

COMMISSION DECISION

C(2008)8472 of 19/12/2008

adopting the Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2008

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

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

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to candidate and potential candidates.
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006, the assistance should be provided through multi-annual or annual programmes, which can be established by country and by component, or, as appropriate, by group of countries or by theme. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the general policy framework referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 and the relevant multi-annual indicative planning document referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) The Council established for all candidate and potential candidate countries a European or Accession Partnership. The Commission has adopted on 17 July 2008 a Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document 2008-2010 which presents indicative allocations for the main priorities for pre-accession assistance to the countries concerned².
- (4) Therefore, the Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2008 aims at providing assistance to: support the Community Agencies in preparing their counterparts in the Beneficiaries to participate in (the activities) of these Agencies; contribute to the increased legal and social inclusion of the marginalised communities and facilitate their full enjoyment of citizenship rights in the region of the Western Balkans; support the monitoring and implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) and the activities of the South East European Investment Committee; enable cooperation between and exchange of approximately 500 academic staff and students; allow approximately 140 students from the Western Balkans and Turkey to undertake postgraduate studies in EU high profile master's courses; promote non-formal education and youth sectors in the region by supporting projects with the Beneficiaries; improve the capabilities of quality infrastructure³ bodies to implement

¹ OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 82.

² C(2008)3585, 17.07.2008

³ Quality infrastructure refers here to all aspects of metrology, standardization, accreditation, market surveillance, testing, quality management, inspection and certification that have a bearing on conformity assessment (abbreviated as MSTQ). This includes both public and private institutions and the regulatory framework within which they operate.

strategies in compliance with accession negotiations; continue upgrading and strengthening the statistical systems in the Beneficiaries; improve the integrated water management of the Sava river basin; increase investments in projects related to the protection of water and water related ecosystems in the Danube and the Black Sea.

- (5) This decision meets the requirements of Article 90 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No 1605/2002⁴ (hereafter: “Implementing Rules”) and constitutes thus a financing decision within the meaning of Article 75 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities⁵ (hereafter: “Financial Regulation”).
- (6) It is appropriate to implement the Social Inclusion project in joint management with the UNHCR, as the Commission and the UNHCR have elaborated this project jointly.
- (7) In order to improve trade relations and increase investments in the Western Balkans, the implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) should be supported through a grant to the CEFTA Secretariat, in accordance with Article 168 (1) (c) of the Implementing Rules.
- (8) It is appropriate to implement Activity 2 of the Trade programme in joint management with OECD, as it has been developed jointly by the Commission and the OECD.
- (9) In light of its extensive experience and exclusive competence as foreseen in the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, a direct grant agreement will be signed with the Sava River Commission to support its activities in relation to Activity 1 for the preparation of the Sava River Basin Management Plan.
- (10) A service contract will be signed via a negotiated procedure with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) in conformity with Article 242(1) (b) of the Implementing Rules whereby “*services may be entrusted to public-sector bodies and relate to activities of an institutional nature*” for the implementation of assistance in the area of quality infrastructure.
- (11) The measures provided for by this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the IPA Committee⁶,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2a, under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2008, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

This programme shall be implemented partly by centralised management and partly by joint management with the UNHCR and the OECD.

The programme is implemented without financing agreements.

⁴ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1.

⁶ Recalling the Council Conclusions of 18 February 2008, Member States declare that the adoption of the Multi-beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2008 does not prejudice the position of each individual Member State on the status of Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99), which will be decided in accordance with their national practice and international law.

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community contribution shall be **EUR 32.9 million**, to be financed through Item 22.020701 of the general budget of the European Communities.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

ANNEX

MULTI-BENEFICIARY PROGRAMME - 2A UNDER THE IPA TRANSITION ASSISTANCE AND INSTITUTION BUILDING COMPONENT FOR THE YEAR 2008¹

SUPPORT TO THE FOLLOWING INTERVENTIONS:

- (1) PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY AGENCIES
- (2) SOCIAL INCLUSION
- (3) TRADE
- (4) EDUCATION – ERASMUS MUNDUS EXTERNAL COOPERATION WINDOW
- (5) EDUCATION – ERASMUS MUNDUS WESTERN BALKAN-TURKEY WINDOW
- (6) YOUTH IN ACTION
- (7) QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE
- (8) STATISTICS
- (9) ENVIRONMENT – SAVA RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN
- (10) ENVIRONMENT – DABLAS SECRETARIAT AND SERVICES

1. IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiaries	Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Kosovo ² Turkey Turkey is not included in projects in the areas of: (2) Social Inclusion, (3) Trade, (4) Education – External Cooperation Window, (6) Youth and (9) Environment - Sava River Basin Management Plan. Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as well as Kosovo are not included in the project (9) Environment - Sava River Basin Management Plan.
CRIS number	IPA/2008/020-320 IPA/2008/020-370

¹ The adoption of the Multi-beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA transition assistance and institution building component for the year 2008 does not prejudice the position of each individual Member State on the status of Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99, which will be decided in accordance with their national practice and international law.

² under UNSCR 1244/99.

Year	2008
Cost	EUR 32,900,000
Implementing Authority	<p>(1) Participation in the Community Agencies: European Commission</p> <p>(2) Social Inclusion: European Commission in joint management with the UNHCR</p> <p>(3) Trade: European Commission in joint management with the OECD</p> <p>(4) Education: European Commission with delegation to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency</p> <p>(5) Education: European Commission with delegation to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency</p> <p>(6) Youth in Action: European Commission with delegation to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency</p> <p>(7) Quality Infrastructure: European Commission</p> <p>(8) Statistics: European Commission, sub-delegation to Eurostat.</p> <p>(9) and (10) Environment - Sava river basin management plan and Dablas secretariat and services: European Commission with sub-delegation to DG Environment.</p>
Final date for concluding the financing agreements	This Programme will be implemented without financing agreements.
Final dates for contracting	30 November 2009 This date applies also to National co-financing.
Final dates for execution	30 November 2011 This date applies also to National co-financing.
Sector Code	99820, 15162, 33120, 11420, 11230, 16062, 14040
Budget line(s) concerned	22.02.07.01: Regional and Horizontal Programmes
Programming Task Manager	Unit D3, Regional Programmes, DG Enlargement
Implementation Task Manager	Unit D3, Regional Programmes, DG Enlargement Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. Statistical Cooperation with European and

	Mediterranean countries Unit, Eurostat DG Environment
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2. PRIORITY AXES / (MEASURES) / PROJECTS

2. a Priority axes

This Multi-beneficiary IPA Programme is designed to respond to Multi-beneficiary priority needs as indicated in the Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2008-2010 taking into account activities implemented under the National Programmes, the guidance provided in the EU strategic documents, the lessons learned from the programming and implementation of previous EU assistance and the findings from consultations with amongst others, the Beneficiaries, International Financial Institutions, the Stability Pact, the Regional Cooperation Council, the EU Member State Regional Contact Points, Civil Society Organisations and European Commission services.

