



Enlargement region: European Commission welcomes final adoption of EU's new €14 billion pre-accession assistance budget for 2021-2027

Brussels, 14 September 2021

The European Commission welcomes the adoption on 15 September by the European Parliament of the new Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) for the period 2021-2027, following the Council's positive decision on 7 September. This is the final step of the adoption process of this instrument, through which the EU will provide almost €14.2 billion to support candidate countries and potential candidates in key political, institutional, social and economic reforms.

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér **Várhelyi**, commented: *"Together, we shaped an instrument that has a great potential and sends a strong signal that the European Union is committed to support the enlargement region. IPA III is definitely an investment into the future."*

IPA III has a strategic and performance based design with no country specific allocation from the onset and will focus on the rule of law and the respect of fundamental values, strengthening democratic institutions and public administration reform, promoting economic governance and reforms towards competitiveness. It will also tackle sustainable economic recovery, energy supply, transport, environment and climate change, and digital transformation.

The new IPA III will support the implementation of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans, aiming to boost the long-term economic recovery of the region, support a green and digital transition, and foster regional integration and convergence with the European Union. IPA III will also underpin our evolving relations with Turkey, in particular through support to people to people contacts, civil society, fundamental rights, the good functioning of the EU-Turkey Customs Union and the green and digital agendas.

Next steps

IPA III will enter into force on the date of its publication in the Official Journal, with retroactive effect from 1 January 2021.

The implementation of the new IPA III follows a two-step process:

- As a first step, Commission services are working on the IPA III Programming Framework, the main strategic document for planning the financial assistance, setting the priority areas, expected results and indicative allocations of Union funds for thematic areas covered by the Regulation. The preparation of the Programming Framework takes into account consultations with partners in the region, EU Member States, the European Parliament, civil society, International Financial Institutions, International Organisations and other stakeholders.
- In parallel, the IPA III beneficiaries have started proposing specific interventions. The Commission expects to be in a position to adopt the programming framework and the financial decisions for the annual action plans in December 2021. The implementation of actions is therefore expected to start in early 2022.

Background

The EU's long-term budget (Multiannual Financial Framework – MFF) is the most extensive stimulus package financed through the EU budget.

Through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, EU is channelling support to reforms in the enlargement region with financial and technical assistance since 2007, to strengthen the capacities of its beneficiaries throughout the accession process, resulting in progressive, positive developments in the region. The current beneficiaries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

For More Information

[The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance \(IPA III\) factsheet](#)

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