.

6.1 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (TACSO)

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme 2011 - 2013 IPA 2012/023-324 and IPA 2013/024-081
Project title:	Technical Assistance to the Civil Society Organisations (TACSO)
EU contribution:	EUR 11.7 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract with SIPU International AB
Contract reference:	CN 2013/325-596 and CN 2013/325-603
Duration of activities:	01/09/2013 – 30/08/2017 (extended until 30/10/2017)
Links:	http://tacso.org/
Database:	http://tacso.org/cso-db-res/reg/
Forum:	http://forum.tacso.org/ http://www.facebook.com/TACSO2 http://www.linkedin.com/company/tacso?trk=fc_badge http://www.youtube.com/user/tascotube#p/u https://twitter.com/#!/TACSO1
Contact :	Karl Giacinti, karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

TACSO gives support to beneficiary Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) by increasing their capacity, improving their democratic role and by promoting networks of CSOs across regional borders, thus contributing to the changes at the level of organisational and institutional/enabling environment development of the CSOs, improvement of the CSO visibility, better quality of CSO project funded by the EU, ensuring sustainability of provision of TACSO service.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

During the reporting period TACSO focused on strengthening capacities of the TACSO selected Resource Centres (RCs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

TACSO organised three training sessions, part of a series in the capacity building programme organized for the selected RCs in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey. With the objective to contribute to the institutionalization of TACSO services in the RCs, to support the organizational development of the selected RCs, and too enrich portfolio of its services to civil society organisations (CSOs). Topics that were covered through the trainings were: Monitoring and Evaluation; Human Resource Management, Resource Mobilisation by Writing Winning Proposals.

TACSO also has commenced with the process of establishing monitoring system for the 'Guidelines for EU support to media in 2014-2020' by gathering key media experts across the region, excluding Turkey, towards the end of April. The meeting served as joint brainstorming session on how to make the whole exercise more effective and efficient. Inputs from the meeting were used for further development of monitoring instruments during the period (May-July), that will enable sufficient

participation throughout the monitoring process, and quantification of qualitative indicators of the Media guidelines. Also, TACSO has shared preliminary information with EUDs.

Major events with the regional dimension encompassed:

- Regional meeting "Working together" – with the main objective of this activity is to enable regional cooperation among institutional entities responsible for dialogue and support to civil society, provide opportunities for exchange of experience among these entities and their civil society partners in the Western Balkan countries and Turkey (June 2017).
- Regional events that TACSO through P2P organised contributing to networking, partnership building, and exchange of experiences:
 - "Cross-Border and regional cooperation", organized in Macedonia (February 2017)
 - "Dialogue and Cooperation with Civil Society for a Better Public Administration" (March, Bosnia and Herzegovina)
 - Leadership Workshop for Rights-based CSOs (March, Macedonia)
 - National Philanthropy Know How conference (May, Serbia)
 - Study Visit on Access to Education and Employment for Roma (May, Spain)
 - Volunteering and Youth Empowerment (June, Kosovo)

TACSO Albania

Organization of a national training program on Developing the Project Logframe for EU funded grant proposal with representatives of 26 CSOs and CSO networks. Successful completion of 2nd Capacity Building Program for CSOs Networks with training topics on, Advocacy and partnership Building, Organizational Development and Management and Project Cycle management with representatives of 11 networks. Organization of a national training program on Media and Public Relations for CSOs with representatives of 26 CSOs from different regions of Albania. Organization of three coaching session in three different regions of Albania on project writing with participation of 89 CSO representatives applying for "Civil Society Countering Violent Extremism". Facilitation the concluding the Memorandum of Understanding for the Establishment of CSO Forums within the administrative regions of Pogradec, Gjirokastër, Elbasan and Malesia e Madhe. Facilitate consultative meetings for EUD to Albania on Country Strategy Paper and Draft Action Document for 2017-2018 the programming of priorities for funding civil society activities under IPA/CSF and EIDHR for the years 2015-2016. Facilitate consultative meetings for EUD to Albania on the programming of priorities for funding civil society activities under IPA/CSF and EIDHR for the years 2015-2016.

TACSO Bosnia and Herzegovina

In January 2017 the Conference "Civil Society participation in responding to the EU Questionnaire for BiH" was held in Sarajevo with support of EUD, with the aim was to increase participation of CSOs in BH in responding to the EU Questionnaire and related processes. Under program "CB/TA support for Effective Networking and Advocacy" three ToTs were held in Sarajevo with a total of 60 participants. Based on the ToTs delivered, a pool of 15 CSO facilitators, educated and supported through coaching lead five two- day Strategic positioning workshops for their networks. European Foundation Quality Management - Excellence Model (EFQM) was used as a tool in the process of developing the network. The EFQM Model was used in order to have a complete view of the organisational performance and to understand the relations of cause and effect, i.e. what organisations or networks are doing and the results they produce. Total of 77 participants (out of which 68 were representatives of CSOs; six representatives from the business sector and three were representatives of educational institutions) produced detailed plans with a short and long term activities for concrete advocacy issue per network.

TACSO the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

From April to June, TACSO Macedonian Office continued with implementation of the capacity building programme for the 10 CSOs' networks that started in 2016. One Training of trainers for CSOs was organised in April with participation of 21 CSOs' representatives. PR support for media coverage of activities of CSOs through consultations was provided continuously for all CSOs that expressed their interest at open calls.

Thematic workshop Countering Violent Extremism was held in April gathering 32 CSOs' representatives, with the aim of the workshop was to provide the participants with conceptual knowledge in the area of violence, extremism and terrorism, and to be prepared for the forthcoming EIDHR call for proposals.

P2P Semi multi-beneficiary conference "The role of CSOs and other actors in Cross-border cooperation programmes – practices and solutions" was organised in February. In June, TACSO Office in cooperation with EUD organised the forum "New road map for civil society development". Key challenges that CSOs face in the current context were focus of the forum discussions and in particular related with the role of CSOs in the society; enabling environment for CSOs and sustainability of CSOs. Total of 65 representatives of civil society organisations, donor community, relevant institutions and other stakeholders participated at the conference.

TACSO Serbia

During this period a set of trainings was held for CSO representatives on topics related to fundraising, monitoring and evaluation, community organizing and basic management of CSOs for total number of 92 representatives of local CSOs from different parts of Serbia. Also, as a follow up activity of TOT programs on advocacy and strategic planning, RC trainers implemented 19 training sessions (15 on strategic planning and four (4) on advocacy) that included 166 representatives of 26 organisations from nine (9) municipalities. In order to increase visibility of local CSOs in East Serbia region, CSO Fair was held gathering 18 CSO exhibitors. The OGP concept was promoted among local CSOs, networks and local self-governments from Eastern and Northern Serbia gathering 51 participants. Total numbers of six technical assistance filed sessions were held in Subotica and Belgrade, gathering 25 representatives from 18 CSOs. In regard to facilitation of dialogue between state and CSOs in the area of CSOs inclusion in EU accession negotiation process, five (5) events of VEUC dealing with several chapters were supported.

TACSO Turkey

TACSO Turkey and RC organised 4 Legal Compliance trainings with 105 participants, including local CSOs working on Syrian crisis founded by refugees. TACSO Turkey and RC also organised two (2) trainings for Social Media and Advocacy for CSOs in İstanbul and Ankara with 49 CSO participants. During the reporting period, TACSO Turkey and RC provided 167 Hep Desk supports and provided seven (7) face to face supports. TACSO and RC also launched CSO platforms and networks database on RC website, which enables registration on volunteer basis to enable widening the membership and out-reach. TACSO Turkey & RC continued its supports for CSO Networks. TACSO supported 5 networks on different thematic areas, with 133 participants took part in 5 network events. TACSO Turkey & RC, in cooperation with EU Delegation supported two EU Project trainings in Ankara with 61 participants in total. TACSO also supported three information& consultation meetings with topics: Support to Human Rights Defenders; EU Supports for Roma Inclusion and EU Policies, and the EU& regional networks and Info on "Call for Proposals for Consolidating Regional Networks". Total of 91 participants from CSOs were informed on these topics via three events and their inputs were collected.

TACSO Montenegro

Training courses on project proposal writing were held aiming to enhance the knowledge and skills of 20 CSO representatives in methods, techniques, tools and approaches, using real case scenarios and

10 project proposals were proposed.

TACSO Kosovo

TACSO supported CiviKos Platform to organize six consultation workshops with CSOs to discuss the implementation of the strategy and collect inputs for the new strategy priorities. The conference "Development of Volunteerism" was organized by TACSO on June 1-2, 2017 in Prishtina, Kosovo. The conference brought together 59 participants, key actors and stakeholders working on the area of volunteerism including representatives of civil society organizations, public institutions, volunteer organizations and national volunteer councils from Croatia, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey. The workshop "Empowerment of Women" was held with 30 participants (women leaders from Kosovo). Starting from January 2017, TACSO Kosovo office in close coordination with EUoK is supporting the effort of donor coordination for civil society in Kosovo.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

RC representatives increased their capacities in the areas concerning training techniques and adult learning principles, strategic thinking and planning, organisational development and application of the Monitoring and Evaluation; Human Resource Management, Resource Mobilisation by Writing Winning Proposals. As a result of the training, some RCs already improved their services offered to other CSOs.

TACSO Albania assisted 26 CSOs and CSO to increase their knowledge and skills on Developing Project Logframe for EU funded project proposal. 11 CSO networks that attended the capacity building program for CSOs increased their knowledge and consolidated their capacities in managing effectively their network organizations. While 26 CSOs and CSO representatives increased their knowledge and skills on Media and PR for CSOs and on the visibility issues of EU funded projects. 89 small grantees consolidated their knowledge on writing proposals for the small grants under sub granting mechanism under the call for proposal "Civil Society Countering Violent Extremism". TACSO Albania facilitated over 130 CSOs from Tirana, Korçë and Vlora districts to provide their inputs with regard to: Challenges and action identification for strengthening the watch-dog role of civil society in Albania; and Priority issues for developing final Call for Proposals under IPA/CSF and EIDHR 2015-2016 financial instruments.

TACSO Montenegro prepared draft of Regulation on Financing Projects and Programs of Non-Governmental Organisations in the Fields of Public Interest. The draft of Regulation on the procedure and method of co-financing of EU funded projects and programs of NGOs was also prepared.

TACSO Serbia noted that as a result of training sessions, nine (9) final and draft strategic plans and six (6) draft and final advocacy campaign plans were produced. The advocacy campaigns tackled issues related to transparent local funding related to environmental protection, social protection services, economic empowerment of marginalized woman, LAP related to Roma population etc. Also inputs from CSOs on new Law on Volunteering were gathered and systematized, to be forwarded to the ministry group working on new law draft. In order to provide relevant and timely information on funding opportunities to CSOs new online platform was launched <https://vodic.gradjanske.org/>. As a result of consultation with TACSO LAG and SECO organizations, recommendations for Serbia IPA CSF 2018/19 Programming were gathered. This has been used by the EUD in Serbia for setting priorities for the upcoming period. TACSO Resource centre, supported by stakeholders produced the RC evaluation report- specific assessment with lessons learned and recommendations to be used in the future.

TACSO BH office organized 22 events with 520 participants in the period of January-June 2017. One of the key events was the Conference "Civil Society participation in responding to the EU Questionnaire for BiH" (Sarajevo January 2017) held with support of EU Del. The aim was to increase participation of CSOs in BH in responding to the EU Questionnaire and related processes. As a follow

up to the Conference the Civil Society Initiative "*Alliance for EU integration*" (A4EU) was supported and during April-June 2017 period seven workshops were organized throughout the country with 186 participants. Outputs are that 12 sector CSO working groups were established to provide responds to the questions in EU questionnaire chapters and web platform A4EU www.pitamo.se has been established. Activity is conducted in partnership with Centre for Civic Initiatives (CCI) and Agency for Co-operation, Education and Development (ACED). Result is that a total of 105 legal entities and individuals have applied to participate in the Alliance for EU Integration and this number represents the participation of 406 entries in 31 chapters (out of 33 in EC Questionnaire for BiH) within 12 Working Groups.

TACSO Kosovo supported CiviKos Platform to organize six consultation workshops with CSOs to discuss the implementation of the strategy and collect inputs for the new strategy priorities. There were in total 100 participants/CSO members in these meetings, including also ethnic minority CSOs. The conference "Development of Volunteerism" brought together 59 participants. The workshop "*Empowerment of Women*" was held with 30 participants (women leaders from Kosovo).

As a result of the capacity building programme for the CSOs' networks organised by Macedonian TACSO 10 networks involved finalised their capacity building plans. In addition seven (7) of the networks prepared their new strategic plans, two (2) prepared fundraising strategy and one network prepared communication plan. Individual support for improving CSOs' media coverage of their events and activities was provided to 20 CSOs. As a result of the support, the involved organisations had: 68 appearances on the national/local television stations, on Web portals and in the national newspapers. Analysis "*Involvement of civil society organisations and other actors in cross-border cooperation programmes*" was prepared. The Analysis examines the involvement of civil society organisations (CSOs) in cross-border cooperation (CBC) programmes with Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Kosovo in which Macedonian CSOs participated in the period 2007-2013. Set of recommendations in the areas: role of CSOs, enabling environment for CSOs and sustainability of CSOs were prepared at the Forum "*New road map for civil society development*" and will serve in the future as basic document for the established Task force of CSOs that took responsibility to develop Road map for civil society development in the country through consultative process with the broader CSOs community.

