



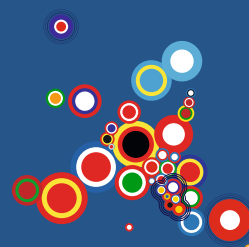
Pre-accession assistance: an investment in Europe

Exhibition catalogue



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Enlargement



GROWING TOGETHER



About the exhibition

Dear reader,

Welcome to the photo exhibition organised by the European Commission's Directorate General for Enlargement.

These photographs document some of the people and stories behind projects funded by the EU in the countries aspiring to membership. The pictures in this exhibition depict projects funded through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. Projects from Croatia, the EU's newest member as of the 1st of July 2013, are also documented.

EU funding is a catalyst for reforms and improvement of the overall conditions in the enlargement countries, playing a key role on their journey to EU membership. The exhibition illustrates some of the visible results – new job opportunities, improved living conditions, better environmental protection, enhanced food security, safer borders, modernised customs regulations and increased cross-border cooperation. These have an impact on both the enlargement region and the EU Member States. An investment in pre-accession assistance is an investment in Europe itself.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.



About the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)

Pre-accession assistance is an investment in the future of the European Union, by supporting political and economic reforms, and preparing the beneficiary countries for the rights and obligations that come with EU membership.

With over EUR 11 billion dedicated from 2007 to 2013, pre-accession assistance has already contributed significantly to reforms in the enlargement countries. At the same time, it helps the EU achieve its own objectives for sustainable economic development, as well as improve other cross-cutting areas like the environment and climate change, transport and energy supply.

Croatia is the EU's most recent Member State, having joined the Union on the 1st of July 2013. The EU's enlargement agenda currently covers the Western Balkans, Turkey and Iceland. The countries are at different stages of the accession process. Before joining, they must meet political, economic and social conditions and align their legislation with EU law.

IPA provides financial and technical assistance across areas such as:

Economic development, transport, energy, and the environment

To embrace new economic possibilities, the enlargement countries need to increase their competitiveness and work even more closely with the EU. Projects in this area may support small and medium-sized enterprises, help set up quality infrastructure agencies or boost the energy and transport infrastructure.

Look on pages 4–5 and 25 to see how IPA has helped increase the competitiveness of Turkish SMEs and created new economic opportunities. On pages 18–19 you will see pictures from the construction of Corridor X, one of the vital pan-European corridors connecting Austria with Greece, running through Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Social development and inclusion

Ensuring that citizens have proper employment opportunities is vital for the development of any society. It is equally important to help workers adapt their skills through constant education, and strengthen social inclusion by integrating disadvantaged people.



Look at the stories about the internally displaced people in Kosovo whose living conditions were improved and who were helped to find suitable jobs (page 17) or those about women participating in the courses given at the Vocational Training Centre for Women in Turkey (page 24).

Agriculture and rural development

EU pre-accession funds provide assistance to the agricultural sector in the enlargement countries to help adapt to EU standards. This benefits both farmers and consumers, aiming at ensuring a fair standard of living for farmers and providing a stable and safe food supply at affordable prices for consumers.

On page 23 you will see how the Phytosanitary Directorate of Montenegro is now better equipped to ensure a high quality standard for plants and seeds. The Garden of Serbia project (pages 20–21) addresses the common problems of the fruit, vegetable, flower and beekeeping sectors in the country.

Rule of law

Supporting the rule of law is key for citizens, businesses, state institutions and the economy as a whole. This is relevant not only in the enlargement countries but also for EU Member States, especially when it comes to tackling organised crime and dealing with border management, security threats, and irregular migration flows.

Look on pages 8–9 for examples of how the EU funds invested in Albania are helping to make the Adriatic Sea a safer maritime border for the EU and Southeast Europe. On pages 14–15 you will find images of Croatia's customs laboratories; now in full compliance with EU requirements.

