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ANNEX

**to Commission Implementing Decision adopting a Support Measure for Communication
about the European Union and the EU Accession Process
for the years 2019-2020**

1 IDENTIFICATION

	Budgetary commitment 2019	Budgetary commitment 2020
Beneficiary	IPA II Beneficiaries ⁽¹⁾	
Basic act	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)	
CRIS/ABAC commitment	2019/041-172	2020/041-775
Total cost = EU Contribution	EUR 25 505 000	
	EUR 12 790 000	EUR 12 715 000 Estimations for 2020 are subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.
Budget line	22.020401	
Method of implementation	Direct management by the European Commission	
Final date for contracting	31 December 2020	31 December 2021
Indicative final date for operational implementation	31 December 2023	31 December 2024

⁽¹⁾ The Icelandic government has decided to put the EU accession negotiations on hold. In this context, the European Commission, in agreement with the Icelandic government, has suspended preparatory work on IPA for the period 2014-2020.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME

2.1 DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIONS

The envisaged assistance is deemed to follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ⁽²⁾.

Action 1	Support measure for communication about the European Union and the EU accession process	EUR 25 505 000 EUR 12 790 000 (2019) EUR 12 715 000 (2020)
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(1) *Description of the Action, objectives, expected results and key performance indicators*

Description of the Action

Effective communication on how the EU accession process works and its implications for the citizens' lives both in the candidate countries and potential candidates and in the EU remains essential to ensure public support. Public understanding of the benefits of the EU membership and the accession process is also vital to encourage political leaders in the candidate countries and potential candidates to pursue the necessary reforms vigorously. This requires a joint effort of the EU and its Member States, as well as of the aspiring countries' governments and civil society.

The General Affairs Council Conclusions of December 2015 stressed the need for the EU to step up its efforts and actions, along with the continued engagement of Member States and partners in this area, and to enhance through improved strategic communication the public understanding of the benefits and obligations of EU membership.

In response to that European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have jointly developed a strategic communication framework based on clear objectives, a common and compelling EU narrative and thematic communication on key priorities. This framework is implemented through the following measures:

- further **professionalisation** of strategic communications work by better use of media opportunities during high level visits and events, more variety in messaging and used platforms, tailored content creation and story-telling, backed up by better knowledge of audiences and evaluation of concrete results and impact;
- developing a set of **key messages** for each candidate country and potential candidate and for the EU audiences in order to support clearer and more coherent communication by all EU actors, including the EU Members States, making best strategic use of EU Info Centres to disseminate the narrative and the key messages to a wider public and advocating to national authorities in the region closer alignment with this narrative and these messages;
- drawing on the experience in the Eastern Partnership region, setting up a Western Balkans **StratCom Task Force** to coordinate effort and shape media messaging and positive campaigning, and to respond to disinformation activities by external actors;

⁽²⁾ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8442/consolidated-list-sanctions_en

- strengthening of the *strategic communications network* by bringing together the staff of the European Commission and the EEAS from headquarters and delegations in order to improve the coherence and complementarity of activities and make best use of experience and skills,
- closer *cooperation with Member States* in planning and coordinating communication activities, in particular, aligning messages, sharing information and organising joint events;
- enhanced coordination with the *European Parliament, IFIs/IOs, think tanks* and *civil society*;
- targeted use of *modern technologies* to reach out to various audiences, with a special focus on social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Storify, etc.)

The support measure for communication about the European Union and the EU accession process, financed from the Instrument for Pre-Accession II (IPA II), will provide funding to continue the implementation of the strategic communication framework and its measures.

It will target the audiences in the candidate countries and potential candidates through activities implemented by the EU Delegations/Office.

The programme will also contribute to the promotion of the EU as a stronger global actor, and the communication of other corporate priorities such as security, migration, jobs, growth and investment. It will thus supplement the European Commission's corporate communication actions, to which the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations is contributing with IPA II funds through a separate financing decision.

The following range of activities will be implemented, taking into account the target audience and the communication context, in particular, the stage of progress towards EU integration in the individual candidate countries and potential candidates:

- establishment and management of EU Information Centres and Info Points in the region;
- thematic communication campaigns linked to political and policy priorities of individual candidate countries and potential candidates;
- outreach and networking (e.g. organisation of visibility events, seminars, conferences, fairs, study visits, workshops and trainings, including events for specific target groups, e.g. media, business, youth, think-tanks and digital influencers);
- cultural diplomacy (e.g. film festivals, book fairs, youth and sports events, video and writing competitions);
- media relations and media rebuttal (e.g. media monitoring, production of media materials, press events, training for journalists, press and media trips);
- online and social media activities (websites, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Storify, etc.);
- production of different information tools and products (publications, audio-visual materials, EU branded promotional materials);
- opinion polling on awareness of and support for the EU accession process and EU membership, as well as EU values, policies and programmes;
- assessment of information and communication actions (e.g. survey-based evaluations, focus groups and studies).