TACSO Turkey made available the content from Legal Compliance trainings at RC website TACSO-RC Help Desk; as two information notes "*Legal issues: Bookkeeping, reporting and responsibilities for associations*" and "*Financial management and reporting for associations*" along with 105 CSO participants improved their capacities for legal issues. Each of the 49 participant CSO to Social Media and Advocacy trainings drafted their social media strategy and conceptualised their visual identity for online advocacy campaigns. CSO platforms and networks database on RC website was launched and so far, 30 registrations were made by platforms and networks and over 70 CSOs registered as individual organisations seeking cooperation. Local CSO Climate Network in Kazdağları with 40 participants from local CSOs using Future Search methodology; network strategic plan was drafted. Four (4) of the other networks developed action plans for advocacy efforts to improve their presence in policy dialogue. 61 participants to EU project trainings improved their understanding on project design and implementation, they were also provided with key referenced documents produced by TACSO. 91 participants from CSOs were informed on these topics via three information and consultation events and their feedback were collected. A pilot internal database for EU projects by CSOs in Turkey covering 2012-2017 period via centralised and DIS was produced with basic information on over 600 projects.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

TACSO Project ends in November 2017. The final event "*EU & Civil Society – Quo Vadis?*" is planned for October 10-12 and will be held in Belgrade. The event will also be used for preparing the input for

the 2017 Progress report, for the part related to Civil Society, based on the findings of the monitoring of the Guidelines for EU support to CSOs in period 2014-2020. In addition, the event will be attended by representatives of the long-term grantees, where one of the sessions will be to support their needs related to sub-granting.

TACSO Albania will organise training program on Developing Winning Project Proposals and training session on Successful Management of Grant Contract with successful small grantees benefiting from and "*Civil Society Countering Violent Extremism*" Call for proposals.

TACSO Montenegro will organise public debates with the CSOs on draft of the new Strategy for Development of NGO 2017-2020 and on acts that regulate financing of NGOs from public funds and procedure of co-financing of EU funded projects. Two publications are being prepared "*Report on Civil society achievements in 2015/2016*" and "*Annual Financial Reports of Civil Society Organizations in Montenegro -2016*".

In regard to capacity building efforts in the following period, TACSO Serbia will support the Resource Centers with organisation of basic trainings for CSOs and will continue to provide assistance through Help Desk services and Technical Assistance sessions. Also, Needs Assessment analyses on possibilities for QAS introduction in Serbia will be presented to CSO community. The recommendations regarding the new Law on Volunteering, gathered via public dialog, will be presented to the relevant Ministry. TACSO RC will focus on OGP promotions to local-self-governments and CSOs. Social entrepreneurship new Law will be in focus: TACSO RC will collect inputs from CSOs and present to relevant Ministry. Finally, Study on the economic value of the civil sector will be published.

TACSO BiH will have two workshops as part of support for institutional capacity building for networks on PR and Media positioning and understanding donor context and resource mobilisation. Additionally 13 events related to A4EU (12 meetings and final event in EU Delegation)

TACSO Kosovo will continue with the activities: monitoring of guidelines and Traffic Lights report 2016 and Jan-Aug 2017; Consultations with civil society and other actors for programming of CSF 2018-19; Final workshop on support to OGG-OPM on defining the priority areas for new government strategy for cooperation with Civil Society.

Macedonian TACSO will organise training of trainers for CSOs and trainings on PR and project application preparation. The analyses of CSOs' communication through on-line media, August-September 2017. Follow-up meetings of the Task force related with the New roadmap for civil society development is planned for September-October 2017.

TACSO Turkey and RC will finalise several documents: Info note on supports to Human Rights Defenders as a part of TACSO Turkey Funder Guide; Internal guideline with RC to develop curriculum for EU Project Trainings and Turkish Legal requirements; Finalisation of information note on "*How to: Law on Collection of Aid*" and Catalogue for CSO Network database. TACSO Turkey will finalise its work with TUSEV and RC for improvement of data collection and sharing on civil society as a reference document, including information on several EU Countries data collection on civil society as a part of EU Guidelines Monitoring works. TACSO also facilitates production of EU Monitoring Report for 3rd year with EU Guidelines working group in Turkey. TACSO Turkey is also supporting development of TACSO 3 by RC STGM and will organise 8th LAG meeting where the information on TACSO by STGM will be provided to LAG and key CSOs.

6.2 OPERATING GRANTS

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme and Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-605
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Project title:	Operating grants
EU contribution:	EUR 1.48 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grants
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 31/12/2016
Contacts:	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Operating grants contribute to the general expenses of an organization whose overall mission and objectives correspond to the policy priorities of the European Commission. The current operating grants provide structural support to 10 regional partnerships of CSOs working on topics such as youth policies, social dialogue, rule of law, promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and LGBT persons. The operating grants were concluded in 2014 following a call for proposals for a period of 12 months with the possibility of extension for up to 48 months. In October 2016 an evaluation took place and resulted in the extension of support for one more year to all 10 regional CSO partnerships.

Regional CSO platform advocating social innovation under employment policies that guarantees security for youth at risks – YOU SEE! Platform (2016/382-275 continuation of 2015/368-862 and 2014/351-917). The project is designed to create a CSO platform enabling regional response to challenges stemming from the implementation of socio-economic policy reforms affecting youth. During the reporting period, all project partners prepared progress reports on the active labour market measure policies in WB countries and Turkey and reviewed the realized measures. The annual meeting of partners took place in Albania in January. The Regional Meeting of practitioners was held in Montenegro in May. The meeting was an opportunity to exchange experiences between those who have created some sort of social innovation contributing to employment or employability of the youth. An Advocacy campaign was implemented in all partner countries and synchronized through social networks.

Regional Youth Exchange Association (2016/381-965 continuation of 2015/371-378 and 2014/351-845). The regional network of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) with offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia contributed to the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) on 4 July 2016 at the Western Balkans Summit held in Paris. On this occasion, in cooperation with the Franco-German Youth Office and the Center for Balkan Cooperation Loja, YIHR organized one session during the "Connecting Youth – Western Balkans Youth Conference" where the initiative for establishing RYCO was presented to more than 150 young people coming from all around Europe. This session was attended by six ministers from the Western Balkans in charge of youth policies. At the same time, YIHR participated in the organization of three parallel seminars for future beneficiaries of the RYCO that took place in Belgrade (with participants from Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina), Podgorica (with participants from Montenegro and Kosovo) and Tirana (with participants from Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). These young people got the opportunity to discuss topics relevant to the future RYCO activities: the role of youth in reconciliation processes in the Balkans, regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and the European Union and personal experiences of young people participating in youth exchanges. YIHR was also present at the RYCO Boost Conference held in Tirana on 7-9 December and followed by the first meeting of the RYCO Governing Board. In the second half of 2016 YIHR organized six regional pilot exchange programs that gathered young people from the Western Balkans at various seminars related to the protection of human rights or dealing with the past war, as well as at regional cultural events such as the Sarajevo Film Festival and

Dokufest in Prizren. Aiming at raising awareness about the importance of the RYCO initiative, YIHR organized a number of street actions and presentations at universities in five different countries.

Young With A Voice (2016/381-500 continuation of 2015/371-191 and 2014/351-938). During the first half of 2017, National networks for children from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Serbia produced recommendations regarding actions necessary to improve the general position of children in their countries. These recommendations were developed on the basis of advocacy actions from the previous project phase and are in line with EU practices regarding the protection of children and their rights. The recommendations from all project countries were compiled in the brochure “State of Child Rights in the Western Balkans”. The brochure was presented in Brussels in May 2017 to the officials of DG NEAR, DG JUST, Intergroup for Child Rights of the European Parliament and representatives of Eurochild, while national promotion in each country is to be organized in second half of the year. Aiming to enable and ensure direct participation of youth within the action, youth from all project countries will participate in the training for peer educators in Serbia in August, so they can afterwards empower their peers through series of workshops in their own countries for monitoring of child related policies and development of recommendations for the EU progress report. Those youth-driven activities will promote and secure high level of youth participation, while providing youth perspective regarding the issues they recognize as important for improvement of their position in society.

Balkan regional platform for youth participation and dialogue (2016/382-276 continuation of 2015/371-185 and 2014/351-922). The project aims to structuring the regional thematic cooperation and coordination between civil society and public authorities in Western Balkan countries so as to improve environment for youth activism and participation, in particular of young people with fewer opportunities. A regional co-operation platform connecting youth groups from across the region promoting active citizenship and participation in the reform process towards the EU integration was created (<http://www.aldabalkan-youth.eu>). The partnership strategy was adopted and Balkan Regional Network for Local Democracy composed of eight Local Democracy Agencies with their host cities established. The Regional Youth Forum will be organised in Peja/Pec in Kosovo on 17-20 October 2017 with the research results presented and policy recommendations on cultural participation of youth adopted. Regional exchange programme for youth correspondents and My City Youth City, Local Youth Fund and Youth Taking Over Day programmes were implemented in the eight host cities.

Together for Equality: Advancing Human Rights of LGBT people in the Western Balkans and Turkey (2016/382-246 continuation of 2015/371-462 and 2014/351-960). During the reporting period, ERA – LGBT Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey increased its membership to 55 LGBT organisations. A Comprehensive Regional Capacity Development Program was developed and capacity building activities were organized with LGBT organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A major research to quantify socio-economic dimensions of LGBT exclusion was conducted across 8 countries of the Western Balkans and was filled in by over 3300 LGBT respondents, the biggest research to date. The research, which will be public in the second half of 2017, was a replication of the FRA 2012 LGBTI Survey. An Online Resource Centre was launched within the association’s webpage and publicly presented at the City Hall of Belgrade in Serbia. The Online Resource Centre has a collection of more than 500 resources on issues related to LGBT and will grow exponentially in the coming months and years. Resources are intended for governments, activists and researchers to find everything relevant to LGBT issues in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Strengthening NGO capacity and promoting public health and human rights oriented drug policy in South Eastern Europe (2016/382-208 continuation of 2015/ 371-158 and 2014/351-836). The project has successfully organised the activities planned for the period January - June 2017. The Drug

Policy Network SEE (DPNSEE) was joined by three new organisations and has now 22 members. DPNSEE published the Glossary of terms used in drug policy and started with setting up the resource centre. Two country visits were organised by Diogenis in co-operation with DPNSEE respectively in Croatia (22-24 March) and Bulgaria (29-30 May). The partner organisations Prevent, Action Plus and NGO 4life organised advocacy activities in their respective countries. From 8-10 June the annual drug policy dialogue in SEE was organised by Diogenis. 45 representatives from NGOs, UNODC, drug coordinators and academics took part at the conference. Two quarterly newsletters have been published. The research on Harm reduction in SEE is continued. A delegation of Diogenis and DPNSEE participated at the 60th Session of the CND in Vienna, March 2017.

Balkans Independent Disability Framework - BIDF (2016/382-458 continuation of 2015/371-187 and 2014/351-920). With this project, ACED and its partners, CIL in Serbia, UPCG in Montenegro, Polio Plus in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the newly registered regional network BIDF, will assist associations dedicated to the fulfilment of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities to establish focal points and undertake policy and legislative advocacy, public education campaigns and other related activities at national and regional level. The 2015 and 2016 activities of the project were designed to develop institutional and organizational capacity of the BIDF as a regional network of Associations of Persons with Disabilities. All CSOs active in the field of disability and human rights protection have assisted BIDF in its mandate to ensure long term, sustainable and participatory assistance to their member organizations and constituencies. The first two years of the project enabled the BIDF network to become recognizable in the region, provide concrete legislative assistance and obtain official court registration as a regional disability network. The development strategy for the third year included activities that contributed to BIDF's promotion and networking with other European disability networks, European disability organizations and international donor community. During the reporting period BIDF national representatives organized meetings and conducted presentations of its network in Switzerland, Belgium, Albania and Croatia. These study trips also served to establish regional cooperation with neighbouring countries that expressed interest to join the BIDF network. In total 6 promotional round tables were organized in the 4 project countries gathering BIDF network members and government representatives for the purpose of policy advocacy and incorporation of policy recommendations. In the process of strengthening the operational capacity of BIDF network and information flow among BIDF national coordinators, the project organized two BIDF Management Board meetings in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Stronger Social Dialog in Western Balkans Countries - SSD WBC (2016/381-317 continuation of 2015/371-444 and 2014/351-846). The project aims at strengthening the capacity of social partners in participating countries to contribute to the national and regional development of social dialogue and the harmonization with EU regulations (in Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania). It is implemented by the Montenegrin Employers Federation (coordinator) and its partners: the Association of Employers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, BusinessAlbania, the Business Confederation of Republic of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Serbian Association of Employers, the Union of Employers' Associations of Republika Srpska. During this reporting period, the project partners implemented a national debate in each country. The panel discussions were a great opportunity to share knowledge about the youth unemployment and informal economy. Also, the project partners prepared e-leaflets which were distributed to their members (at least 1.000 companies per country) and also to other relevant institutions.

European Integration and the social dimension: strengthening regional cooperation of trade unions in the Balkans (2016/381-594 continuation of 2015/371-495 and 2014/351-847). The programme deals with institutional capacity building, expertise & knowledge building within trade union

organisations in the Former Yugoslavia. It aims at promoting experience exchange in the main areas of trade union activities, policies and internal reform processes, in order to empower them as strong actors in society and as recognized partners in the social dialogue. The reform of trade unions and their adaptation to the real economy is a key objective of the project, taking into account experiences from the trade unions in the EU. During the reporting period, relations with employers in the region underwent a continuing improvement and cooperation. The Solidarnost Youth Committee enlarged its scope of relations with the German DGB, the French Youth Structure and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office. The formation of Solidarnost Women’s Committee is under construction. Industrial & labour relations are increasingly in the focus of the regional cooperation as well as vocational training and youth employability. For further information please visit: www.onthewaytoeu.net

6.3 LONG- TERM GRANTS

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility and Media Programme, IPA 2014/031-605
Project title:	Support to regional thematic networks of Civil Society Organisations – Long-term Grants
EU contribution:	EUR 15.8 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	16 Grants
Duration of activities:	December 2015 – December 2019
Contacts:	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu Karl Giacinti, karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The 16 Long-term grants were awarded after a Call for proposals launched under the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2014-2015 to provide support to regional thematic networks of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), fostering regular networking at regional and EU level, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills and connections, and increasing and widening their impact in campaigning and advocacy.