Public administration reform

Citizens have the right to well-functioning administrative bodies. A professional civil service capable of taking policy decisions must be able to perform efficiently and transparently at central, regional and local levels.

EU funds have supported the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) in its efforts to build an accountable, effective and professional public administration system in the Western Balkans (page 27). Forty different municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have enhanced their capability to take policy decisions and provide public services (page 27).





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Small business, big success – Turkey, Amasya:

The Greater Anatolia Guarantee Facility

EU contribution: EUR 43.5 million

- 1 / Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are the largest employers in Europe, and ensure a strong and healthy job market. The Greater Anatolia Guarantee Facility supports them by providing guarantees in favour of medium, small and micro enterprises, so they can access the finances they need to grow. The facility also helps reduce the development gap between regions in Turkey.
- 2 / The owner of a bakery in the Cultural House of Amasya is one of many beneficiaries of the Greater Anatolia Guarantee Facility. This project has given small and medium-sized enterprises better access to finances, and the ability to start and develop their businesses with a strong focus on innovation, regional development, growth and employment.



Promoting cultural diversity – Croatia, Rovinj:

Strengthening the Identity of Minority People Leads to Equality (S.I.M.P.L.E.)

EU contribution: EUR 907,916.30

3 / Based in Rovinj, Croatia, this innovative cross-border project brings together institutions, public authorities and civil society organisations from Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Italy and Slovenia. Together, the work of the international participants helps strengthen cultural diversity values and promote equality and non-discrimination as basic values for the peaceful coexistence of all citizens. It also promotes language diversity and fair citizens' services, free from distinctions of race, religion and ethnic origin. The goal is to promote understanding and social cohesion.

School in nature – Croatia, Osijek:

Cross-border protection of Middle Danube

EU contribution: EUR 149,792.87

4 / The 'school in nature' programme represents one of the educational activities for raising awareness of environmental protection in the Hungary-Croatia cross-border Danube region. Through workshops, visits and stays, students, teachers and individuals from companies learn about the protection of rivers and flood forests, renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and water analysis. Aside from the environment, tourism in the area also feels the benefits of this project: new cooperation initiatives and bilingual promotion materials positively affect tourism and the local economies on both sides of the Danube.

5 / Through on-going environmental protection and awareness raising in the cross-border Danube region, IPA initiatives are helping preserve the unique natural landscape of Baranja in Croatia, and Baranja County in Hungary. This project encourages the sustainable management of natural resources and cross-border protection. Europe's next generation will need to continue the work, which is why EU funds also created 4 bilingual educational programmes focused on "Living rivers, flood forests, energy education and water analysis". The most valuable natural areas in the region will become part of NATURA 2000.



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Safer borders, safer Europe – Albania, Durrës:

Blue Border Management: Supply of maritime vessels for maritime law enforcement and border control

EU contribution: EUR 3.5 million

6 / To strengthen maritime security and assist Albania in monitoring its coastline and reducing illegal cross-border activities, the EU invested in the national maritime authorities. The new maritime vessels, a modern video monitoring technology, and the training for the Border Police and the Coast Guard enable a more effective fight against human trafficking and the smuggling of illegal goods. This is to the benefit of both the EU and the region.

7 / The Adriatic Sea is a major maritime border for the EU and the countries of Southeast Europe. Ensuring a strong security presence there is vital for supporting peace and safety both in the region and for the EU. EU funds enabled the police and customs to enforce stronger controls in the area thanks to eight new vessels, such as the Iliria ship in the photo.





Sharing knowledge and equipment – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Žepče:

AgroMAP NETWORK – Raising the competitiveness of the subsector MAP

EU contribution: EUR 320,143.79

Contracted under the Call for Proposals “Support to Economic and Tourism Development and other selected economic sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina” of the total value of EUR 3.79 million of IPA funds

- 8 / To support competitiveness of the medicinal and aromatic plants sub-sector, this IPA-funded project brought together over 2,000 participants. They shared their expertise and more: harvesting, cutting and packaging machines, distillers, refrigerators and other essential equipment. The educational workshops and the network exchange created an increased know-how and a wider skill set for those involved. The region also feels the economic benefits: existing productions have improved, and entrepreneurs could grasp new opportunities.