To facilitate programming, the Multi-beneficiary Programme 2008 projects have been consolidated into a series of separate Programmes. The Commission Decisions³ pertaining to the Multi-beneficiary Financing Proposal (Programme) 1 (supporting Refugee Return in the Western Balkans, Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe and the Regional School for Public Administration), the Energy Community, Monitoring, the Regional Cooperation Council, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Civil Society Dialogue and Development have been adopted. The Commission Decisions regarding Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection and Cooperation with International Financing Institutions should be adopted later this year.

The Multi-beneficiary Programme 2 is presented in two parts – a and b. The Multi-beneficiary Programme 2b, which is presented in a separate Commission Decision aims to support activities in the fields of police cooperation (including (i) the fight against organised crime, in particular illicit drug trafficking and the prevention of terrorism, (ii) Regional support to strengthen the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) Centre for combating trans-border crime, education (Tempus) and animal disease eradication. The overall objective of aid to be provided under this Commission Decision, Multi-beneficiary Programme 2a, is to address the following priority areas as identified in the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010:

Priority Axe 1: Address the Political Criteria

- Support the Community Agencies in preparing their counterparts in the Beneficiaries to participate in (the activities of) these Agencies. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Public Administration, Section 2.3.1.1.1 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);

³ Support to the operational budget of the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) for the period from January 2008 to June 2009 under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component for 2008, C(2008)729, 27.02.2008; Obligation of the European Community to pay its contribution to the budget of the Energy Community under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2008, C(2008)800, 06.03.2008; Support to the operational budget of the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina from July 2008 to June 2009 under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component in 2008, C(2008) 2754, 19.06.2008; IPA monitoring programme under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component for 2008, C(2008)3569, 16.07.2008

- Contribute to the increased legal and social inclusion of marginalised communities and facilitate their full enjoyment of citizenship rights in the region of the Western Balkans. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Minority Rights, protection of minorities and refugee return, Section 2.3.1.2.1 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);
- Support the monitoring and implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) and the activities of the South East European Investment Committee. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Trade, Section 2.3.1.3.3 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);

Priority Axe 2: Address the Economic Criteria

- Enable cooperation between and exchange of approximately 500 academic staff and students. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Education, Youth and Research, Section 2.3.2. of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);
- Allow approximately 140 students from the Western Balkans and Turkey to undertake postgraduate studies in EU high profile master's courses. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Education, Youth and Research, Section 2.3.2. of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);
- Promote non-formal education and youth sectors in the region by supporting projects with the Beneficiaries. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Education, Youth and Research, Section 2.3.2. of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*).

Priority Axe 3: Ability to assume the obligations of Membership and approximation to European Standards

- Improve the capabilities of quality infrastructure⁴ bodies to implement strategies in compliance with accession negotiations. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Free Movement of Goods, Section 2.3.3.1 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);
- Continue upgrading and strengthening the statistical systems in the Beneficiaries. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Statistics, Section 2.3.3.7 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*);
- Improve the integrated water management of the Sava river basin (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Environment, Section 2.3.3.8 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*).
- Increase investments in projects related to the protection of water and water related ecosystems in the Danube and the Black Sea. (*Multi-beneficiary IPA MIPD 2008-2010, Environment, Section 2.3.3.8 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010*).

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

A summary of the project purpose, results, main activities and implementation method for each of the areas to be supported is provided below. Further details are provided in the annexed Project Fiches.

⁴ Quality infrastructure refers here to all aspects of metrology, standardization, accreditation, market surveillance, testing, quality management, inspection and certification that have a bearing on conformity assessment (abbreviated as MSTQ). This includes both public and private institutions and the regulatory framework within which they operate.

Projects by Priority Axe	Indicative EC contribution (EURm)	Project purpose, expected results, main activities and implementation summary (including type of contract/agreement and <u>indicative</u> launch date of tender procedure)
<i>Priority Axe 1: Address the Political Criteria</i>		
(1) Participation in Community Agencies	EUR 7.8m	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Community Agencies in preparing their counterparts in the Beneficiaries to participate in (the activities of) these Agencies. <p>Expected Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened ties between Beneficiaries and Agencies; • Increased understanding of the role, functioning and participation requirements of Beneficiaries and Agencies. <p>Activities:</p> <p>Awareness-raising activities and fact-finding missions to determine or fine-tune any gaps so as to allow for participation in the Agencies' work to be carried out.</p> <p>For some Agencies these needs are already very clear, in which case preparatory measures such as training activities, study visits, workshops, conferences and/or outreach actions as well as drafting/editing (and if necessary translation of manuals, guides and/or other relevant documents and reports for the benefit of Beneficiaries) will be implemented.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>On the basis of Article 168 (1) (c), this project will be implemented through direct grant agreements. The agreements should be concluded in Q1 2009. The agreements will be concluded with the following Community Agencies for the amounts indicated below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPVO (Community Plant Variety Office) – EUR 400 000 • EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) – EUR 700 000 • ECDC (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control) – EUR 400 000 • ECHA (European Chemicals Agency) – EUR 200 000 • EEA (European Environment Agency) – EUR 1 200 000 • EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) - EUR 1 000 000 • EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for