The CSOs networks supported in this framework are active in a number of sectors identified as relevant for the region. The final aim is to strengthen their capacities to advocate and effectively dialogue with Governments in order to influence policy and decision making processes, and to produce lasting change in the society.

About 20% of each project budget will be used to provide financial support to CSOs external to the beneficiary network, with the purpose of reaching out to, and building capacities of, grass-root and other types of non-governmental local organisations.

The 16 action grants have completed their inception phase in the first six months of 2016.

ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST SEMESTER AND PLANNED FOR THE NEXT

The 18 projects are divided in 3 thematic areas:

- RULE OF LAW, GOVERNANCE AND MEDIA FREEDOM
- SOCIAL INCLUSION, MIGRATION AND RECONCILIATION
- SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMEN

1. RULE OF LAW, GOVERNANCE AND MEDIA FREEDOM

Western Balkan's Regional Platform for advocating media freedom and journalists' safety (2015/369 - 846) aims at empowering journalist associations to be effective and accountable actors in advocating application of EU standards of media freedom and integrity in Western Balkan region. The first six months of 2017 were marked by continuation of an intense work on production of strategic documents and capacitating partners to implement them – joint advocacy and advanced research skills were followed by in-house training with strategic and advocacy consultant. Additionally, each member and the Network as a whole, had its internal and external communication practices analyzed by communication expert with an aim to advance it. Given the number of different incidents against journalists in the reporting period – 58 in the region – a mechanism for joint reactions was activated 3 times, including public action in Skopje in March. As a result, the cases were reported on different platforms (Mapping media freedom, Council of Europe, etc) and some were directly referred to by representatives of the international community. Following the visit of an external ROM evaluator, the recommendations were incorporated in the activities with the aim to enhance the project impact. As of May partners started working on the annual follow up reports on *Indicators on the level of media freedom and journalists' safety* to be published and presented on national conferences by November. By the end of the year legal analysis of key advocacy issues will be done for each participating country, as well as recommendations for possible amendments that will be used for advocacy. Data from the research and legal analysis will be put to use in advocacy effort towards international stakeholders in Brussels and elsewhere, as well as at national decision makers and influencers.

Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform – WeBER (2015/370-038). National Working Groups (NWGs), as the second level tier of the regional WeBER Platform, have been established in all 6 WB countries. NWGs ensure that dialogue on PAR involves the national and local level of civil society engagement, through the participation of 81 locally based CSO members of the NWGs. Within the scope of the Grant Facility of the project, 33 grants for monitoring the PAR at the local level had been awarded. The WeBER training on PAR monitoring, policy making, analysis, and advocacy, along with the seminars on the framework of SIGMA/OECD Principles of Public Administration, gathered 323 representatives. Monitoring work based on the PAR Monitor Methodology, the cornerstone product of the project which has been extensively discussed along its development process with relevant stakeholders (SIGMA/OECD, RCC, DG NEAR, the Platform members), is the activity of principal importance in the upcoming period. Supplementary subsequent activities of the project will focus on finalizing the Regional PAR Scoreboard, through which the findings of both WeBER and SIGMA/OECD will be visualized, and additionally, on publishing the PAR Resource Centre – searchable and regularly updated database of CSO reports/analyses/papers on PAR from the region.

Accountability, Technology and Institutional Openness Network in the South East Europe region - ACTION SEE (2015/370-251) aims at enhancing the involvement of civil society and media organizations in the creation of public opinion, policymaking and participation in the decision-making mechanisms. Metamorphosis and project partners—Why Not, CDT, CRTA, MJAFT, Open Data Kosovo and Westminster Foundation—promoted the project through media launch and inception events held in all the participating countries. The project team conducted assessment and mapping of relevant actors and initiatives in all of the action countries: the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania. In order to assess how media cover rule of law and good governance related topics, besides the input from stakeholders and discussion from inception events, an online survey was conducted. In order to raise public awareness about the concept of good governance and issues of media reporting and institution's transparency, fight against corruption, project team produced a series of analytical articles in Balkan languages and English, which were then republished by various media. The research process for the Regional

Openess Index will continue in September, and by the end of the year a defined list of institutions will be examined for their compliance to the standards of good governance according to the established indicators list. An open call for small grants was launched and grants awarded enabling support for good governance advocacy activities by a wide network of CSOs from the region.

CSOs as equal partners in monitoring public finances (2015/370-293). During the reporting period, the project finalized a national analysis on public debt, tax justice, PPPs and public infrastructure. The project partners worked on the visibility of the project and participated in the Eurodad International Conference in the Netherlands and co-organize a workshop: *Debt Bondage in the Western Balkans* at the *Global Solidarity Summit* in Germany. It is planned to publish a call for sub-granting and to organize 2 workshops for CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia and a round table with CSOs, experts, ministries, media and academia. It is also planned to start promoting the 4 regional analysis on public debt, tax justice, PPPs and public infrastructure firstly by participating on the *EuroIFI Network meeting* in Greece and at the event *Corruption challenges of development finance* in Slovenia.

2. SOCIAL INCLUSION, MIGRATION, RECONCILIATION

SE Europe Transnational CSO Coalition for Women and Child Protection against Human Trafficking and Gender-based Violence - STOP (2015/370-114) project aims at fostering networking of CSOs to facilitate exchange of knowledge and skills while increasing their campaigning and advocacy skills related to illegal migration and its consequences such as human trafficking and gender based violence while transiting across SEE. The project has successfully gone through the Inception phase. Project teams were deployed in all five respective partner organizations. Baseline studies of the Gender-based violence (GBV) in the region, Human trafficking (HT) in the region and Legislative framework pertinent to GBV and HT with the Public opinion on GBV and HT presence in the society in region were completed and prepared for publishing. Regional Policy paper at the Balkan regional level on women and children protection and cessation of both gender-based violence and human trafficking activities in SEE drafted and adopted at the Second Regional meeting of the national partners. Estimated capacities and strengths of national CSOs related to trafficking in human beings, genocide, smuggling and protection of children through developed unique standardized questionnaire by the project team. During the next semester it is foreseen to complete CSOs capacities related activities through tailored training modules for strengthening women and child protection and cessation of both gender-based violence and human trafficking activities among stakeholders in SEE. During February and March, a ROM mission was conducted and based on the report suggestions on how to simplify and improve the STOP project were developed.

SOCIETIES - Support Of CSOs In Empowering Technical skills, Inclusion of people with disabilities and EU standards in South east europe (2015/370-229). The project has the overall objective to improve the capacities of CSOs in South East Europe (SEE) in managing social inclusion processes and in promoting social inclusion policies, through an efficient dialogue with Public Authorities during the decision-making processes. Two modules of activities - the sub-granting process and capacity building program – were provided during the reporting period. Calls for proposals in 5 countries were closed with more than 200 project proposals received. The Evaluation committees selected the best 25 initiatives. The contracts are expected to be signed by the end of July. As a part of Capacity building program two training cycles were provided by Bulgarian experts and a study visit to Bulgaria followed in June. As a SEE country that passed the pre-accession phase recently with its community service and experience on social inclusion Bulgaria represented an important example to CSOs participants. The working groups on social inclusion have been activated in all countries and they meet according to the respective schedules.

Taking action on social inclusion of older people (2015/370-287). The project aims at strengthening networks of civil society organizations from the Western Balkans in order to improve social inclusion

of older people in local communities and the society at large across the region. The project partners from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia finished the first year with all of the activities done according to schedule. The second year activities have started with the preparation of research studies whose results will be feeding into the national advocacy campaigns further in the project. A meeting of the project partners was organized in Bosnia and Herzegovina in June to discuss the key activities in the second year of the project, and to plan the mid-term review of the project. The meeting was immediately followed by a workshop "Writing Successful Proposals for EU Projects" and it featured participation of four civil society organizations from each of the five project countries. A representative of the EU Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr Vladimir Pandurevic answered the questions of the workshop participants. Four of five partners in the project were involved with preparation of five year national reports on ageing in their countries for the upcoming Ministerial Conference on Ageing organized in Lisbon in September. They provided relevant information and presented the TASIOP project activities as contributions of the civil sector.

Increasing capacities and strengthening the role of regional CSOs for improving labour conditions and labour dialogue with public institutions (2015/370-380). The overall objective is to promote an enabling environment for dialogue between regional CSOs and public institutions for improving labour conditions. During the reporting period, 8 cross-sector meetings were organized in 4 IPA countries. Project employees and members of BALcanOSH.net, participated in two conferences: "Second International Occupational Safety and Health" and "Machinery safety - Risk Assessment" in Bulgaria. Also, the project employees attended coordinative meeting of the European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health and National OSH council. Meetings, events, workshops with public institutions, media organizations, and the CSO where planning future project activities were organized / attended. All events were covered by electronic, social and printed media. Project website and social networks were maintained and updated continuously and simultaneously, in five languages. More details are available at www.project-balcanosh.net

Youth Banks Hub for Western Balkans and Turkey (2015/370-394). The project is designed to create a coordinated network of organizations oriented towards youth participation in decision-making processes. Its activities include continuous monitoring of youth participation in the region, advocacy, and capacity development. During the reporting period, the project reported about youth participation in the targeted region for the third time since its establishment. Current results have shown an overall level of political participation of youth in the targeted countries rated as weak (level two of five) for both aspects of youth participation – youth activity, and opportunities that societies in all the countries create for youth to take part in the political decision-making. Aiming at the establishment of responsive, inclusive, participatory and, representative decision-making at all levels, by the end of 2017, the Network will welcome new member organizations selected based on an open call.

Divided Past - Joint Future (2015/370-393). The project aims for CSOs to be recognised by governments as an important societal factor with strong capacity to implement the peace building and reconciliation agenda in the Western Balkans and Turkey. During the reporting period the project activities included: a) first national advocacy campaign on implementation of peace and reconciliation policy b) Organization of an expert meeting in order to create a "cross-stakeholder" approach in advocacy and non-formal education for peace dialogue and reconciliation.

South East Europe Transnational CSO Coalition for Women and Child Protection Against Human Trafficking and Gender-based Violence - STOP (2015/370-114) project aims at fostering networking of CSOs to facilitate exchange of knowledge and skills while increasing their campaigning and advocacy skills related to illegal migration and its consequences such as human trafficking and gender based violence while transiting across SEE. The project has successfully gone through the

Inception phase. Project teams were deployed in all five respective partner organizations. Baseline studies of the Gender-based violence (GBV) in the region, Human trafficking (HT) in the region and Legislative framework pertinent to GBV and HT with the Public opinion on GBV and HT presence in the society in region were completed and prepared for publishing. Regional Policy paper at the Balkan regional level on women and children protection and cessation of both gender-based violence and human trafficking activities in SEE drafted and adopted at the Second Regional meeting of the national partners. Estimated capacities and strengths of national CSOs related to trafficking in human beings, genocide, smuggling and protection of children through developed unique standardized questionnaire by the project team. Based on the obtained results capacities and strengths of national CSOs estimated, and created training modules that are harmonize with recognized county CSOs needs.

3. SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ALTER - Active Local Territories for Economic development of Rural Areas (2015/370-371). The project is managed by coalition of six national rural development networks from the Balkans, one CSO from Turkey and two rural development networks from the EU. The main objective of the project is to stimulate an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society, as well as to empower civil society to be effective and accountable independent actors. The project aims to improve CSO capacity to dialogue with Governments influencing policy and decision making processes in sustainable development of rural communities and holding them accountable for their performance towards citizens and society at large. During the reporting period, the project supported advocacy campaigns related to sustainable rural development in each project country. 7 national Advocacy plans and 7 studies about national frameworks for sustainable rural development were developed in the first year of project implementation. The project supported the development of 6 rural networks in the WB6 through capacity building and expert support as well as networking in Turkey.

Smart Start - Sustaining civil society impact through social entrepreneurship and innovations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey (2015/369-433). The project aims to help create an enabling environment for social entrepreneurship of civil society organizations (CSOs) and to improve their sustainability, financial viability and social impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. During the reporting period, the project implemented an educational program consisting from 5 modules. Meanwhile, 100 CSOs from 5 countries have entered the final phase, finishing business plans in order to apply for a SMART Start-up grant. CSOs have had a deadline of 30 day to apply with complete and sustainable business plans to Smart Councils on national levels. After the selection, each country made promotional events in order to increase awareness about social entrepreneurship and promote awarded grantees. Furthermore, Smart Start will open call for mentors to these grantees and develop a mentorship program for further activities. Research done in last period will be published followed by policy briefs on national levels and will be introduction for campaigns on raising awareness, mapping social enterprises and legal framework initiatives. Visit www.smartstart4u.org for more.

Sustainable agriculture for sustainable Balkans: Strengthening advocacy capacities of CSOs and developing policies in the Western Balkans (2015/370-487). The project aims to improve sustainability and capacities of advocacy and regional networking of CSOs working on sustainable agriculture Western Balkans. During the reporting period, the main focus of the project was on activities related to the Grant & Training Programme for Western Balkans CSOs. The second Programme component (coaching) started in January 2017 together with the announcing the Restricted call for project proposals. Selected 48 CSOs participating in the Programme were invited to submit project proposals and were provided with assistance from experienced coaches for development of their full applications. On the basis of the independent evaluation process, 10 best

advocacy proposals have been selected for the third component of the Programme (granting). Total of 37 Western Balkans CSOs are supported through this Programme, including partners involved in awarded projects activities. The projects cover a range of topics related to sustainable agriculture, including consumer protection, water policy, organic agriculture, farm animal health and welfare, traditional agriculture landscape protection, etc.