Preserving cultural heritage – Albania, Berat:

Support to sustainable and integrated development of cultural and historical heritage – Phase II

EU contribution: EUR 2 million

- 9 / EU funds aim to preserve and protect the most important examples of cultural heritage in the enlargement countries. Built nearly 2,500 years ago, the Berat Castle site in Albania needed repair works. The EU supported the lighting system in the castle, new stone paving and street lighting in the town of Berat, and historical site rehabilitation. The ancient cultural heritage site was preserved, now attracting tourists from both Albania and abroad.
- 10 / Pre-accession funds helped restore the urban infrastructure inside and around the ancient Berat Castle, one of the cultural highlights in Albania for European tourists. In turn, increased tourism activity will spark new local businesses and go some way to ensuring economic stability in the region.



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Supporting innovation – Serbia, Belgrade:

Innovation Serbia Project

EU contribution: EUR 8.4 million

11 / Stimulating innovation is an important part of overcoming current economic challenges. This means supporting innovative enterprises with outstanding know-how, and new technologies with financing and services. The Innovation Serbia Project aimed to stimulate innovation by funding early-stage, private, micro and small enterprises with the 'Mini Grants' Programme. To qualify, these enterprises had to show technological innovation and the ability to create new intellectual property, as well as meet a clear market need.

12 / Strawberry Energy d.o.o. is one of the many new enterprises supported by the Innovation Serbia Project. This start-up from Belgrade has developed a unique global technological innovation – the transportable mini solar charger, 'Strawberry Tree Mini'. Using pure solar power and converting it into electrical energy, this innovative product can be used to charge small portable devices such as mobile phones, cameras, and mp3 players on the go.

Transparent public money – Serbia, Belgrade:

Strengthening the Serbian public procurement system

EU contribution: EUR 1.5 million

13 / A transparent, accountable and corruption-free system for public money spending is essential for any administration. To achieve this, it is important to have a good public procurement system. This project has brought the relevant legislation closer to EU standards, has defined a strategic framework to improve the public procurement system, and has reinforced the capacities of responsible institutions. Information on public procurement is now available to the business sector and to the wider public, including online.



Customs labs now better equipped – Croatia, Zagreb:

Customs laboratory development

EU contribution: EUR 2.275 million

14 / Customs play a crucial role in every country, positively influencing citizens, businesses, state institutions and the economy as a whole. This EU funded project improved Croatia's operational capacity in customs laboratories, bringing it in line with EU requirements. The collection of customs duties and taxes has been maximised by establishing the nature, tariff classification, origin and value of goods. This strengthened the role of Croatia's customs in providing support for the prevention of illegal traffic of goods.

15 / The EU directed funds and technical assistance to the customs laboratory in Zagreb. This led to improvements in the legal basis, management, analytical equipment and methods, as well as in their training programmes and working methods. Based on this support, the laboratory can now realise its operational capacity in line with EU requirements, and perform the wide range of responsibilities in line with EU best practice.

Supporting adult education – The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Skopje:

Support to the Centre for Adult Education

EU contribution: EUR 1.5 million

16 / People are at the heart of economic activities and should have the opportunity to engage in meaningful employment. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, IPA funds have helped develop an adult training and lifelong learning system for all citizens, including specific programmes for excluded persons, school leavers and unqualified people. The programme supports an efficient education system that focuses on literacy and personal fulfilment. The end goal is to see the participants can benefit from vocational and social inclusion.