		<p>Drugs and Drug Addiction) – EUR 900 000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMSA (European Maritime Safety Agency) – EUR 300 000 • ERA (European Railway Agency) – EUR 200 000 • EU-OSHA (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work) – EUR 900 000 • EUROFOUND (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions) – EUR 700 000 • EMEA (European Medicines Agency) – EUR 900 000
(2)	Social Inclusion	<p>€1m</p> <p>Project Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the increased legal and social inclusion of marginalised communities and facilitate their full enjoyment of citizenship rights in the Western Balkans. <p>Expected Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness and pro-activity of local authorities in civil registration and in the provision of documents to marginalised communities; • Increased number of registered persons in the municipalities of the Western Balkans from marginalised groups; • Increased access to school, medical insurance, employment and civil rights for marginalised communities. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of marginalised communities in the civil registration and naturalisation process through electronic and printed media; • Raise awareness and increase pro-activity of authorities at all levels in the civil registration process; • Increase stakeholders' capacities through training, workshops, marginalised community participation, consultants and through the provision of technical support; • Advocate authorities and legislative bodies to improve procedures and services linked to civil registration; • Provide free legal aid documentation; • Facilitate the exchange of information and documentation between competent Beneficiaries in order to facilitate registration.

		<p>Implementation:</p> <p>The Commission and the UNHCR will conclude a Contribution Agreement for the implementation of this project. The agreement should be concluded in Q2 2009.</p>
(3) Trade	€0.8m	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Support the monitoring and implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) and the activities of the South East European Investment Committee.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CEFTA Secretariat effectively supports CEFTA decision making structures • Trade and investment related policies assessed and recommendations formulated including a prioritisation for policy reform (amongst others investment policies, tax policies, financial market development, human capital and labour market policies) • Progress in the work of the CEFTA Sub-Committees (i.e. elaborate on the steps required for further liberalisation of trade with agricultural products, effective tackling of the non-tariff trade barriers and enhancement of cooperation in customs matters) • Progress in the work of the South East Europe Investment Committee (SEEIC) and its Working Groups (i.e. identification of priority reforms and development of work programmes to be implemented) • Strengthened administrative capacity of authorities and institutions with respect to the implementation of CEFTA and related trade and investment policies; • Strengthened trade- investment-related technical knowledge; • Strengthened regional links and networking between governments of the Western Balkans with a view to aligning trade and investment related legislation and policies; • Reinforced links between governments and the business community. <p>Activities:</p> <p>Activity 1</p> <p>Co-financing of the operations of the CEFTA Secretariat;</p> <p>Activity 2</p>

		<p>Assessment of the trade flows among CEFTA parties and of the investment environment (in particular, investment policies, human capital development and labour market policies, tax policy and administration as well as financial market development). Provide coaching to local experts to strengthen the economic analysis capabilities of the CEFTA Parties and thereby facilitate repeat assessments on an annual basis;</p> <p>Activity 3</p> <p>Provide expert input to the work of the CEFTA sub-committees (agriculture, customs cooperation, non tariff barriers)</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>Activity 1: In order to increase trade relations and investments between the beneficiaries in the Western Balkans, the implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) should be supported through a grant to the CEFTA Secretariat, in accordance with Article 168 (1) (c) of the Implementing Rules. The EC will provide 50% of funding to the Secretariat. The remaining 50% will be financed jointly by the CEFTA parties and bilateral donors. A Contribution Agreement with the CEFTA Secretariat should be concluded in Q3 2009.</p> <p>Activity 2: It is appropriate to implement Activity 2 of the Trade programme in joint management with OECD, as it has been developed jointly by the Commission and the OECD. The Commission and the OECD will therefore conclude a Contribution Agreement for the implementation of this project. The agreement should be concluded in Q3 2009.</p> <p>Activity 3: A service contract for an approximate amount of EUR 150 000 will be concluded by the Commission for the provision of technical assistance. The tendering process should commence in Q3 2009.</p>
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Priority Axe 2: Address the Economic Criteria		
(4) Education - Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window	€8.5m	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Enable the exchange of academic staff and students at all levels thereby enhancing their knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <p>Multilateral exchange of students between Europe and Western Balkans;</p> <p>Enhanced international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans through cooperation with high quality</p>

		<p>European institutions (Erasmus Charter) and with extensive experience in ECTS and in the implementation of the Bologna acquis;</p> <p>The spreading of the experiences of EU universities in the framework of Erasmus exchanges and in the implementation of "Bologna process";</p> <p>Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Individual mobility for undergraduate students, master, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships; Academic Staff exchanges for the purposes of teaching, practical training and research.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>The project will be implemented through a call for proposals. The call for proposals should be launched in Q42008. The selection and award criteria will relate to (a) the financial and operational capacity of the applicant, (b) the relevance of the proposal, and (c) the methodology proposed. Implementation of the programme will be delegated to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.</p>
(5) Education - Erasmus Mundus Western Balkans – Turkey Window	€5.5m	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Provide approximately 140 scholarships to students from the Western Balkans and Turkey for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <p>Students from the Western Balkans and Turkey to obtain a Masters degree (joint, double or multiple) from an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course;</p> <p>Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Mobility of students from the Western Balkans and Turkey in at least two participating institutions offering an Erasmus Mundus Masters course located in different European Countries.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>The project will be implemented through agreements with the universities selected under Action 1 of the Erasmus Mundus Programme in the previous years.. The agreements should be signed in Q22009.</p> <p>Implementation of the programme will be delegated to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.</p>
(6) Youth in Action	€1.5m	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Promote non-formal education and youth in the</p>