Civil society Acts for Environmentally Sound Socio-Economic Development - CO-SEED (2015/371-198). The project aims at promoting a more sustainable management of natural resources in the target region through more participatory and transparent decision-making processes involving civil society organisations which are recognized as crucial stakeholders. During the reporting period, a manual on best examples of CSO participation in decision-making processes on regional level was produced. Policy recommendations were formulated for the improvement of regulatory frameworks on environmental impact assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessments (SEA) in each country. These were submitted to public authorities and disseminated to CSOs through the CSO network and sub-grantee organizations. Beneficiary CSOs took active part in public consultations meetings for EIAs and SEAs. Roundtable meetings with public authorities and professional companies started being held. In the coming period, the roundtable meetings will be completed in each country. Training on assessing adequacy of prepared EIAs and SEAs will be conducted, checklists for EIA and SEA reports will be prepared and media will be engaged in EIA and SEA consultations to demonstrate CSO approaches and issues through workshops on the national level.

6.4 RELOAD

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility and Media Programme, IPA 2016/038-960
Project title:	Regional Programme on Local Democracy in the Western Balkans - ReLOaD
EU contribution:	EUR 8.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with UNDP
Contract reference:	CN 2016/382-867
Duration of activities:	01/02/2017 – 31/01/2020
Links:	http://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/operations/projects/poverty_reduction/regional-programme-on-local-democracy-in-the-western-balkans--re.html
Contact:	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

ReLOaD aims to strengthen partnerships between local governments (LG) and civil society by scaling-up a successful model of transparent and project-based funding of CSOs. The Western Balkan countries namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia, invest significant efforts to mainstream the EU accession agenda within their socio-political contexts. The ReLOaD will, as support to these efforts, expand LG - CSO relations, facilitating dialogue among them, and improve quality of CSO services, by focusing on needs of 50 LGs, and supporting implementation of 200 CSOs’ projects, for the benefit of 38,000 people.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

During the reporting period, also coinciding with the project inception phase (February 2017 – May 2017), the main activities included:

- Hiring of project staff and establishment of project structures - Board of Partners and Advisory Groups - in each participating WB country.
- Regional kick off meeting as well as national kick offs were organised, contributing to the wide promotion of the Programme in the region;
- Criteria for selection of partner municipalities and documents relevant to the call for municipalities in each WB country defined;
- Selection of partner municipalities completed in Bosnia and Herzegovina (10 local governments that participated in previous LOD phases) and Montenegro (5 local governments). Selection process is still ongoing in remaining four WB countries and it will be concluded in the third quarter of 2017;
- Key visibility elements were defined and the communication strategy was completed;
- Adjustments and translation of the replication model – the Methodology for Transparent Funds Disbursement for CSOs were made, to be followed by the assessments of existing in-country mechanisms for disbursement of public funds to CSOs;
- Initiated regular communication with relevant regional initiatives and EU-funded projects, such as TACSO, ROMACTED, and initial meetings were held in the WB countries.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Project structures established, including the project team (17 staff members across the region and 2 more to start as of July 2017), six national Board of Partners in the WB countries constituted with all relevant stakeholders (national and local authorities, civil society, Delegation of the EU, UNDP and TACSO) as well as Advisory Groups
- One regional promotional event (kick-off) and four country-level events organized (one still to be organised) and the Programme presented to the relevant stakeholders, LGs, and public
- First group of partner municipalities (15 in 50) selected in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Selection of partner municipalities in participating WB countries – municipalities to be selected in the following countries: Albania - 10, Bosnia and Herzegovina – second cohort of 10, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 5, Kosovo – 5, Serbia – 5
- Assessment of existing in-country mechanisms for disbursement of public funds to CSOs, including specific recommendations for improvement, drawing on the experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the principal model from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Continuation of awareness-raising and familiarisation of local government leadership and staff, as well as CSOs on the Methodology for CSO Fund Disbursement and its benefits
- Setting up of a financing mechanism in line with national legislations (i.e. specific municipal budget lines) to fund CSO activities within each participating local government
- Calls for CSOs in partner municipalities (design of tailored grant schemes for CSOs)
- Capacity development for LGs and CSOs in targeted localities
- Formalization of the methodology and accompanying tools, as well as monitoring framework for funding of CSOs by municipalities within all target localities
- Creation of online interactive platform to facilitate virtual knowledge sharing, advocacy and communication

6.6 MEDIA

Programme reference:	The Civil Society Facility and Media Programme, IPA 2015/037-653
Project title:	JUFEX - Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe
EU contribution:	EUR 2.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with Council of Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2016/372-924
Duration of activities:	20/04/2016 – 19/04/2019
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Objective of the programme is to promote freedom of expression and freedom of the media in line with CoE standards, with a specific focus on the Judiciary. The programme comprises one major component, namely the judiciary, and two additional components (regulators and media actors) relating to the interconnected segments, which are of significant importance for freedom of expression and exercise of human rights, in line with CoE and European standards.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Judiciary: A Handbook on freedom of expression and subsequent 7 Modules have been prepared on the basis of materials developed within the project “Strengthening the Capacity of Turkish Judiciary on Freedom of Expression” which applies the HELP Methodology developed by the Council of Europe (HELP- Human Rights Education for legal Professionals). A regional training of trainers (ToT) was organized as a follow up to the ToT which took place in the first quarter of 2017 in all JUFREX counties/locations. National trainings were focused on freedom of expression, including both international standards and national institutional and legislative frameworks. A Regional Follow-Up training hold in Durres 25-26 April 2017 gathered the most successful participants of the national Trainings of trainers and strengthened their competences.

Regulatory Authorities (RA): Two regional conferences for RA were attended by representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (FYROM), and Kosovo with experts from Slovenia and Croatia. At the national level, several activities with RA took place among which the launch of INDIREG study in Serbia on independence of Regulatory Authorities (methodology developed under EC project). EC proposed preparation of the complete media sector inquiry in Montenegro, as a pilot activity to be extended possibly to other countries of the region. The Scope of the action and the tender for the selection of international expert have been finalized.

Media Actors: Trainings for journalist have been held in Serbia, Kosovo*, FYROM and Montenegro (young professionals) in order to enhance their understanding of FoE legal content, their rights and obligations.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Judiciary: The Handbook on Freedom of Expression has been translated in the 6 project languages and it has been tailored to national legislation. More than 60 people among judges, prosecutors, lawyers have been certified as national trainers after ToT. Most of the partners such as National Bar

Associations, Academies of Judges and Prosecutors have agreed on including the upcoming Training of trainers and consequent cascade trainings in their official training program.

Regulatory Authorities: At the regional level, a joint publication on hate speech is going to be issued: it contains detailed information about international standards and relating cases that were dealt with by national regulators in the region. Montenegro is undergoing a Media Sector inquiry as a pilot exercise in the region; this initiative could be eventually extended to other countries.

Media Actors: 27 Serbian Journalists have been trained on FoE, more than 100 media actors have attended national training and events on the subject of FoE. A regional Summer School has been organized with participants of all Project countries/locations. 60 Students of faculty of political sciences, law and young professionals have been trained on EU/ECRHR standards on freedom of expression in Zlatibor.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Regional Activities/ All countries/locations: Regional Conference Freedom of Expression/Media and the Internet and the event will take place on 2-3 November 2017 in Budva, Montenegro: The participants are successful trainees from national Trainings of Trainers which took place in each country/location, and are now acting as local trainers at national level. The next months will see the publication of the FoE handbook (developed under HELP methodology and adapted to different national contexts) in local languages for cascade training and dissemination among partners. Cascades trainings for the judiciary will be hold regularly in each country with the support of Academy of Judges and Prosecutors as well as bar associations in Albania, BiH, FYROM, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia. Inter-professional trainings for judiciary and media actors to be hold in Albania, BiH, FYROM, Kosovo, Serbia on legal content of FoE and its implication for media actors.

Albania : A High level conference on Freedom of Expression and the internet will take place on the 25th of October to inform decision makers in Albania to make the right choices when it comes to regulation of online content as well as media organizations to enhance the application of ethical behavior in online content. In September two grants in Albania for Magistrate School and Bar will be finalized.

BiH: In June- July four grants have been finalized: two with the Bar associations in the Federation BiH and Republika Srsпка (RS), and two for Centers for Education of Judges and prosecutors (BiH and RS). Those partners are in charge of implementing the cascade trainings for the judiciary. The process of development of Legal Media Dictionary will be completed in October. Training of journalists will take place under the grants in BiH.

Montenegro: The media sector inquiry : (July 2017-January 2018) is one of the tools to support the country in the process of the accession to the EU and the preparation of the detailed and substantial action plan for the media sector. The inquiry will cover the legislative framework, Public Media Services, internet, Transparency of media ownership and media concentration as well as safety of journalists among other subjects.

Serbia: In September the INDIREG Study on independence of Regulatory Authority will be completed as well as the study on co-regulation aiming at proposing possible solutions for Serbian Regulator.

Programme reference:	The Civil Society Facility Programme, IPA 2013/024-081
Project title:	Regional EU award scheme for investigative journalism in Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 0.45 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey

Type of contract:	Grant Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2014/350-133
Duration of activities:	11/10/2014 – 10/10/2017
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The regional scheme of EU awards for investigative journalism in Western Balkans and Turkey aims at celebrating and promoting outstanding achievements of investigative journalists and improving the visibility of quality investigative journalism in the region by rewarding the investigative journalistic works published in 2014, 2015 and 2016, selected by independent juries through national contests.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Operational Manual with rules and procedures for the regional scheme of EU awards for investigative journalism in Western Balkans and Turkey was updated in order to further elaborate award criteria and other administrative rules taking into account the lessons learned from the award contests in 2015 and 2016. Seven separate EU award contests were organised in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey based on joint criteria and procedures. In each country, independent juries appointed by EU Delegations selected three investigative stories published in 2016, including the best stories by young journalists.

In total, 237 nominations were processed by national coordinators and evaluated by independent juries in seven countries. Seven award ceremonies were organised to deliver the awards and celebrate the winners. Regional press release summarizing the 2017 EU award contests' results, and also the overall results of the 3-year award scheme was distributed to target audiences.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

21 investigative stories contributing to transparency and reporting on societal issues related to abuse of power and fundamental rights, corruption and organised crime, were awarded in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. The stories covered a wide range of societal issues, including those connected to corruption and abuse of power in local and state institutions, attempted state capture by the underground and misuse of power by political party officials, but also procurement and subsidies controversy, irregularities in energetics business, tax fraud, environmental disasters and abuse of children.

Altogether 25 journalists were awarded. In comparison with the previous year when teams of journalists were authors of number of the winning stories, this time most of the stories were authored by individual journalists. Amongst the media with extraordinary achievements regarding the number of the 2017 winning stories are Žurnal online magazine (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Alsat-M TV channel (Macedonia) and Vijesti daily newspaper (Montenegro) that have each published 2 award-winning stories, as well as the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) whose journalists have worked on three of the prized stories (in Albania, Macedonia and Serbia).

Winning journalists received a total of 75,000 euro. Individual prizes ranged between 3,000 and 5,000 euro.

Hundreds of media reports with news about the EU award winners were published across the region. Regional press release with summary of the regional EU award scheme results in 2017 was republished by several regional and European communication platforms including the web site and social networks of the European Commission, DG NEAR.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Ongoing activities to promote the EU award winners in each country through events, lectures at the universities etc. Use of the web site for further promotion of the winners. Work on the final report of the 3-year EU award regional scheme.

Programme reference:	The Civil Society Facility and Media Programme, IPA 2014/ 031-605
Project title:	Building Trust in Media in South East Europe and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 1.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with UNESCO
Contract reference:	CN 2015/367-802
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 31/12/2018
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project Building Trust in Media in South East Europe and Turkey aims to strengthen freedom of expression, access to information, and free, independent and pluralistic media, ensuring that journalists and media organizations in South East Europe and Turkey are key drivers for democratic, sustainable and peaceful development in the region. Its implementation started in January 2016.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Activities aimed to strengthen media self-regulation, to increase media good governance and Media Information Literacy (MIL) are under way in all countries covered by the project (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey and Kosovo under UNSCR 1244). Following key activities were held between January and June 2017:

- The School of Journalism and Public Relations (SJPR) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia published a research entitled “Back to the Drawing Board: Crafting the Ideal Journalism Curricula for Southeast Europe” that analyses journalism education in SEE and establishes a set of indicators to evaluate the curricula in journalism across the region. To achieve that, SJPR mapped all universities, media organizations and associations operating across the region and involved in training of journalists. A total of 60 qualitative interviews were conducted to collect primary data and a set of 6 main indicators have been developed together with recommendations.
- A national consultation on MIL was organized in Tirana, Albania on 21 February 2017. This event brought together an array of different actors from the governmental and non-governmental sector. The recommendations and discussion points from this national consultation will be reflected in the final Position Paper on MIL in Albania, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Sport.
- A national consultation on MIL was organized in Belgrade, Serbia on 9 March 2017 gathering over 80 policymakers, media experts, professors, educators, librarians and other information intermediaries, youth, civil society and international community stakeholders. Consultations were led by Media Education Center (MEC), Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Ministry of Culture and Information, with support with the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National

Commission of the Republic of Serbia for UNESCO. The multi-stakeholder event discussed opportunities and gaps of national MIL policies and strategies.

- A new web platform – "The Coalition of Media and Information Users in South East Europe" (www.cimusee.org) was launched in June 2017. This platform is dedicated to raising levels of media and information literacy (MIL) in the region through the emergence of an informed and active media and information user.
- A new webpage of the project was launched (<http://en.unesco.org/trust-in-media-see>) together with some visibility materials such as [a promotional video](#) explaining the objectives of the Project.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Knowledge developed on journalism education in South East Europe with the publication of the research "*Back to the Drawing Board: Crafting the Ideal Journalism Curricula for South East Europe*"
- 2 major national consultations organized on MIL in Albania and Serbia with ministries of governments from these countries joining forces to enable media and information literacy policies and strategies.
- Partnership and networks established and enhanced on MIL through the launching of the online platform of the Coalition of Media and Information Users (CIMUSEE) in SEE
- Increased visibility of the project "*Building Trust in Media in SEE and Turkey*"
- Strengthened social media strategy and educational content disseminated on MIL to build trust in media

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Capacity-building activities, awareness-raising and networking activities to raise the profile of press and media councils in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo.
- Setting up of the Office of the new Albanian Media Council and launching of its webpage explaining Albanian citizens the role of media self-regulation and how to file complaints to the new press council.
- Organization of the third LAREG + meeting in Brussels on 13 November 2017 and a press conference on journalists labour rights in South East Europe on 14 November 2017.
- Launching of media ethical audits consultations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Montenegro together with media good governance seminars in these 2 countries.
- Publication of a report assessing the current state of media self-regulation and complaint mechanisms, opportunities for legal redress and other mechanisms to safeguard press integrity in Turkey and organisation of a workshop with academics and media practitioners to define the approach and methodology of the report.