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Clean water – Kosovo, Skenderaj/Srbica:

Construction of waste water treatment plant in Skenderaj/Srbica

EU contribution: EUR 3 million

17 / The EU Member States and the enlargement region are strictly interdependent in preserving the environment and guaranteeing healthy living conditions. In this way, IPA support can have multiple benefits across the whole region. One example of this support can be found in the efficient work of the modern waste water treatment plant's employees in Skenderaj/Srbica. There, sewage water is purified and recycled so that it can finally flow into the rivers without causing environmental and human health risks across the region.

Better living conditions – Kosovo, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica:

The European Union – Mitrovicë/a RAE Support Initiative (EU-MRSI)

EU contribution: EUR 5 million

18 / Integrating disadvantaged people into the workforce is one of the EU's top priorities in order to promote social inclusion. This project in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica went beyond building homes for internally displaced people; it helped employ more than 200 residents with temporary construction jobs. It also provided vocational training to more than 230 residents, some of whom have gone on to start their own businesses.

19 / Improving health and the standard of living conditions in Kosovo is fundamental for creating a sustainable future in the country. After the conflict of 1998–99, IPA funds have helped internally displaced people in a number of ways. This includes the provision of new housing and repairs, medical screening and healthcare for elevated lead blood levels, income generation, community development initiatives, interethnic dialogue, and education. To help the area support its residents in the future, municipal authorities received capacity building support.



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Proper infrastructure for economic growth – The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Demir Kapija:

The budget for Corridor X exceeds EUR 200 million. The EU contributes with a EUR 45 million grant, while the remaining funds are provided by the national authorities, supported with loans from the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

20 / Corridor X represents one of the pan-European corridors connecting Austria with Greece, running through Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Proper infrastructure is vital to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the other enlargement countries as it provides the backbone for economic growth and boosts competitiveness. Another benefit of Corridor X is a reduction in road traffic accidents as it allows for the safe delivery of goods on time.

21 / The EU invests funds in infrastructure that connects the enlargement countries with the EU. This is essential for embracing new economic possibilities, the creation of new job opportunities, and strengthening competitiveness. Any improvement in the European transport infrastructure helps the EU as well, and provides new opportunities to European firms.

22 / Agreements between the EU and the enlargement countries result in transport cooperation and trade liberalisation for almost all goods. To help the EU and the enlargement countries benefit from these agreements, IPA funds are used to conduct feasibility studies, establish quality infrastructure agencies and invest in construction and repairs on roads of pan-European and local importance. This gives a boost to local economies and enables services to operate across borders.



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Garden of Serbia – Serbia, Smederevska Palanka:

Garden of Serbia

EU contribution: EUR 392,000

23 / The Garden of Serbia project brought together local producers to promote product quality, the marketing of agricultural products and the development of joint services. The project helped them to develop new products with added value, making them a part of the EU economy.

24 / The Garden of Serbia project addressed the common problems of the fruit, vegetable, flower and beekeeping sectors. Specifically, it brought improvements related to the production quality, marketing and overall organisational capacities. In doing so, it has raised the quality of existing agricultural products and made them more competitive on both the domestic and EU markets.





Gender equality – Montenegro, Podgorica:

Gender Equality Programme
EU contribution: EUR 700,000

25 / Gender equality is one of the European Union's founding values. Despite improvements, there are still many more men in high positions compared to women. The Gender Equality Programme in Montenegro aimed to change this. It contributed to the political and economic empowerment of women in the area by encouraging the introduction of a 30% quota for women in elections. In addition, awareness-raising campaigns improved public understanding of gender issues, including the problem of domestic violence.

Safer food – Montenegro, Podgorica:

Strengthening the Phytosanitary Directorate
EU contribution: EUR 700,000

26 / European consumers should have access to safe quality products from all Member States and neighbouring countries. The Phytosanitary Directorate of Montenegro helps make safety the most important ingredient of food and feed by analysing seeds, plant health, variety and reproduction.