		<p>region by supporting projects with the Beneficiaries, in particular exchanges of young people and those active in Youth work and Youth organisations. Provide support to initiatives that reinforce young people's mutual understanding, sense of solidarity and tolerance, as well as the development of cooperation in the field of Youth and civil society in the Beneficiaries.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <p>Increased opportunities for young people in the region to experience international mobility and acquire socio-educational skills which could facilitate their integration in society;</p> <p>Increased participation of young people in democratic life and active citizenship, in particular with regard to young women and young people with fewer opportunities;</p> <p>Fostered interethnic and inter-religious dialogue among young people and youth organisations;</p> <p>Development of long-lasting partnerships as well the exchange of youth work expertise and know-how in the field of youth and non-formal education;</p> <p>Improved organisational skills of organisations established in the Western Balkans, in particular with regard to management of Community funds.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p><u>Activity 1:</u> Youth Exchanges offer an opportunity for groups of young people from countries participating in the Youth in Action programme to meet and learn about each other's cultures. Their pedagogical value and non-formal learning element comes from the fact that the groups explore themes of common interest.</p> <p><u>Activity 2:</u> Young people take part individually or in groups in non-profit, voluntary activities abroad, helping in local projects in a wide range of fields: social, ecological and environmental, arts and culture, new technologies, leisure and sports, etc.</p> <p><u>Activity 3:</u> Activities supporting the training of those active in youth work and youth organisations, in particular the exchange of experiences, expertise and good practice between them; as well as activities which may lead to long-lasting quality projects and partnerships and networks. The action supports training courses, seminars, study and feasibility visits, evaluation meetings, job-shadowing, partnership-building and networking activities.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>All activities supported through the window are based on partnerships between organisations from the region and organisations from the EU and other Beneficiaries participating in the</p>
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		<p>programme. Activities 1 and 3 take place in the Western Balkans and Activity 2 may consist either in volunteers from the Western Balkans sent to Youth in Action Programme Beneficiaries or, vice versa, in volunteers from Programme sent to the Western Balkans.</p> <p>Project applications are selected by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency through permanent calls for proposals (February, June, and September) on the basis of criteria defined in the Programme Guide and Addendum of the Youth in Action programme.</p> <p>Implementation of the programme will be delegated to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.</p>
<p>Priority Axe 3: Ability to assume the obligations of Membership and approximation to European Standards</p>		
(7)	Quality Infrastructure	<p>€m</p> <p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Improve the capabilities of quality infrastructure⁵ bodies, all of which are implementing strategies to comply with accession negotiations Chapter 1 of the EU <i>acquis</i>, enabling them to offer industry services to provide the tools to trade in the EU and EFTA market, as well as in the markets of the beneficiaries.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <p>Beneficiary specific reports on target towards harmonisation;</p> <p>Increased competence to deliver testing and calibration services according to EU/EFTA standards leading to more accredited laboratories;</p> <p>Quality Infrastructure bodies better prepared to fulfil roles and obligations;</p> <p>Quality Infrastructure network(s) created.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Assessments: By means of questionnaires and on-site audits, EU/EFTA experts in each field will report on progress since 2007 towards harmonisation of quality infrastructure systems with those of the EU/EFTA and recommend training and support required to complete the harmonisation process;</p> <p>Proficiency Testing: Representatives of beneficiaries' own accreditation bodies and metrology institutes, together with the technical managers of the laboratories will be trained by an accredited EU/EFTA proficiency testing provider</p>

⁵ Quality infrastructure refers here to all aspects of metrology, standardization, accreditation, market surveillance, testing, quality management, inspection and certification that have a bearing on conformity assessment (abbreviated as MSTQ). This includes both public and private institutions and the regulatory framework within which they operate.

		<p>in appropriate techniques;</p> <p>Training: The project will provide practical, hands-on training in the EU/EFTA and in the beneficiaries in all fields of quality infrastructure;</p> <p>Network Building: The project will provide regional training for trainers in the quality infrastructure sectors and creation of a regional network of quality infrastructure training providers and develop training course certification programme linked to existing EU schemes. A regional quality infrastructure information programme for industry will be provided, to support established EU information providers in the region, via internet, via an information CD-ROM and seminars. A regional strategy for stimulation of competitiveness and exports will be provided by the introduction of Quality Standards in Companies.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>A service contract will be signed via a negotiated procedure with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) in conformity with Article 242(1) (b) IR whereby “services may be entrusted to public-sector bodies and relate to activities of an institutional nature” for the implementation of assistance in the area of quality infrastructure.</p> <p>The contract should be concluded in Q1 2009.</p>
(8) Statistics	€4m	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>The purpose of the project is to continue upgrading and strengthening the statistical systems in the Beneficiaries, thereby improving the availability, quality, comparability and timeliness of statistical data in particular in the following main areas: macro-economic statistics, price statistics, external trade statistics, agricultural statistics, demographic and social statistics and business statistics.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <p>Developed administrative capacity of the Beneficiaries;</p> <p>Improved sustainability, transfer of knowledge, and ownership by the Beneficiaries;</p> <p>Improved availability, quality and comparability of the statistical data in the selected priority areas;</p> <p>Beneficiaries prepared for full application of the EU acquis.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>The technical assistance will include:</p> <p>Expert missions to the Beneficiaries to assess the domains where improvements are most urgently required;</p> <p>Expert missions to the Beneficiaries to give on-</p>

		<p>the-spot guidance for improvements to identified weaknesses;</p> <p>Organising workshops and seminars for the Beneficiaries to disseminate best practices and exchange views among the experts in the beneficiaries;</p> <p>Help desk function to give continuous assistance (e.g. on the use of classifications and statistical methods);</p> <p>Finance data collection surveys such as the price collections needed for compiling the Purchasing Power Parities.</p> <p>General statistical assistance will allow for:</p> <p>Experts from the Beneficiaries to participate in technical meetings including working group meetings, task force meetings, seminars and workshops organised by Eurostat and other Commission services;</p> <p>Study visits to statistical offices and other official statistics providers in Europe;</p> <p>Training activities both locally and in the EU to be organised;</p> <p>Consultation visits to the Beneficiaries on demand to be organised;</p> <p>Assessments/reviews of the whole statistical system to be conducted;</p> <p>The translation and dissemination of relevant documentation to be arranged;</p> <p>The development of web sites also in English language to be supported;</p> <p>Traineeships of experts from the Beneficiaries at Eurostat and at the NSIs of the European Statistical System to be arranged.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>This project shall be implemented through a service contract for an approximate value of EUR 4 million. The tendering process should be launched in Q1 2009. Implementation of the programme will be sub-delegated to Eurostat.</p>
<p>(9) Environment - Sava River Basin Management Plan</p>	<p>€1.3m</p>	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Improve integrated water management of the Sava river basin following the approach of the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) and the Communication of the Commission on water scarcity and droughts (COM(2007) 414 of 18 July 2007) and thereby bring about improved water quality and a reduction of pollution and structural degradation as well as establish cooperation mechanisms between the countries of the Sava basin in the areas of water protection, flood risk management and sustainable navigation.</p>