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme, IPA 2012/023-324
Project title:	Civic Response to Clientelism in Media – MEDIA CIRCLE
EU contribution:	EUR 0.55 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2013/332-758
Duration of activities:	30/11/2013 – 29/11/2017

Links:	www.fairpress.eu
Contacts:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Aim of the project is to establish independent, sustainable, multi-layered, cross-country mechanisms for active media policy monitoring, advocacy and emergency response in South East Europe.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Implementation of detailed regional advocacy action plan
- Media Clientelism Index 2016 presented on 7 March 2017 at a public hearing in the European Parliament in Brussels titled “MEDIA CLIENTELISM INDEX: MEASURING MEDIA REALITIES IN SIX SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES”
- Twitter campaign “Clean news, clean politics, clean people” concluded
- Implementation of advocacy activities of six nongovernmental grassroots organisations with which the MEDIA CIRCLE consortium has joined forces
- Country specific reporting on the state of media clientelism and politicisation through Fairpress portal (continuously)

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Detailed plan for data collection for Media Clientelism Index 2017 designed
- Report titled “MEASURING MEDIA REALITIES – Media Clientelism Index 2016” published
- Twitter campaign “Clean news, clean politics, clean people” concluded and awards given out
- Advocacy activities of six nongovernmental grassroots organisations with which the MEDIA CIRCLE consortium has joined forces implemented
- 286 analytical articles written and published on national languages of the countries participating in the project
- 114 analytical articles written and published on central portal in English
- 425 articles media related articles were republished from other media outlets
- 10 UNCUT interviews published
- 85.551 Fairpress.eu sessions; 122.599 Fairpress.eu pageviews; 60.996 Fairpress.eu users
2.330 Fairpress.eu Facebook pageviews; 326.581 Fairpress.eu Facebook reach; 36.599 Fairpress.eu Facebook post engagements; 19.001 Fairpress.eu Facebook likes

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Advocacy activities
- Repeating the country-specific research for the measurement of Media Clientelism Index 2017
- Implementation of 6 national conferences (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, FYR Macedonia, Romania) and one international conference in Brussels at which the results of Media Clientelism Index 2017 will be presented
- Country specific reporting on the state of media clientelism and politicisation through Fairpress portal (continuously)
- Closing conference of the project in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Evaluation and follow-up of the project

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme, IPA 2012/023-324
Project title:	South-East European Partnership for Media Development

EU contribution:	EUR 0.6 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2013/332-771
Duration of activities:	30/11/2013 – 29/11/2017
Links:	http://www.seenpm.org/south-east-european-partnership-for-media-development/ http://www.cji.ro/?p=5268 https://www.facebook.com/SEEMediaPartnership/?fref=ts
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE:

To support the development of independent and accountable media in the Western Balkans The focus is on creating the capacity of media organisations in Western Balkans to influence the policies regarding employment conditions and education needs of the journalists in 5 IPA countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- Organizing the regional conference on Media Literacy and Education. Launching of the regional report (28-29 March, Skopje).
- Preparation and dissemination of a Policy paper on media and Information Literacy (May 3rd, to mark World Press Freedom day)
- Preparation of the fourth and fifth wave of FoE reports. Topics selected: "Whose Media Are these?" - a report looking into how the social media add to, compete or replace the "traditional" platforms; "Gatekeepers and Middlemen" - a report looking into how entities with no apparent media mandate (companies or state bodies) can restrict freedom of expression. (Both reports are to be launched in September).
- Internal evaluation completed; ROM evaluation (February-March)
- Freedom of expression and media monitoring. Participation in the global advocacy networks (IFEX campaigns, IFEX Board, Global Forum for Media Development Summit). Participation in the OSCE conference on Media Freedom in the Western Balkan (February).

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

- one regional report on media and Information literacy
- one policy paper on media and Information literacy
- one regional conference

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER:

- Launching and dissemination of the fourth and fifth wave of FoE reports.
- Preparation, launching and dissemination of the sixth (and last) report of FoE. Topic selected: a general assessment of the FoE in the project countries;

- Advocacy visit to Bruxelles (Oct 9-10) and continued advocacy in the countries in the project;
- Participation in the Media and Information Literacy conference in Sarajevo (Sept 19-22)
- Preparations for the closing of the program (Nov 29)

6.7 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility and Media Programme, IPA 2014/031-605
Project title:	Protecting children from violence and promoting social inclusion of children with disabilities in Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with UNICEF
Contract reference:	CN 2015/368-251
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 31/012/2018
Contact:	Kristina Vujic, kristina.vujic@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project aims to promote human rights and to make public services for children-victims of violence and children with disabilities more effective and inclusive. For this, the project seeks to empower civil society to better monitor realisation of children's rights, to promote inclusive and innovative services, increase public awareness and support for the protection of children from violence and social inclusion of children with disabilities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

During the reporting period, several initiatives to improve national legislation and operational frameworks on violence against children (VAC) and children with disabilities (CWD) took place in Albania, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Capacities of key professionals to identify, report and refer cases of VAC, and realise the right of a child with disability to inclusion were strengthened through various capacity building activities for community nurses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, education and social welfare professionals, parents and school-students in Kosovo, multi-agency response services on VAC in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, through capacity assessment of Operational Multi-Disciplinary Teams (OMTs) in Montenegro, and sectoral, thematic and mentoring support to 12 new inter-sectorial teams in Serbia. In support of data collection mechanisms development, the focus has been on preparatory for and/or finalisation of SitAn on CWD in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and Turkey. Research around national child protection systems' ability to respond to VAC was carried out in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Besides, a set of indicators on VAC for each key sector was developed for further use in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

To contribute to the establishment of civil society organisations (CSOs) networks and their ability to advocate, monitor and report on VAC and social exclusion of CWD, a key focus has been around building CSOs capacities to monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD), preparation of shadow and alternative reports on VAC and

UNCRPD and engagement with national Ombudsman offices on various issues like research, reporting, etc.

In support of advocacy and awareness raising aspect of the project, a number of campaigns, surveys, events, etc., were carried out contributing towards a change in social norms and attitudes on VAC and child disability. To name a few examples: non-violence programmes were initiated in 15 schools in three municipalities of Kosovo, the “Be fair. For a childhood without barriers” campaign was launched in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the second phase of the campaign “End Violence” was launched in Montenegro with a focus on prevention of violence in the family and child discipline.

As for the regional partnership with the European Disability Forum (EDF), four national seminars were organized to reinforce the capacities of organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) and to foster collaboration, knowledge-sharing and convergence of purposes in joint advocacy actions for the rights of CWD. Technical support has been provided to emerging national inclusive networks of DPOs for the preparation of alternative reports on progress made in implementing the UNCRPD in the relevant countries. At regional level, Action’s coordination meeting took place in the beginning of 2017 in Skopje with participation of UNICEF teams from six countries and a territory, EDF and UNICEF regional office.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

In Albania, Child Protection Unit workers benefited from 670 online and 53 face-to-face technical mentoring sessions, leading to 591 children in vulnerable situation identified, provided with support and referred to appropriate services by professionals; ALO 116 child helpline service reached out nearly 20,000 children, parents and schools personnel in 90 schools country wide to raise awareness on reporting of VAC cases. In the four northern municipalities of Mitrovica region in Kosovo, 50 professionals from education and social welfare systems received knowledge and practical skills on 6 themes around VAC; over 300 students from public schools attended 18 workshops on VAC awareness and reporting; over 50 parents have learned about child protection mechanisms and prevention of peer violence; 40 peer mediators from primary and secondary schools successfully completed 6 days training programme on mediation and peaceful conflict resolution; over 20 children and parents received support for peaceful solutions through over 100 mediation sessions organised by juvenile mediation center. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, since its launch in March, campaign on CWD reached 4,124,108 people, engaged 172,036 social media platforms, and the videos have 1,667,821 views in total up-to-date; over 250 people have downloaded and using the mobile phone application as the campaign’s product. Over 300 children with/out disabilities acquired social, artistic, etc., skills through participating in thematic workshops, training programmes, summer camps in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, etc. to promote social inclusion of CWDs and raise awareness on disability issue. The national seminars under EDF leadership proved to be extremely instrumental to better align DPOs to the key principles and concepts of the UNCRPD (a rights-based approach towards disability) improving their capacities as change agents and policy contributors. As a consequence, new inclusive diverse networks of DPOs have emerged in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, engaged in promoting a broader understanding of the rights of children with disabilities in their countries and in lobbying decision makers at all level to reinforce the legal framework for the protection of children from violence and for the social inclusion of children with disabilities.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

In the remaining semester of 2017, the Action’s key focus will be on: a) remaining work on legislative review on VAC in Albania, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia; b) data collection work on CWD SitAn in Albania and Turkey, finalisation and launching/dissemination of

SitAn reports/findings in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; research on independent living by CWDs and research on child marriage in Montenegro; c) capacity development will continue (through sessions, meetings, workshops, etc.) strengthening skills and knowledge among multi-sectoral professionals, parents, children and CSOs on identification of violence, neglect and abuse signs, positive parenting, reporting and prevention of VAC, as well as on the rights of children with disabilities as per UNCRPD; d) engaging CSOs in monitoring and reporting on VAC and violation of the rights of CWDs through preparation of shadow and alternative reports on VAC, CRC and UNCRPD, strengthening CSOs networks and cooperation with Ombudsman offices; e) awareness raising will remain one of the key priorities for the next semester in all countries. EDF will continue to generate capacity-building inputs and provide technical support to networks of DPOs for the preparation of alternative reports, combined with the implementation of follow-up actions to the CRPD Committees' concluding observations.

The first regional technical meeting will be organised at the end of October in Serbia for the Action's key implementing partners in partnership with EDF to discuss importance of data on VAC and CWD, its application and use for policy and advocacy.

CHAPTER 7: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

7.1 TEMPUS AND ERASMUS+

Programme reference:	IPA 2011/SI2.596555; IPA 2012/SI2.615827; IPA 2013/SI2.645034; IPA 2014/SI2.691984; IPA 2015/D45.B1515.000567; IPA 2016/D45.B1616.001476
Project title:	Tempus: Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies; Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE)
EU contribution:	IPA 2011/SI2.596555, EUR 15.3 million IPA 2012/SI2.615827, EUR 14.9 million IPA 2013/SI2.645034, EUR 11.7 million IPA 2014/SI2.691984, EUR 10.07 million IPA 2015/ D45.B1515.000567, EUR 13.2 million IPA 2016/ D45.B1616.001476, EUR 13.5 million IPA 2017/D45. B1717.001712, EUR 10.3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans (except Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
Type of contract:	The programmes are implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Links:	http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus; http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/capacity-0_en
Contact :	Karolina Buzaljko, karolina.buzaljko@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Tempus programme and Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) facilitate the reform of higher education institutions by upgrading the quality and management of academic institutions, in line with changing political, social and economic needs and through voluntary convergence with higher education reform developments in the EU Member States.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

The CBHE Grant holder's meeting has been organised with a participation of 373 representatives from the CBHE projects selected under the 2016 Call for proposals, National Erasmus+ Offices, International Contact Points, EU Delegations from 8 Partner Countries, European Commission (EAC and DEVCO) and EACEA. In total, 80 nationalities have been represented. Workshops on project management, financial management, as well as sessions on networking and synergies among projects were held. Thematic workshops provided opportunity to create synergies among the projects and strengthen cooperation.

Altogether two 2 technical assistance missions (TAMs) for Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) were organised in 2017: one in Albania – a seminar 'Using Curriculum mapping to improve learning in Higher Education', and one in Kosovo – a training seminar 'Income generation in HEIs' (with national experts and policy makers).

The HEREs from Balkan region participated in 2 seminars: 'Students in focus: Student as partners in higher education governance and quality assurance' organised in Almaty, on 5-6 April 2017 and 'Universities and social engagement' organised in Nicosia, Cyprus, on 13-14 June 2017. In addition, the HEREs from the region were involved in a study visit 'Research based teaching: Universities, Entrepreneurship and the Knowledge Triangle. Università degli Studi di Milano' organised in, Italy 30 - 31 May.

Under Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE), 33 running projects involving institutions from the Western Balkans are closely monitored by the Agency. The first 15 CBHE interim reports have been analysed within the established deadlines.

Under the Call EAC/A03/2016 the selection process resulted on the selection of 16 projects. The projects are mainly joint projects (13) and only 3 are Structural projects focusing on strengthening of relations between higher education systems and the wider economic and social environment. 8 projects focus on development of curricula mainly in the disciplines of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary and security services (22%), followed by education, environmental sciences, engineering and engineering trades, biological and related sciences (11%). 62 % of the projects are coordinated by the institutions located in the region, which shows a promising ownership of results. In terms of regional cooperation there is a balance between the national and regional projects.

A total of 19 on-going Erasmus+ CBHE projects in the Western Balkans were monitored during this period by the NEOs and EACEA staff.