27 / Protecting human health and consumers' interests in relation to food is a concern for the European Union. The Phytosanitary Directorate of Montenegro supports this goal and helps protect plants and plant products against the damage caused by harmful organisms. As a result, it ensures the best quality and varieties of seeds and planting materials for Montenegrin producers, as well as high-quality plant protection and plant nutrition.



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Continuous learning brings more independence – Turkey, Antakya:

The Greater Anatolia Guarantee Facility

EU contribution: EUR 43.5 million

28 / Economic independence is essential for both women and men to gain control over their own lives. One way IPA helps achieve this in Turkey is by funding the Vocational Training Centre for Women in Antakya, Hatay. The centre is an example of how economic independence can be achieved through education and training on business plan development and finance.

Encouraging economic opportunities – Turkey, Hatay:

ABIGEM project

EU contribution: EUR 50 million

29 / By increasing their competitiveness, Turkish small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs can encourage trade relations and create new economic opportunities – in both the EU and the enlargement countries. The new EU Turkish Business Centres (ABIGEM) help businesses in the country become more competitive and productive by offering advice and support for people wishing to start a new business or improve their existing business.

30 / The cosmetics producer Verdaa is just one example of many businesses which have benefitted from EU Turkish Business Centres (ABIGEM). So far, these business advisory services have helped more than 2,600 small and medium-sized enterprises in 12 provinces and offered close to 700 training programmes with nearly 22,000 participants. They have also run 141 start-up and entrepreneurship programmes, with nearly 3,700 participants.



Advice for businesses – The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Skopje:

Implementation of Turn Around Management & Business Advisory Services programmes

EU contribution: EUR 2.25 million

31 / One way IPA can help growing businesses to compete is to support the introduction of international best practices and promote the ease of access to business advisory services. In Skopje, IPA funds led to advisory services providing help to local companies in the form of feasibility studies, computerising management information systems and market analysis. As a result this project enabled local small and medium enterprises to increase their economic performance and strengthen their competitiveness. One of the beneficiaries was a company offering services and information on technical data and novelties for designers and architects.

Reinforcement of local democracy – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tešanj:

Reinforcement of local democracy project (Phase II)

EU contribution: EUR 1.5 million

32 / Effective public administration reforms are vital for reducing the risk of corruption and enabling European citizens to enjoy their right to well-functioning administration bodies. Thanks to EU funding, 40 municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina improved their capability to take policy decisions and provide services to the public. They learned how to allocate public finances in a fair and transparent manner and while doing so, they supported smaller scale grants, which also benefitted the dialogue with civil society.

Better public administration – Montenegro, Cetinje:

Running of ReSPA and Organisation of ReSPA Activities

EU contribution: EUR 3.6 million

33 / Transparency and accountability are key to good governance – as are clear priorities and goals. These need to be achieved through a public administration reform. The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) in the Western Balkans aims at exactly this. The ReSPA is a regionally owned, international organisation that works towards building an accountable, effective and professional administration system in the area, and promoting regional cooperation in public administration.



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Protecting ecosystems – Bosnia and Herzegovina, National Park Sutjeska:

Support to the development of ecotourism in the National Park Sutjeska

EU contribution: EUR 349,985.74

Contracted under the Call for Proposals “Support to Economic and Tourism Development and other selected economic sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina” of the total value of EUR 3.79 million of IPA funds

34 / The unique and diverse natural beauty and cultural heritage of the Sutjeska park make it a potentially huge hotspot for tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina. EU funds supported the development of eco-tourism in the area (the park also shares a border with Montenegro), giving the service sector a boost and developing a tourism infrastructure for Bosnia and Herzegovina’s oldest national park.

35 / As home to one of only two primeval forests in Europe, this national park represents a wildlife protection area and one of the most complex ecosystems in Southeast Europe. The project aims at supporting eco-tourism, thus positively influencing small and medium-sized enterprises and the creation of new job opportunities, while preserving and protecting an important and beautiful natural site for the whole of Europe.