		<p>Expected Results</p> <p><u>Activity 1</u></p> <p>Sava River Basin Analysis report;</p> <p>Sava river basin management plan;</p> <p>Identification of investment projects per country in order to implement the river basin management plan;</p> <p>Meetings and workshops organised to facilitate the planning and strengthen capacities;</p> <p>Stakeholder dialogue in the entire Sava region in relation to integration of river basin planning (including navigation and flood protection) improved.</p> <p><u>Activity 2</u></p> <p>In-country experience of all relevant stakeholders in structuring water investments from a technical, financial and legal point of view in preparation for future investment activities under Community funding schemes and with international financing institutions has increased;</p> <p>Background documents and data preparation in support of the Sava river basin management plan;</p> <p>Guidelines to establish water pricing policies in accordance with the Water Framework Directive;</p> <p>Wide awareness of the Sava river basin management plan through dissemination and publicity actions;</p> <p>Review of the strength and weakness of the RBMP including a gap analysis;</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p><u>Activity 1</u></p> <p>Coordination of the completion of “Sava River Basin Analysis Report” in accordance with the existing list of contents;</p> <p>Assistance to water management authorities to prepare basic data needed for developing River Basin Management plan and to work out jointly on developing methodologies that can be used in situations where there is insufficient data;</p> <p>Coordination of the preparation of key background documents for the Sava River Basin Management Plan (e.g. hydrology, morphology, hydraulics, hydropower utilisation, river regulation/flood protection, navigation, sanitary engineering, biology, ecology, (hydro)geology, pedology (i.e. the study of soils in its natural environment), economy, law);</p> <p>Coordination of the process for public information and consultation in all phases of development of Sava River Basin Management Plan as given in the Public Participation Plan of</p>
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		<p>International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC);</p> <p>Preparation of technical supporting documents and material, such as maps, figures, compilation of tables, etc;</p> <p>Coordination of the integrated Sava River Basin Management Plan⁶ to be completed by 2010-2011;</p> <p><u>Activity 2</u></p> <p>Support to the preparation of basic data needed for developing River Basin Management Plan and in the development of methodologies that can be used in situations where there is insufficient data;</p> <p>Support to the preparation of key background documents for the Sava River Basin Management Plan (e.g. hydrology, morphology, hydraulics, hydropower utilisation, river regulation/flood protection, navigation, sanitary engineering, biology, ecology, (hydro)geology, pedology (i.e. the study of soils in its natural environment), economy, law);</p> <p>Support to the preparation of an assessment of the existing national monitoring networks and to develop the concept of "Sava trans-boundary monitoring system" for surface water and groundwater;</p> <p>Assistance to the setting of environmental objectives for surface waters, ground waters and protected areas within the Sava river basin and the application of exemptions where relevant (in accordance with the Water Framework Directive);</p> <p>Support to the identification of key water management issues and assess key technical, economical, environmental and social aspects regarding their potential implementation, in particular in relation to flood risk management and navigation;</p> <p>Fostering and facilitating the integration of different planning aspects and levels, such as integration of water management, flood risk and navigation planning or integration of international, national, entity, regional and local planning.</p> <p>Assistance to the preparation of programmes of (short-term, medium-term and long-term) technical, administrative-institutional and economical measures to deal with key water management issues of transboundary relevance and related financing and investment needs</p>
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⁶ Based on the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Flood Risk Management Directive (2007/60/EC) and the Communication on water scarcity and droughts (COM(2007) 414 final).

		<p>(including the facilitation of concrete financing and investment plans on the appropriate level).</p> <p>Provide guidance and assistance that can be of practical use for national, entity, regional or local authorities to implement water pricing policies based on the principle of full cost recovery (including environmental and resource costs) and the polluters-pays principle.</p> <p>Assistance to the assessment of the impact on water management (in particular water quality) of future infrastructure projects and projected future water uses such as navigation, hydropower, flood protection, agriculture, etc.</p> <p>Support the preparation and implementation of the process for public information and consultation in all phases of development of Sava River Basin Management Plan as given in the Public Participation Plan of ISRBC.</p> <p>Support the preparation of a Draft River Basin Management Plan by 2010.</p> <p>Assistance in the preparation of technical supporting documents and material, such as maps, figures, compilation of tables, etc.</p> <p>Assistance in the completion of the integrated Sava River Basin Management Plan⁷ by 2010-2011.</p> <p>Support in the dissemination and publicity of the final River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>Activity 1</p> <p>Following negotiations overviewed by the e Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the International Sava River Basin Commission, "the Sava Commission", was established by the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin signed by the riparian countries (Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) in Kranjska Gora (Slovenia) on 3 December 2002. The Sava River Commission has therefore a <i>de jure</i> monopoly on the Implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin. In light of this <i>de jure</i> monopoly and in line with Article 168 1 (c) of the Implementing Rules, a direct grant will be given to the Sava Commission to support their activities in relation to the preparation of the Sava River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>Activity 2</p> <p>A service contract for an approximate value of</p>
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⁷ Based on the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Flood Risk Management Directive (2007/60/EC) and the Communication on water scarcity and droughts (COM(2007) 414 final).