Tempus activities consisted mainly in monitoring closed and on-going Tempus projects. Approximately 12 Tempus projects are still operating in the Western Balkans.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

The analysis of the first 15 CBHE projects showed that the projects had a successful start in terms of setting up the management structures and initiating the project activities in time, and in general with a satisfying quality providing the basis for completing the projects as foreseen. To be noted that projects coordinated by institutions in Western Balkans are well-managed (e.g., by Serbian institutions), which shows an increase of capacities of these institutions to manage international projects. In comparison to Tempus, the 2015 projects are focusing on very concrete themes and subjects and far less on horizontal topics such as quality assurance, recognition etc., which were exploited sufficiently in the previous selections. There is also a push to modernise curricula to address labour market needs (e.g., modernisation geodesy degree programmes) and/or concrete societal needs (e.g., health care, waste management).

Despite positive results, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed closer, such as bureaucratic, time-consuming, administrative procedures to implement projects in certain universities (in both EU and non-EU countries); recognition of credits, diplomas, and degrees that need to be guaranteed in line with the national legislation and Lisbon Convention; better involvement of students in projects; and commitment of Ministries of Education as project partners beyond a formal participation, etc.

For the new 2017 projects subject fields were detected as innovative in comparison to previous selections and best practice cases were provided during the discussion. According to the priority/theme of the projects, majority of the projects address the priority 'Improving quality of education and teaching' in particular 15 projects address the theme 'Learning and teaching tools,

methodologies and pedagogical approaches', and 7 address the theme 'Multidisciplinarity/interdisciplinarity'.

The quality in general has been good/very good, and some projects have transformative potential for the higher education systems.

The HEREs activities were highly successful and provided an excellent opportunity for discussion and exchange of practice. Participants reported on the high quality of the events and the interest of topics for the modernisation process in their countries.

CBHE Grant holders meeting was very successful. The networking sessions, provided opportunity for the projects in the region to create synergies and strengthen the cooperation among the institutions in the region.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- A coordination meeting of all NEOs) and international contact points (ICPs) will be organised in Brussels in October to discuss the implementation of Erasmus+.
- A TAM is foreseen to the seminar in Serbia 'Global University Rankings and their impact' in September 2017.
- HEREs from the region will participate in a study visit at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland in October for a seminar "*Quality culture in practice: Scotland and the University of Edinburgh*".

7.2 ERASMUS MUNDUS

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/935
Project title:	Erasmus Mundus Action 1 and Action 2
EU contribution:	Action 1: EUR 8.0 million Action 2: EUR 12.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Erasmus Mundus Action 1: Western Balkans and Turkey Erasmus Mundus Action 2: Western Balkans
Type of contract:	The programme is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Links:	http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/ http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-1-learning-mobility-individuals/erasmus-mundus-joint-master-degrees_en
Contact :	Karolina Buzaljko, karolina.buzaljko@ec.europa.eu Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, EACEA-EPLUS-JMD@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Erasmus Mundus programme's objective was to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives, in order

to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. The programme has been discontinued in 2014 to be included in the Erasmus+ Programme (2014-2020).

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Erasmus Mundus Action 1

Action 1 of the former Erasmus Mundus programme supports high quality joint masters courses and doctoral programmes which are run by consortia of European and third country higher education institutions (HEIs). The action mainly fosters cooperation between HEIs and academic staff in Europe and third countries with a view of creating poles of excellence and providing highly trained human resources. The Joint programmes must involve mobility between institutions of the consortium and lead to the award of recognised joint, double or multiple degrees. Students/doctoral candidates are awarded Erasmus Mundus scholarships/fellowships. 12 doctoral programmes co-funded by IPA are still ongoing.

Erasmus Mundus Action 2

Under Action 2, the Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region in the world on the other, to manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – undergraduate, master, doctorate, post-doctorate – and for academic staff. The partnerships allow sharing of best practices and exploring further opportunities for cooperation between European and Western Balkan HEIs through bilateral agreements and other measures. In January 2017, seven Action 2 projects were still active in the Western Balkans.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Erasmus Mundus Action 1

The Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJDs) selected under the former Erasmus Mundus programme are still running their intakes, partly funded by IPA funds for what concerns the Western Balkans and Turkey. In particular, 12 EMJDs whose intake started in the second semester of 2014 have awarded fellowships to doctoral candidates who will complete their studies in the second semester 2017. The concerned EMJDs are expected to submit their final report by the end of 2017.

Erasmus Mundus Action 2

Between January and July 2017, three partnerships selected in 2013 came to an end. These projects financed 766 mobility flows for students and staff (628 non-EU and 138 EU). The partnerships enhanced regional cooperation between the participating universities from Western Balkans and strengthened academic links between Europe and the targeted region, also in view of future cooperation under Erasmus+.

As part of the Action 2 valorisation strategy, the conference "Ten years of Erasmus Mundus Partnerships: Building Bridges Towards the Future" took place in Brussels on 8th and 9th February 2017. The event was an occasion to analyse the outcomes achieved by the Action 2 projects funded between 2009 and 2014. 100 selected participants (delegates from 13 EU countries and 34 partner countries, students and higher education experts) provided their valuable contribution on the attainments of Action 2, the challenges faced and lessons learned during the implementation of the projects. The conference was also a forum to discuss the development of future actions under the Erasmus+ programme.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Erasmus Mundus Action 1

The results of the Erasmus Mundus Doctoral Programmes which benefited from IPA funds in 2014 will be assessed as from November 2017. In addition, EACEA will receive and assess the final summary reports of completed masters programmes covering five consecutive intakes partly funded by IPA funds.

Erasmus Mundus Action 2

The results of the above mentioned conference will be published and the final reports from the three above mentioned projects will be analysed.

7.3 ERASMUS+ CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Erasmus+ Capacity building in the field of youth – Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	The programme is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Contact :	Karolina Buzaljko, karolina.buzaljko@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The objectives of these projects are to enhance cooperation between Programme and Partner Countries, improve the quality and recognition of youth-work, non-formal learning, and volunteering in Partner Countries and foster synergies with education systems and the labour market, reinforce non-formal learning mobility schemes and programmes, and promote transnational non-formal learning mobility. Further, the projects aim to promote strategic cooperation between youth organisations and public authorities and raise the capacities of youth councils, youth platforms and local, regional and national authorities dealing with youth in Western Balkan countries.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

The EACEA provided an on-line information session on Capacity Building Youth Western Balkans, including question-answer component (questions received via e-mail, answered during the session) which took place on 10/02/2017. The web-streaming of the session as well as frequently asked questions remained available on the EACEA's website.

Following the plan of monitoring visits for selected projects funded under the Western Balkan Youth Window a monitoring visit to Pristina was performed in June.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

The deadline of 2017 selection for the Western Balkan Youth Window managed at centralised level under the Erasmus+ Programme – Key-Action 2, Capacity Building in the field of youth - was on 8 March 2017. In total, 200 applications have been submitted representing a slight increase of 6,38% compared to last year's 2nd round of selection (188 applications). Serbian organisations submitted 51% (102) of the applications. 44 applications were submitted by organisations based in Albania, 22 by Bosnia and Herzegovina, 18 by Montenegrin organisations and 14 by Kosovo.

44 projects representing a total grant request of EUR 2.998.888,27 are selected (average grant request: EUR 61.500,00). Among the organisations funded there are: 16 beneficiaries from Serbia, 6 from Albania, 8 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 10 from Montenegro and 4 from Kosovo. Among the selected partners, 136 come from the EU, 82 from Western Balkan countries and 36 from Non EU programme Countries - The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (23) and Turkey (13). Selection results were published by the beginning of August 2017.

Among the 126 organisations from the Western Balkans involved in the selected projects (either as coordinators or as partners), 52 have participated in a project in 2015 or in 2016 (17 for Serbia, 13 for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 8 for Albania, 7 respectively for Montenegro and Kosovo. 74 of the 2017 organisations are new comers to the scheme.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- EACEA started to establish the contracts beginning of August and expects to finalise the process in November. The pre-financing payments are on-going since September. An on-line kick off meeting will be organised beginning of December 2017.
- After the publication of the call 2018 (November 2017) the EACEA will deliver information campaigns (on-line or/and in the region).

7.4 EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2015/038-054
Project title:	Employment and Social Affairs Platform (ESAP)
EU contribution:	EUR 3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant agreements with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Contract reference:	VS/2016/0054 (RCC) and VS/2016/0002 (ILO)
Duration of activities:	01/03/2016 – 28/02/2019 (RCC) 01/04/2016 – 31/03/2019 (ILO)
Contact :	Kiril Kiryakov, kiril.kiryakov@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the Employment and Social Affairs Platform is to assist the Western Balkan countries with the employment and social policy reforms in their pre-accession process. The action will help improve the regional cooperation in employment and social policy-making, labour market governance, working conditions and social dialogue.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

Peer reviews of the structure, functioning and effectiveness of existing national Economic and Social Councils (ESCs) carried out in Albania, Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro.

One regional meeting of representatives of Ministries of Labour to agree on the topics for the peer review on employment policies and programme; Two meetings of representatives of Public Employment Services (PES) involved in the benchlearning exercise to agree on a set of quantitative indicators to be collected for the Western Balkan PES benchmarking analysis; Three technical assistance actions implemented to address national employment and labour market priorities.

Technical assistance provided for the establishment of a Network of Agencies for Peaceful Settlement of Labour Disputes in the Western Balkans. The purpose of the Network is to promote professional development and enhance collaboration among the bodies responsible for effective prevention and resolution of labour disputes.

First annual high-level regional meeting of labour inspectorates validated the sectors to be covered by a joint regional labour inspectorate campaign (agriculture and construction).

OUTPUTS (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

A virtual ESAP platform for promoting online interaction and knowledge sharing among stakeholders involved in employment and social affairs in the region;
Three regional analytical reports covering active labour market measures, employment and social data sources, and a forecasting exercise of employment patterns in the Western Balkans to feed into the SEE 2020 strategy discussions;
Full commitment of Public Employment Services to the benchlearning process;
Six country-specific and a consolidated Economic and Social Council Peer Review Reports;
Agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding for a Network of Agencies for Peaceful Settlement of Labour Disputes in the Western Balkans.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Training assessors for the PES benchlearning exercise (September, Belgrade)
Employment Policy Design Workshop for representatives of the Ministries of Labour and the social partners (October, Tirana)
Workshop for the Economic and Social Councils to agree on plans for implementation of national awareness campaigns (November, Sarajevo)
Signing a Memorandum of Understanding institutionalising the network of labour inspectorates in the Western Balkans.

7.5 CULTURAL HERITAGE

Programme reference:	Preparatory actions for preserving and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas in the Western Balkans for 2012, CARDS 2012/023-867
EU contribution:	EUR 3.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Single works contracts; Evaluation: Service Framework contract
Contract reference:	n/a
Duration of activities:	till 08/11/2018
Contact:	Olga-Elena Fimin, olga-elena.fimin@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Rehabilitation of cultural heritage sites affected by war-related actions, contribution to a sustainable development of sites of valuable cultural objects, fostering inter-cultural dialogue, reconciliation, raising the awareness of cultural diversity in the Western Balkans among the population and eventually support to economic development.

The following three projects were selected:

- Rehabilitation of the Franciscan Monastery in Bač, Serbia;
- Reconstruction of the Kastel Fortress, "Cultural centre with auxiliary services", Bosnia and Herzegovina;

Rehabilitation of the Monastery of St. Mary for museum use and landscaping of the archaeological site of Apollonia, Fier, Albania.

The works were implemented in line with the working programme and no delays are expected. During this period an addendum for additional works is approved for an amount of EUR 75,619.90. The main purpose of the addendum was the rehabilitation of four monuments/buildings which were judged to be in critical structural state, with cracked and/or inclined walls.

Works are planned to be completed by January 2017, followed by one year Defects Liability Period.

ACTIVITIES

- Contract for works at the Franciscan Monastery in Bač was signed on 30 March 2016 for the amount of EUR 685,468.96.
- Works on Reconstruction of the Kastel fortress, "Cultural Centre with auxiliary services" started on 11 May 2015 and was completed in March 2016 with issuing Provisional Acceptance Certificate. The guarantee period will last for 12 months e.g. March 2017. Supervision contract signed with SAFEGE BOSNIA KONSALTING INZINJERING PROJEKTOVANJE DOO SARAJEVO (Bosnia and Herzegovina) on 26 September 2014. Contract Value EUR 98,000. Works Contract signed with PRIVREDNO DRUSTVO ZA IZGRADNJU, OBNAVLJANJE I REKONSTRUKCIJU GRADEVINSKIH OBJEKATA KOTO DOO (Serbia) on 24 March 2015. Contract Value EUR 948,108.31.
- As for the rehabilitation of the Monastery of St. Mary and landscaping in Apollonia Park, the works and supervision contracts, both started on 5 January 2016, for a duration of 2 years (including 1 Year Defect Liability Period). The ongoing works are in line with the working programme and no delays are expected.

7.6 YOUNG CIVIL SERVANTS

Programme reference:	Multi-Country Programme, IPA 2016/037-900
Project title:	EU Scheme for Young Professionals in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 0.9 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Direct grant to British Council
Contract reference:	CN 2016/377-485
Duration of activities:	14/09/2016 - 13/09/2017
Links:	http://eu4wb6.com/
Contact :	Karolina Buzaljko, karolina.buzaljko@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The EU Scheme for Young Professionals pilot action aimed to build professional capacity and prepare the next generation of public administrators and policy makers in the six Western Balkan countries to promote the regional cooperation element of the EU integration process at the level of civil service by making cross-border connections between these leaders and agents of change.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Civil servants took part in the Regional Exchange Programme. In the period between 6-17 March 2017, each action country hosted a working group from the other 5 WB6. The 6 working groups as well as their hosting country have been agreed among selected participants during the

executive training programme. All pre-departure arrangements have been set before the departure of participants.