Objectives

The overall objective of this Action is to raise public awareness about the EU values, policies and programmes and to ensure an informed public debate on benefits and challenges of the EU accession process and the EU membership, in reinforced cooperation with the Member States.

The specific objects are:

- to contribute to increased public awareness and support for *EU values, policies and programmes* and their impact on people's everyday life;
- to contribute to increased public understanding and support for the *EU accession process* with the accompanying *socio-economic transformation* and its long term benefits and opportunities for citizens and economies;
- to contribute to increased acknowledgement of *EU funding* in the enlargement region *and its correlation with the EU values and policy objectives*, with a focus on tangible positive impact of EU funded projects on citizens and economies;
- to contribute to *addressing relevant issues related to disinformation*, inter alia by raising awareness for disinformation activities.

Expected results

The main results expected are:

- factual information is disseminated to target groups through relevant channels about the EU values, policies and programmes, as well as the opportunities and challenges linked to the EU accession process and the EU membership;
- debate among target groups on EU related issues is facilitated;
- effective contacts and partnerships with relevant actors are established in order to ensure sustainability and multiplier effect;
- capabilities of stakeholders and multipliers to communicate about the EU and the EU accession process are increased;
- awareness of disinformation activities in the region is increased.

Key performance indicators

The indicators to measure the outputs, results and impact of activities will be set in line with the Communication Network Indicators matrix of the European Commission ⁽³⁾:

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	RESULTS	IMPACT
NETWORKS	Number of contacts: visitors, event participants, calls, emails, etc. [counting]	Overall usefulness of the contact [survey]	Number of people having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of the contact [Eurobarometer, survey]
EVENTS	Number of attendees: physical and online [counting]	Overall usefulness of the event for attendees [survey]	Percentage of attendees having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of the event [survey]
PUBLICATIONS	Number of readers / listeners of the publication [web analytics, Office of Publications orders]	Overall usefulness of publication for readers [survey]	Number of readers having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of a publication [survey]
MEDIA RELATIONS	Number of online views of media releases [web analytics]	Percentage of media items published in tier(s) 1-6 in a sample of EU related media coverage	Percentage of citizens that have the perception that they are well informed about the political

⁽³⁾ <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/corp/comm/Evaluation/Pages/Do-You-Need-Methodological-Guidance.aspx>

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	RESULTS	IMPACT
		[media monitoring]	priorities of the EU [Eurobarometer, survey]
VIDEOS / PHOTOS	Number of views, embeds and downloads [Audio-Visual Portal, web analytics, social media metrics, global counting]	Overall usefulness of the video for the viewer [survey]	Number of viewers having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of the video [survey]
SOCIAL MEDIA	Number of impressions [social media metrics]	Number of engagement: shares, likes, clickthroughs, comments [social media metrics]	Percentage of people reached having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of engaging with EU social media content [survey, for corporate campaigns]
WEBSITES	Number of visits [web analytics]	Conversion rate: downloads, registrations, form completed, etc. [web analytics]	Number of visitors having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of the web visit [survey, rating widget]
INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS	Reach: Number of contacts made during the campaign [audited circulation and audience analytics]	Recall: Number of people who can recall a campaign message [survey]	Change of opinion: Percentage of people having a more positive opinion of the EU as a result of the campaign [Eurobarometer, survey]

(2) Assumptions

The expected results are based on the assumption that the public and media remain interested in EU related information, and that the EU accession process remains a political priority for the national authorities in the candidate countries and potential candidates, and in the Member States, with commitment and willingness of all stakeholders to stimulate the debate on EU related issues. Major domestic or international political developments could create a risk of hampering the communication efforts towards the EU accession process.

(3) Implementation modalities

The Action will be implemented through direct management by the EU Delegations/Office in the candidate countries and potential candidates.

The Action will be implemented in its entirety through procurement.

The procurement procedures will contribute to all objectives and results of the Action.

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement is EUR 25 505 000 (EUR 12 790 000 in 2019 and EUR 12 715 000 in 2020).

(4) Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement

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

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the implementation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

3 INDICATIVE BUDGET TABLE – EU CONTRIBUTION IN EUR

	2019	2020	Total
EU Delegation to Albania	-	3 000 000	3 000 000
EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 500 000	2 000 000	3 500 000
EU Office in Kosovo*	2 100 000	-	2 100 000
EU Delegation to Montenegro	1 400 000	-	1 400 000
EU Delegation to North Macedonia	3 800 000	-	3 800 000
EU Delegation to Serbia	1 990 000	2 715 000	4 705 000
EU Delegation to Turkey	2 000 000	5 000 000	7 000 000
Total	12 790 000	12 715 000	25 505 000

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

4 PERFORMANCE MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

As part of its performance measurement framework, the Commission shall monitor and assess progress towards achievement of the specific objectives set out in the IPA II Regulation on the basis of pre-defined, clear, transparent measurable indicators.

The Commission will collect performance data from relevant sources, which will be aggregated and analysed at the level of this programme.

The effectiveness of implemented activities and the achievement of objectives will be monitored and evaluated through quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks in line with the Communication Network Indicators matrix of the European Commission.