		<p>EUR 300 000 shall be concluded for the provision of technical assistance. The tendering process should commence in Q1 2009.</p> <p>Implementation of the programme will be sub-delegated to DG Environment.</p>
(10)	<p>Environment - DABLAS⁸ Support Secretariat and Services</p> <p>€0.5m</p>	<p>Project Purpose:</p> <p>Facilitate the approximation to the EU environmental <i>acquis</i> especially in the field of water and to increase investments in projects related to the protection of water and water related ecosystems in the Danube and the Black Sea.</p> <p>Expected Results:</p> <p>DABLAS project pipeline effectively updated; DABLAS Task Force meetings and preparatory meetings and DABLAS process facilitated in cooperation with the DABLAS Task Force Secretariat (co-chaired by the Commission); Dissemination of experience (both positive and negative) in preparation of environmental investments, particularly in the field of water, as well as guidance and training in the issues related to successful investment in the environment sector;</p> <p>Improved stakeholder dialogue in the entire Danube-Black Sea region in relation to relevant investments.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Activity 1 – Facilitation of the DABLAS process by assisting in organising DABLAS Task Force meetings and preparing background material relevant to the beneficiaries of this IPA project. This project should assist the Secretariat of the DABLAS Task Force in terms of inter alia preparation of meetings and background documents, coordination of activities, provision of information on projects and preparation and dissemination of information in the region.</p> <p>Activity 2 - Implementation of activities supporting the DABLAS process such as training, production of guidelines and financing strategies etc. The main aim of the technical assistance will be to ensure the preconditions and success of technical assistance available for project preparation under IPA and other investment facilities.</p> <p>Activity 3 –The project will aim at the continued identification of potential sources of financing: the main task will be linked to developing a strategy for closer involvement of bilateral donors and more involvement of financing institutions including National Development Banks,</p>

⁸ Danube And Black Sea Basin

		<p>International Financing Institutions and water utilities with a view to identify more sources of funding.</p> <p>Activity 4 – Finally, a smaller task under the contract will be linked to the continued process of identification of projects with a significant environmental impact on the Danube and/or Black Sea (in support to national processes). This will however not be the main aim of the present contract, given that it is covered by the above mentioned PHARE 2006 and IPA 2007 projects.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <p>This project shall be implemented through a service contract for an approximate value of EUR 500 000. The tendering process should commence in Q1 2009. Implementation of the programme will be sub-delegated to DG Environment.</p>
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2. c Overview of past and on going assistance (EU / IFI / Bilateral and national assistance) including lessons learned and donor coordination

Past and ongoing assistance

From 2000 to 2007, over EUR657 million has been provided in assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries through the CARDS Regional, Phare Multi-Country and IPA Multi-beneficiary programmes. In financial terms, assistance provided under these programmes has addressed, in particular, socio-economic development through extensive and close collaboration with International Financial Institutions, which have helped the development of a functioning financial sector capable of supporting the expansion of the private sector and the needs of municipalities. Equally important is the support that has been given to the regional cooperation process in the Western Balkans and certain areas of key importance for the European integration, such as tax and customs, statistics, public administration (SIGMA) and horizontal support via TAIEX. Additional details on the assistance allocated under the CARDS, Phare and IPA programmes are provided in the table below:

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
CARDS	20.2	20.0	43.5	31.5	22	47.5	57.5		242.2
Phare					28.4	91.1	194.7		314.2
IPA								100.7	100.7
Overall Total	20.2	20.0	43.5	31.5	50.4	138.6	252.2	100.7	657.1

Table 1: Total European Community allocations to the CARDS Regional, Phare Multi-Country Programmes and IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme (*amounts in Euro millions*)⁹

Lessons learned

In designing the Multi-beneficiary IPA 2008 programme, particular note has been taken of the results of projects programmed in previous years. The lessons learned build upon the experience in the implementation of previous projects in the specific areas. The pertinent information at a project level is provided in the annexed project fiches.

In the management of previous and ongoing Multi-beneficiary IPA, CARDS Regional and Phare Multi-Country projects and programmes a number of applicable lessons have emerged through the project monitoring and evaluation reports as well as the evaluation report on the implementation of CARDS assistance to the Western Balkans which are applicable to this programme. These include:

- *Programme Coordination:* Beneficiaries have emphasized the importance of regular and timely communications regarding the Financing Proposals to facilitate their involvement and ownership of the programme. Consequently, detailed programme plans, which include timelines and the process for the distribution of draft documents for comment have been drafted, discussed and communicated to the Beneficiaries Multi-beneficiary coordination meetings which take place regularly throughout the year allow for discussion on the status of programming and project implementation.
- *Donor Coordination:* In light of the number of players involved in the area donor coordination is a notable challenge which must continue to be addressed;
- *Complementarities:* EC Multi-beneficiary assistance must complement and be consistent with the National programmes;
- *Local Ownership:* Increasing local ownership is essential for the effective targeting of the support and achieving the agreed results. Significant efforts are being made to involve the Beneficiaries, the Stability Pact and the Regional Cooperation Council;
- *Absorption Capacity:* The absorption capacity and past achievement record of Beneficiary organisations is an important consideration.

Donor Coordination

Coordination and coherence of assistance and activities is particularly important, given the large number of players involved. The need for improved coordination and coherence has been highlighted to the Commission during consultations as a continuing concern by the authorities of the region.

Efforts are being made by DG Enlargement to improve coordination in this area. Regular meetings are organised throughout the year for example, with Beneficiaries, Delegations and stakeholders (including for example an International Financial Institutions (IFI) days, Donor Coordination days).

The Commission has endeavoured to establish a transparent consultation process with in particular the Beneficiaries. This process is aimed at enhancing, as far as possible, local

⁹ Note: The CARDS figures indicated include assistance from Phare and Obnova where relevant in 2000 and from CARDS 2001 and onwards. In 2005 and 2006, the amounts indicated for Phare include those allocated to multi-country programmes from the Turkey pre-accession instrument. The CARDS Regional Programmes of 2004, 2005 and 2006 include respectively €15m, €15m and €1.9m for Cross-Border Cooperation.

ownership of the choices, content and design of the programmes. Consultations take place at a regular interval during the programming phase with the Beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Special importance should be given to the role of the Regional Cooperation Council as the interlocutor for the Beneficiaries in particular for the Regional Cooperation Process in the Western Balkans.