- Each working group elaborated a specific assignment, which has been defined at the end of the executive training programme based on discussions held during the training. Each working group produced a high quality paper on the agreed topic.
- Networking, lessons learnt and visibility events were organised throughout the region
- Regional Alumni Conference took place in Pristina on 3-4 May 2017. The main findings and results of each working group have been presented during the conference.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Six research papers have been produced as a result of the Regional Exchange Component on the following topics: (1) Sustainable Model of Legal Approximation Platform, (2) How to Improve Business Environment in the Western Balkans, (3) Role of Media and Civil Society Actors in the Integration Process, (4) Budgetary Procedures Towards Efficiency, (5) Strategic Documents Towards EU Accession, (6) EU Mechanisms (including Strategies and Legislation) on Gender Equality and Fundamental Rights of Communities and other Groups
- The action demonstrated the strong willingness of the participants to learn and to work together in multinational groups,

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The positive evaluation of the pilot scheme resulted in the proposal to extend the action for the following two years.

CHAPTER 8 : OTHER HORIZONTAL ACTIONS

8.1 EU AGENCIES

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Preparatory measures for the participation of candidates and potential candidates in EU Agencies
EU contribution:	EUR 4.46 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant contracts
Contract reference:	11 contracts signed in 2015
Duration of activities:	Q3 2015 – Q1 2018
Contact:	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, agnieszka.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

List of Agencies, duration of activities and total amounts:

CN	Agency	Duration	Amount (EUR million)
360-343	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions	30/06/2015 – 29/09/2016	0.3
361-042	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control	30/06/2015-29/06/2017	0.35
362-071	European Institute for Gender Equality	30/06/2015 – 30/06/2017	0.2
361-490	European Aviation Safety Agency	01/07/2015 – 31/08/2017	0.5
361-979	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction	01/07/2015 – 30/06/2017	0.6
361-049	European Chemicals Agency	01/09/2015 – 28/02/2018	0.3
361-733	European Food Safety Authority	02/10/2015 - 30/11/2017	0.6
364-928	European Maritime Safety Agency	24/10/2015 - 23/04/2018	0.3
367-495	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work	01/12/2015 – 30/11/2017	0.41
368-133	European Railway Agency	01/01/2016-31/12/2017	0.3
367-323	European Environment Agency	01/02/2016-31/01/2018	0.6

PURPOSE

The programme supports EU Agencies to carry out preparatory measures with Beneficiaries and stakeholders to ensure that Beneficiaries are able to participate effectively in the activities of EU Agencies as they implement important parts of the EU *acquis*.

Activities are designed to help Beneficiaries understand the function and operations of EU Agencies, and more importantly their role within them. EC support also permits IPA II beneficiaries to involve other relevant national stakeholders in their activities in ways similar to those of EU Member States. This support mainly consists of advice on organisational matters, staff training and participation in stakeholder meetings.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

The Agencies carry out preparatory measures comprising interactive working sessions, trainings and workshops, aiming at capacity building, transfer of knowledge and development of skills that should lead to the creation of the necessary administrative structures, compliance of the national legislation with the EU *acquis*, application of the standardised methodologies in the field of expertise of respective agencies, or establishment of effective networks. Activities also cover preparation and translation of documents and implementation of surveys. Given the large number of contracts, a comprehensive presentation of each project would go beyond the scope of this report. Therefore only some examples are presented which do not indicate an order of priority.

EASA

Highly specialised workshops and working sessions with regard to the State Safety Programme were delivered for the experts of the countries in strengthening the civil aviation oversight capacity.

Dedicated on-site support activities were conducted with the aim to further support the development of well-functioning and sustainable oversight systems.

Several on-the-job (OJT) sessions were conducted with the support of mature civil aviation oversight authorities of the EU covering a long range of the aviation safety spectrum.

The official Steering Committee closing session was another event, organised within the reporting period.

ECDC

Three specialised training workshops were organised for the experts working in the field of communicable disease prevention and control, namely on cross-sectoral biorisk awareness, modelling of HIV surveillance data, and epidemic intelligence system on cross-border outbreaks of food-and waterborne diseases. In addition to these three hands-on training events and seven ECDC meetings for focal points of specific disease networks, a regional Multi-country workshop on microbiology laboratory systems supporting public health was organised. It brought together 19 representatives from Western Balkan countries and Turkey, seven experts from EU Member States, representatives from the European Commission (DG SANTE), WHO Regional Office for Europe, and ECDC to reflect the work done by countries in reviewing and re-organising their national laboratory networks; identifying gaps at the national level related to the reference laboratory functions; facilitating the discussion on shared expertise across countries; and sharing experiences around common strategic issues in public health microbiology laboratory system development.

ECHA

Nearly 30 representatives of the beneficiaries (Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) participated in seven EU level events: workshop on the Implementation of ECHA's Integrated Regulatory Strategy; HelpNet Steering Group Meeting,

workshops and IT-tools training; ECHA's Stakeholders' Day; Forum-26 for Exchange of Information on Enforcement; ECHA's Restriction Workshop; ECHA's 10th Anniversary seminar; Helsinki Chemicals Forum.

In addition, two IPA specific workshops were organised for the beneficiaries:

- IPA Workshop on Practical Risk Assessment for REACH on 5-6 April in Tirana, Albania: twenty-five participants from Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.
- Regulatory Workshop on 15 May in Belgrade, Serbia: fifteen Serbian officers.

EFSA

Agreements on the participation of the Assistant Coordinator (AC) in the framework of the project have been concluded with two more IPA countries (Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina – total no. of agreements is 6).

National hands on training on collecting and reporting to EFSA zoonoses, Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and Food borne outbreaks (FBOs) data took places in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia in February and March, with around 50 participants from various national food institutions involved in data collection.

Web conference on Food Ex2 use was arranged for participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

Around 124 IAP representatives participated in 13 EFSA's cooperation and scientific networks with the Member States, Panel Working Groups and two multi countries IPA training on food safety risk assessment topics.

In order to better define activities for the new project, EFSA conducted an online survey in April 2017 to collect input from IPA target audience on priorities for technical cooperation with EFSA.

EIGE

EIGE had organized two network meetings in the reporting period, co-hosted one event and participated in two conferences; has provided technical assistance to all 7 countries in their efforts in producing Gender Equality Index; included some statistical data on all IPA countries in its Gender Statistics Database and included data of three countries in Women and Men in Decision Making Database; prepared a contact list of all IPA related contacts – total of 248 contacts and added them to the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system database; including significant number of EIGE newsletter recipients from IPA countries; including sending regular updates about major developments at EIGE and has collected 115 IPA-related resources in the Research and documentation database in the reporting period from all countries.

EMSA

Three training sessions were delivered at EMSA's premises, including one general training on the EU Maritime Legislation and two more technical trainings on Ballast Water Management and on Accident Investigation. Officials from some of the beneficiary countries participated in six events normally organised for EU Member States, dealing with EMSA's systems and services for traffic and pollution monitoring. EMSA provided some of the countries with images from CleanSeaNet (EMSA's oil spill monitoring and polluter identification service).

EU-OSHA

During the period EU-OSHA supported two conferences by speakers and organised a training on OiRa tools for SME's risk assessment. There were two Focal Point meetings held in Bilbao with the participation of the Focal Points from the Beneficiary countries. Promotional materials for the

European Healthy Workplaces Campaign have been sent to the Beneficiary countries and OSH information was translated into their languages.

In April 2017 a mining company from Serbia was among the winners of the Good Practice Awards – European competition for outstanding and innovative contributions to workplace safety and health organised by EU-OSHA as part of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY - JUNE 2017)

EASA

Activities undertaken have helped the beneficiaries to strengthen and to acquire new skills and knowledge on aviation safety with particular focus on EU rules and requirements as well as to establish well-functioning and sustainable oversight systems.

ECDC

96 experts from EU enlargement countries participated in eleven ECDC events:

- Three hands-on specialised training workshops on EPIS-FWD, HIV modelling tool, and biorisk awareness and mitigation;
- Seven meetings of ECDC networks: emerging and vector-borne diseases, EU reference laboratories for antimicrobial resistance, European reference laboratory network for tuberculosis, NFP for Microbiology, NFP for Preparedness and Response, NFP for Threat Detection and IHR, Hepatitis B and C, and Tuberculosis surveillance;
- One Multi-country workshop on microbiology laboratory systems supporting public health

ECDC, after consultation with National ECDC Correspondents, submitted the proposal for follow-up activities for external funding under IPA II by DG NEAR to support national counterparts from EU enlargement countries in their preparation for participation in ECDC structures and activities during 2017 – 2019.

ECHA

In the Integrated Regulatory Strategy Workshop, the beneficiaries learned about the state of play and ECHA's actions to implement the strategy. The HelpNet meeting, workshops and IT-tools training provided the beneficiaries with up-to-date information on topical issues on REACH, CLP and BPR and the Stakeholders' Day gave them the latest news on the REACH 2018 registration process. In the Forum-26 meeting, a Serbian inspector presented their enforcement organisation, capacities and activities. The Forum will base their decision on the Serbian participation as an observer in the future work of this ECHA body on the shared information. The discussions in the Restriction Workshop on how to improve this regulatory process are relevant to the beneficiaries in relation to the restrictions that have been transposed in their national legislation. The 10th Anniversary seminar highlighted ECHA's achievements and challenges from the start of the REACH regulation and provide an outlook for the future implementation of the EU chemical legislation. The Helsinki Chemicals Forum on the other hand enabled the participants to get insights in to the chemical management at global level and to establish/maintain contacts with peers in international organisations, industry, NGOs, academics and the media.

EFSA

National reports on zoonoses, AMR and FBOs are finalised and sent to EFSA's Data Warehouse (DWH) by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

The latest scientific report on Lumpy Skin Disease of AHAW Panel was prepared with input received from IPA countries: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/170420>

All 7 pre-accession countries have been included in the BfR food safety almanac, joint activities of EFSA's MSs focal points members and IPA focal point observers:

<http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/364/eu-food-safety-almanac.pdf>

EFSA submitted the proposal for the new project 2017 – 2019 under EC Multi-country Action entitled "*Preparatory measures for the participation of IPA beneficiaries in EU agencies*"

EIGE

Cooperation with all Western Balkan countries state institutions progressed as expected and exceeded expectations in some cases. EIGE has established a good working relationship with the institutions responsible for advancement of gender equality in the IPA countries; EIGE's publications and other tangible work outcomes have been regularly shared with key partners in each IPA country. All seven IPA countries have taken concrete steps in the production of their national Gender Equality Index and EIGE strengthened cooperation with gender focal points in EUDs in IPA countries, as well as DG NEAR and DG JUST.

EMSA

The implemented activities have enabled beneficiary countries to strengthen their administrative capacity and organisation capability needed for the implementation and enforcement of international and EU maritime law. The participation in the meetings or trainings on EMSA's maritime systems has helped the participants acquire technical skills and practical experience on how to make the best possible use of the systems, and the provision of CSN images is a valuable tool for oil spill detection.

EU-OSHA

The focal points better understand EU-OSHA's network. OSH professionals from the beneficiary countries extended their knowledge on the European OSH system, the importance of Social Dialogue and the Healthy Workplaces Campaign. European OSH information was translated into local languages.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

EASA

Activities ended on 30 June. The Agency is planning to continue cooperation with IPA beneficiaries.

ECDC

Implementation of this ECDC action ended in June 2017 with participation of total of 304 experts from Western Balkans and Turkey in ECDC technical discussions and network meetings over the last 24 months. Through these technical cooperation activities, ECDC further supported integration of national counterparts in, inter alia, ECDC epidemic intelligence systems on food and water-borne diseases and Legionnaires disease, networks of focal points for microbiology, threat detection, preparedness and response, as well as pilot submission of national surveillance data to TESSy on mutually agreed diseases, and active participation in ECDC disease network meetings. In addition, ECDC continuously provided capacity strengthening and best practice sharing activities in the field of communicable disease surveillance, prevention, and control. EU enlargement countries benefitted from the opportunity to test feasibility to use EULabCap tool to measure microbiology laboratory capabilities for communicable diseases and participate in ECDC EQA for several FWD pathogens.

ECHA

During the second half of 2017, the project will contribute to a workshop on SVHC that is foreseen to be organised in Belgrade. Study visits in Croatia and Hungary on competent authority tasks will also take place. In addition, the project will finance the beneficiaries' participation in ECHA's 5th Biocides Stakeholders' Day in September and in the Open Session of the Forum-28 for Exchange of Information on Enforcement in November. Some of ECHA's CLP Campaign 2017 material will be translated into Serbian and published.

EFSA

In the next period two multi country IPA training on risk communication (Skopje) and exposure assessment (Belgrade) will be arranged. In addition, working group on LSD will hold a meeting back to back to the Standing Group of Experts on Lumpy Skin Disease (GF-TADs) in Montenegro.

Hands on training on pesticides and Veterinary drug residues data collection and reporting to EFSA will be arranged back to back with respective ESFA's scientific network meetings.

IPA representatives will be invited to attend 8 EFSA's cooperation/scientific networks with the Member States.

EIGE

EIGE will continue cooperation with the beneficiaries in Western Balkans under the new project entitled "*EIGE's cooperation with the EU candidate and potential candidate countries*".

EMSA

EMSA will deliver a training session on Ship Security and two training sessions on marine environmental issues. Three of the beneficiary countries will also participate in a training on CleanSeaNet in a 'Train-The-Trainer' format.

In addition, two in-country trainings will be delivered: one training on EU Maritime Legislation for Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, delivered in Serbia, and one training in Albania on Flag State Implementation and Port State Control. Port State Control officers from Montenegro have also been invited to some of the Paris MoU seminars as a way to assist the country to move closer to meeting the requirements for membership in the Memorandum. Furthermore, beneficiaries may be offered access to the e-learning modules that EMSA is currently producing.

EU-OSHA

EU-OSHA plans to provide speakers to six training courses in the Western Balkans and invite participants from the region to two trainings and the closing meeting of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2017-2017.