Other coordination activities include:

- European Commission has played an active role in the Stability Pact for South East Europe and as mentioned above, close collaboration will be ensured with its successor organisation, the Regional Cooperation Council;
- European Commission maintains bilateral relations with governments to ensure their actions complement and build on national efforts;
- European Commission Delegations and the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) as appropriate organise regular meetings between Member States, Beneficiaries and other involved organisations (such as International Financial Institutions) to ensure monitoring and coordination throughout the programming cycle;
- DG Enlargement staff responsible for the implementation of the Multi-beneficiary programmes participate in regional networks and structures to facilitate coordination amongst the stakeholders and donors active in the region.

2. d Horizontal issues

Cross cutting issues, such as equal opportunities, support to minorities and vulnerable groups, environmental protection and good governance, have, as appropriate, become an integral part of each project fiche. The mainstreaming of the cross cutting issues in each project shall ensure that strategies, policies, structures and operating procedures of the beneficiary are in conformity with the principles defined in the various project fiches.

2. e Conditions

Overall, there should be a continued clear consensus by the Beneficiaries as well as in the region to support the initiatives pertaining to this Financing Decision. Details on the conditions that need to be fulfilled by the Beneficiaries prior to the implementation of specific projects are included in the annexed project fiches.

2. f Indicative Benchmarks

	N ¹⁰		N+1(cumulative)	
	EU	NF*	EU	NF*
Number of tenders launched Statistics (1) Environment: (i) Sava River Basin Mangement Plan (1) and (ii) Dablas Secretariat and Services (1) Trade: Technical Assistance to CEFTA (1)			4	
Number of negotiated contracts Quality Infrastructure (1)			1	

¹⁰ Year "N" is the year of budgetary commitment

Number of Contribution Agreements Social Inclusion: UNHCR (1) Trade: CEFTA (1), OECD (1)			3	
Number of Calls for Proposals Education: (i) Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (1); (ii) Erasmus Mundus Western Balkan Turkey Window (1) Youth in Action: (1)		1	2	
Number of Direct Grants Community Agencies (12) Sava River Basin Commission (1)			13	
Contracting Rate (%)			100	

* In case of parallel national co-financing

3. BUDGET (AMOUNTS IN EUR)

3.1 Indicative budget table

Centralised management	Institution Building (IB)					Investment (INV)					Total (IB + INV)	Total IPA Community contribution	
	Total expenditure	IPA Community contribution		National contribution*		Total expenditure	IPA Community contribution		National contribution*				
	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)	EUR (b)	% ⁽¹⁾	EUR (c)	% ⁽¹⁾	EUR (d)=(e)+(f)	EUR (e)	% ⁽¹⁾	EUR (f)	% ⁽¹⁾	EUR (g)=(a)+(d)	EUR (h)=(b)+(e)	% ⁽²⁾
Priority Axe 1: Address the Political Criteria	10 175 000	9 600 000	94,3	575 000	5,7						10 175 000	9 600 000	29.2
Participation in Community Agencies	7 800 000	7 800 000	100								7 800 000	7 800 000	–
Social Inclusion	1 250 000	1 000 000	80	250 000	20						1 250 000	1 000 000	–
Trade	1 125 000	800 000	71,1	325 000	28,9						1 125 000	800 000	–
Priority Axe 2: Address the Economic Criteria	15 875 000	15 500 000	97,6	375 000	2,4						15 875 000	15 500 000	47.1
Education – Erasmus Mundus	5 500 000	5 500 000	100								5 500 000	5 500 000	

Western Balkan – Turkey Window													
Education Erasmus Mundus – External Cooperation Window	8 500 000	8 500 000	100								8 500 000	8 500 000	
Youth in Action	1 875 000	1 500 000	80	375 000		20					1 875 000	1 500 000	
<i>Priority Axe 3: Ability to assume the obligations of Membership and approximation to European Standards</i>	7 930 000	7 800 000	98,4	130.000	1,6						7 930 000	7 800 000	23.7
Quality Infrastructure	2 100 000	2 000 000	95,2	100 000	4,8						2 100 000	2 000 000	–
Statistics	4 000 000	4 000 000	100								4 000 000	4 000 000	
Environment	1 830 000	1 800 000	98,4	30 000	1,6						1 830 000	1 800 000	
<i>(i) Sava River Basin Management</i>	<i>1 330 000</i>	<i>1 300 000</i>	<i>97,7</i>	<i>30 000</i>	<i>2,3</i>						1 330 000	1 300 000	

<i>(ii) Dablas Secretariat and Support Services</i>	500 000	<i>500 000</i>	100								500 000	<i>500 000</i>	
TOTAL	33 980 000	32 900 000	96,8	<i>1 080 000</i>	3,2						33 980 000	32 900 000	100

* contribution (public and private national and/or international contribution) provided by national counterparts and/or international organisations and/or grant beneficiaries

(1) Expressed in % of the Total expenditure IB or INV (column (a) or (d)).

(2) Priority axis rows only. Expressed in % of the grand total of column (h). It indicates the relative weight of the priority with reference to the total IPA Community contribution of the entire FP.

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

The Community contribution which represents up to 96,8% of the total budget allocated to this programme has been calculated in relation to the eligible expenditure which in the case of centralised and joint management is based on total expenditure. Parallel co-financing will be used.

Trade

Under the contribution agreement with CEFTA, the European Community will provide 50% of funding to the Secretariat in year 2. The remaining 50% will be financed jointly by the CEFTA parties and bilateral donors.

Environment – Sava River Basin Management Plan

2.3% of the total budget allocated to this project will be funded through parallel co-financing from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia.

Due to their regional character it is not possible to require national co-financing for the other projects in this Programme. However, contributions to the budget have been secured for some projects as follows:

Social Inclusion

UNHCR will contribute at least 20% of the budget.

Quality Infrastructure

European Free Trade Association (EFTA) will contribute approximately 5% of the budget.

In the case of grants, final grant beneficiaries should contribute with a minimum of 10 % of the eligible expenditure of the project, both for investment and institution building projects.

Exceptions:

Community Agencies - Agencies falling within the scope of Article 185 of the FR are not entitled to claim operational costs, but may request financing in full of their projects. Agencies not governed by Article 185 of the FR will receive grants for a value of 95% of the total eligible costs (which may include operating expenses).

Erasmus Mundus – Scholarships are not subject to contributions from the students.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Method of implementation

The programme will be implemented on a centralised basis by the European Commission in accordance with Article 53a of the Financial Regulation¹¹ and the corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules¹². Exceptions to this method of implementation are identified below:

Social Inclusion:

It is appropriate to implement the social inclusion project in joint management with the UNHCR, as the Commission and the UNHCR have elaborated this project jointly. To this end the Commission and the UNHCR will conclude a Contribution Agreement. The contractual agreements to be signed with the International Organisation will fully observe the conditions laid down in articles 53 (d) of the Financial Regulation and 43 of its Implementing Rules. For

¹¹ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1.

¹² OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1.

UNHCR, the general conditions of the standard template for International Organisations published on the AIDCO Website will thus supplement the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement signed in April 2003 between the European Commission and the United Nations Organisation.

Trade:

With regards to the **trade** project, the European Commission will provide an operating grant to the CEFTA Secretariat. For this purpose it will conclude a new direct agreement with the CEFTA secretariat based on Article 168 (c) of the Implementing Rules, considering that the Secretariat has a de facto monopoly. This agreement will provide 50% of funding to the Secretariat. The remaining 50% will be financed jointly by the CEFTA parties and bilateral donors. It is appropriate to partly implement the Trade programme in joint management with OECD, as it has been developed jointly by the Commission and the OECD. The programme will be implemented following Article 53d of the Financial Regulation and the corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules. The Commission and the OECD will conclude a Contribution Agreement for the implementation of this project. A service contract will be concluded by the Commission for the provision of technical assistance (Activity 3).

Quality Infrastructure:

A service contract will be signed via a negotiated procedure with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) in conformity with Article 242(1) (b) IR whereby “services may be entrusted to public-sector bodies and relate to activities of an institutional nature” for the implementation of assistance in the area of **quality infrastructure**. The contract should be concluded in Q1 2009.

Environment:

The implementation of the projects in the field of **environment** will be sub-delegated to DG Environment. Following negotiations overviewed by the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the International Sava River Basin Commission, "the Sava Commission", was established by the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin signed by the riparian countries (Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) in Kranjska Gora (Slovenia) on 3 December 2002. The Sava River Commission has therefore a de jure monopoly on the Implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin. In light of this *de jure* monopoly and in line with Article 168 1 (c) of the Implementing Rules, activity 1 of the project will be implemented through a direct grant to the Sava Commission to support their activities in relation to the preparation of the Sava River Basin Management Plan. In addition, for activity 2 a service contract will be concluded for the provision of technical assistance in line with the Financial Regulation and of its Implementing Rules.

Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action

The **Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action** programmes will be implemented on an indirect centralised basis by the European Commission following Article 53.1 (a) of the Financial Regulation and corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules. Implementation tasks are delegated under Article 54.2 (a) of the Financial Regulation to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, which was created by Commission Decision 2005/56/EC of 14 January 2005. According to Article 12 (3) of the Council Regulation No (EC) 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes, any programme delegated to an executive agency has to contribute to the financing of the administrative budget of the agency.

Due to the nature of implementation, the administrative expenditure associated with operational appropriations in any given year is incurred in the following year. Hence the provision of management costs has been envisaged in 2008 to cover the administrative expenditure for the programmes planned under the 2007 budget (not included in the present Financing Proposal).

Statistics

The **statistics** project will be implemented by the European Commission with sub-delegation to Eurostat.

4.2 General rules for procurement and grant award procedures

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

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

The Commission shall also use the procedural guidelines and standard templates and models facilitating the application of the above rules provided for in the "Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions" ("Practical Guide") as published on the EuropeAid website¹³ at the date of initiation of the procurement or grant award procedure.

The general rules for procurement and grant award procedures shall be defined in the Contribution Agreement between the Commission and the UNHCR in the Social Inclusion project and between the Commission and OECD and the Commission and the CEFTA Secretariat in the Trade project.

4.3 Environmental Impact Assessment and Nature Conservation

All investments shall be carried out in compliance with the relevant Community environmental legislation.

As a consequence, since the Sava river basin management plan and Dablas secretariat and services correspond to projects which fall within the scope of the EIA-directive¹⁴, an environmental impact assessment shall be made for each project¹⁵, equivalent to that provided for by the EIA-directive.

Since the aforementioned projects are likely to affect sites of nature conservation importance, an appropriate nature conservation assessment shall be made for each project¹⁶, equivalent to that provided for in Art. 6 of the Habitats Directive¹⁷.

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide/index_en.htm

¹⁴ Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (OJ L 175 5.7.1985, p. 40).

¹⁵ Cf. Annex EIA to the corresponding investment project fiche.

¹⁶ Cf. Annex Nature Conservation to the corresponding investment project fiche

¹⁷ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L206, 22.7.1992).

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 Monitoring

The Commission may undertake any actions it deems necessary to monitor the programmes concerned. These actions may be carried out jointly with the international organisations concerned.

5.2 Evaluation

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

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

The Commission may also carry out strategic evaluations.

6. AUDIT, FINANCIAL CONTROL AND ANTI-FRAUD MEASURES

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

In order to ensure the efficient protection of the financial interests of the Community, the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office) may conduct on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with the procedures foreseen in Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 2185/96¹⁸.

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

7. LIMITED CHANGES

Limited changes in the implementation of this programme affecting essential elements listed under Article 90 of the Implementing Rules to the Financial Regulation, which are of an indicative nature¹⁹, may be undertaken by the authorising officer by delegation (AOD), or by the authorising officer by sub-delegation (AOSD), in line with the delegation of powers conferred upon him by the AOD, in accordance with the principles of sound financial management without an amending financing decision being necessary.

¹⁸ OJ L 292; 15.11.1996; p. 2

¹⁹ These essential elements of an indicative nature are, for grants, the indicative amount of the call for proposals and, for procurement, the indicative number and type of contracts envisaged and the indicative time frame for launching the procurement procedures.