8.2 REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme for 2016, IPA 2016/037-900
Project title:	Enhancing mobility, connectivity and competitiveness in South East Europe – Support to RCC
EU contribution:	EUR 7.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant agreement with RCC
Contract reference:	CN 2016/380-471
Duration of activities:	01/01/2017 – 31/12/2019

Links:	www.rcc.int
Contact:	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, agnieszka.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to provide financial assistance to the functioning of the RCC Secretariat and contribution to the activities of the RCC in 2017, as foreseen in its 2017 -2019 Strategy and Work Programme, in particular implementing the SEE 2020 strategy.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY– JUNE 2017)

Within the reporting period RCC continued the regular SEE2020 programming, implementation, monitoring and donor coordination processes. Intense activities were also undertaken with the aim of elaboration of the Consolidated Multi-annual Action Plan on Regional Economic Area in Western Balkans Six (MAP), expected to be endorsed at the Trieste Western Balkans Summit. Under the **Competitiveness** Flagship, the activities were focused on: improvement of the investment and business environment in the region by putting in place a regional investment reform agenda seeking to harmonize the rules for investment entry, treatment, promotion and mutual protections across the region and complement the free trade agenda already in place; strengthening the industrial base through priority sectoral work and development of regional value chains, and their integration in European and global value chains, by developing and globally promoting a joint regional offer in tourism industry. Under the **Connectivity** flagship, intensive consultations took part with governments, EC and regional and international stakeholders on prioritizing joint regional measures supporting the digital integration of WB6 within the pan-European digital market, as part of the MAP. Preparations have kick-started for the organization of the ambitious High-level WB6 IT Summit in 2018, with the aim of initiating a cooperative regional multi-stakeholder dialogue on the digital transformation challenges and prospects in WB. Industry led study on Digitization prospects in WB is on-going, analysing the current state of play of digitisation, assessing its economic impacts and formulating policy and regulatory recommendations to facilitate the take-off of digitisation. In addition, the interim findings of the World Bank-led study Balkan Digital Highway, generated following the field visit phase, are set to be presented in the framework of the 2017 Infifest. Under the **Skills and Mobility** flagship, the text of the draft multilateral Agreement/s on recognition of professional qualifications for Doctors of Medicine, Dentists, Architects and Civil Engineers will be finalized by the end of 2017. To support the development of the action plans on removal of obstacles on recognition of professional and academic qualifications and mobility of researchers (integrated within MAP), technical workshops were organised with representatives of the Ministries of Education, Science, Trade and Labour to agree on the respective action plans. Following the inclusion of the WB economies within the regular EU Report on Open Science, as well as the successful integration of WB economies in EU's Open Science working group, in observers' capacity, RCC's work on supporting the development of Open Science in the region will include: mapping of the existing research infrastructure, including the e-infrastructure, and supporting the development of open access policies and negotiations with publishers to ensure better access to international journals for the WB research community. For an effective implementation of the instruments across the described flagships, a set of activities to enhance good governance has been put forth. In order to design policies and legislation in an inclusive manner and enable an active participation of society in this process, an activity to enact public participation more effectively has started off. Efforts in reducing corruption by strengthening institutional integrity have been advanced by developing sectoral approaches to corruption risk assessment. The process of enhancing capacities of judges and prosecutors in cross-border cooperation and European law and strengthening judicial training institutions has been continued within the established and functioning SEE Judicial Training

Institutions Network (SEE JTI). Training materials in cross-border cooperation in civil and commercial matters has been developed and regional training for SEE judges organised.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- SEE2020 Annual Implementation Report for 2017 endorsed
- SEE2020 Programming cycle completed with endorsed Programming Document 2017-2019 and organized annual regional donor coordination meeting
- Draft MAP prepared, based on series of regional technical workshops on prioritization and validation of MAP actions
- Study Investment Policy Review for SEE done in cooperation with UNCTAD
- Roadmap for the Regional Policy and Promotion project prepared in cooperation with the World Bank Group
- Action Document on Regional project on tourism finalized
- Agreement on the Note to the Governments to open the negotiations on four multilateral agreements on recognition of professional qualifications for Doctors of Medicine, Dentists, Architects and Civil Engineers
- Completed Mapping of the Positions of the Key Stakeholders on the multilateral agreements on recognition of professional qualifications for the selected professions
- Drafted Western Balkans Recommendation on Public Participation
- Initiated Checklist for corruption risks in healthcare sector
- Developed training materials for SEE judges in cross-border cooperation in civil and commercial matters and organized regional seminar for judges as future trainers
- Initiated study in the area of judicial training

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Key activities planned for the next semester include:

- Stock-taking and needs assessment of the measures within the MAP and a donor coordination meeting on MAP (co-organized with CEFTA)
- Launch of SEE2020 Programming and Monitoring cycle for 2018
- Launch of Balkan Barometer (BB) 2017 edition and survey stage completed under BB 2018
- Legal base analysis for regional investment instrument as a support to formalize the investment reform agenda
- Establishment of the Working group on Capital Markets with the aim of broadening the region's capital markets integration
- Launch of EU-funded Regional tourism project
- Establishment of an organizational Steering Committee for the 2018 IT Summit and a stock taking meeting on IT Summit
- Meeting of the Working Group on Open Science and the Joint Working Group on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications
- Seminar on Automatic Recognition of Academic Qualifications

- Study on Automatic Recognition of Academic Qualifications in SEE including case examples of automatic recognition practices in the Benelux and Nordic countries
- Study on Smart Specialisation Strategies in SEE
- Endorsement of Western Balkans Recommendation on Public Participation by the Regional Working Group on Better Regulation and by the ministers in charge of public administration
- Finalization of the Checklist of corruption risks in healthcare sector and its application commenced in three WB economies

8.3 CROSS-BORDER INSTITUTION BUILDING - CBIB+ PHASE II

Programme reference:	Multi-Country Action Programme 2014/031-603
Project title:	Cross-border Institution Building - CBIB+ Phase II
EU contribution:	EUR 2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with GIZ International Services (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/368-298
Duration of activities:	01/12/2015 – 30/11/2018
Links:	www.cbibplus.eu
Contact :	Jlenia Destito, jlenia.destito@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

This project aims at enhancing regional coordination and harmonisation of approaches, as well as promoting a culture of best practices and sharing of experience in the field of cross-border cooperation (CBC) at intra-Western Balkans. It also supports a smooth transition from the IPA to the IPA II programmes in CBC, particularly in those countries operating under indirect management.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY 2017 – JUNE 2017)

- Organisation of the 4th Regional Consultative Forum in Belgrade (Serbia) on 23-24 February 2017.
- Organisation of a regional workshop for staff of the IPA II joint technical secretariats (JTSs) in Durrës (Albania) on 23-24 May 2017.
- Coordination of a technical working group (TWG) on strategic projects under IPA II CBC programmes.
- Assessment and discussion of the capacity building needs amongst staff of the central finance and contracting units (CFCUs) in Montenegro and Serbia.
- Dissemination of a questionnaire for grant beneficiaries and unsuccessful applicants under the 2007-2013 calls for proposals and analysis of the responses.
- Preparation of a monitoring system for IPA II CBC programmes.
- On-the-job capacity building to the JTS staff while compiling interim reports under the technical assistance contracts of the IPA II CBC programmes.
- Organisation and delivery of several training events for management structures and assessors and evaluators of calls for proposals.

- Upgrading and continuous use of several communication tools (project website, newsletter, social media pages and flash news).

OUTPUTS (JANUARY 2017 – JUNE 2017)

- Advanced draft of the guide for the identification, selection and implementation of strategic projects under IPA II CBC programmes.
- Report on the findings of the survey on 2007-2013 strategic projects.
- Analytical report on the survey under the CBC programme the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Albania.
- Several analysis reports stemming from surveys on the JMC members (AL-XK and MK-AL),
- Action package for the performance framework and templates for programme reporting and regional range reporting.
- First draft of the monitoring system presented at the JTS regional workshop in Durrës.
- Training materials from several capacity building events.
- Second issue of the project newsletter ‘Yellow&Blue’ prepared and ready for printing.
- Evaluation of the research papers on CBC in the Western Balkans, received under a contest for EU-funded prizes.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Organisation of the fifth CBC regional consultative forum in October 2017 in Struga (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).
- Coordination of a TWG on performance management – impact assessment methodology.
- On-the-job training for the use of monitoring tools to improve the performance framework of the IPA II CBC programmes.
- Organisation of a tailor made training on the monitoring system for the grant beneficiaries under the first IPA II CBC calls for proposals.
- Organisation of different training events for programme structures and grant beneficiaries in line with the requests received from key stakeholders.
- Circulation of regular monthly flash news and finalisation for printing of the second issue of the newsletter ‘Yellow&Blue’ under this phase of CBIB+.
- Delivery of a training module to improve the public relations skills of the CBC management structures.

8.4 FOSTERING REGIONAL COOPERATION

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2014/ 031-603
Project title:	Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan (WB) countries in the process towards EU integration – Support to the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South-East Europe
EU contribution:	EUR 1 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South-East Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2015/359-331
Duration of activities:	02/06/2015 – 31/05/2017

Links:	www.seerural.org
Contact :	Jlenia Destito, Jlenia.DESTITO@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project aims at fostering regional cooperation among institutions and stakeholders in the agriculture and food sector, as well as facilitating the process of balanced territorial development of the Western Balkan countries in the progression towards EU integration.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- 4 Regional expert advisory working groups (REAWG) organised on topics related to agriculture and rural development and one SWG Assembly session.
- 11 Stakeholder Group (SHG) meetings in the cross-border regions “Drina - Tara”, “Drina - Sava”, “Prespa” and “Shara”, “Pcinja - Krajishte”, “Prokletije – Bjeshket e Nemuna” and “Krsh”.
- 16 “People to People” (P2P) events in all cross-border regions.
- 5 capacity building events.
- Publication and promotion of a baseline analysis and strategic planning study on economic development for the cross-border regions “Pcinja - Krajishte”, “Prokletije – Bjeshket e Nemuna”, “Krsh”.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Policy recommendations on agriculture and rural development.
- Preparation of project proposals focusing on ‘green’ value chains, development of business plans and sustainable use of natural resources in the “Drina-Tara”, “Drina-Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra”, “Pcinja - Krajishte”, “Prokletije – Bjeshket e Nemuna” and “Krsh” cross-border regions.
- Strategic priorities for economic development of the cross-border regions “Pcinja - Krajishte”, “Prokletije – Bjeshket e Nemuna”, “Krsh” are set in line with the EU integration process on agriculture and rural development.

8.5 MONITORING

Programme reference:	Support Measure – Monitoring Programme
Project title:	Multi-country Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) - Western Balkans & Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 6.89 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service Contract with Particip GmbH
Contract reference:	CN 2015/361-031
Duration of activities:	03/6/2015 – 02/06/2019
Contact :	Petra Schlueter, petra.schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The contract provides an external independent Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) service for national IPA programmes and the multi-beneficiary programmes in the Western Balkans region. The

purpose of ROM is to support the results monitoring activities of programmes and projects by the Operational Managers in the EU Delegations and at EC Headquarters. The ROM reviews are conducted in accordance with the ROM Handbook.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

The project completed the 2016-17 ROM Review Workplan and is now implementing the 2017-18 Workplan covering the period from May 2017 to April 2018. A total of 57 ROM missions were launched in the semester covering problematic, innovative, or not visited programmes or allocations where specialist sector knowledge is required.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

61 draft ROM Reports were issued in the period. The reports addressed performance issues in Albania (10), Bosnia and Herzegovina (7), FYR Macedonia (9), Kosovo (3) Montenegro (9), Serbia (7) and Regional programmes (16). The report outcomes are a contribution to the overall results monitoring of IPA programmes by the Operational Managers (OMs) and support to interim decisions and actions taken by the OMs to improve the outcomes achieved by the programmes.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The 2017-18 ROM Review Workplan has 72 approved ROM Review missions to be made up to April 2018 and a further 10 missions pending approval. Approximately 50 ROM Reviews are expected to be made in the next semester, including a small number of National missions in Turkey. The project will also conduct a pilot exercise in the region for On-going Programme Results Reporting (OPRR) later in 2017.

8.6 EVALUATION OF REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme, IPA 2015/031-609
Project title:	Evaluation of regional organisations in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 0.295 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Specific Contract under Framework Contract with Particip GmbH
Contract reference:	2016/377-819
Duration of activities:	02/11/2016 – 30/06/2017
Contact:	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, agnieszka.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an overall independent assessment of the regional organisations and fora in the Western Balkans and the role they play in the regional integration and accession perspective including recommendations on possible streamlining.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2016)

- Kick-off meeting

- Inception phase - desk research
- Setting out the detailed design of the evaluation, including all aspects of methodology, and consultation strategy - drafting Inception Report

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2016)

- Inception Report submitted

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Desk and field phase - missions in the countries/region: data collection, analysis and preparation of the desk report/ mapping of regional organisations and their scope;
- Synthesis phase – assessment, recommendations – drafting Final Report and Executive Summary

8.7 VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Enhancing the regional dimension of the pre-accession assistance by the improved visibility of IPA Multi-country projects
EU contribution:	EUR 0.357 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Specific Contract under Framework Contract with JCP Srl
Contract reference:	CN 2014/350-489
Duration of activities:	01/12/2013 – 31/10/2017
Contact:	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, agnieszka.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The global objective is to increase the visibility of the IPA MB Programme as part of overall IPA visibility and communication campaigns run by the Information and Communication unit of DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations for the visibility of EU pre-accession funds.

It focuses on producing success stories, identifying synergies between programmes and projects, drafting a communication handbook and providing training seminars on its use, and providing support and advice to staff on communication policy and events.

ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- Drafting of success stories (10)
- Final editing of success stories (24)
- Translation of 16 success stories into 7 IPA languages
- Graphic design of success story template

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2017)

- 24 final success stories submitted
- Translations of 4 stories into 6 IPA languages submitted

- Mock-up template submitted

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Final editing of remaining success stories (6)
- Translation of remaining stories (14)
- Layout of all stories and translations (240)
- Finalisation of Handbook
- Training sessions for Task Managers on use of Handbook (4/5)