

Some of the Projects Realized Through “Instrument of Pre Accession Assistance – IPA” in Albania



**Construction Engineering
and Management**

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Abstract

Many different economical studies have been realized in Albania these last years. This study provides some economical data about projects realized during years 2007-2013 in Albania. EU is open to all European countries according to Article 49 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which constitutes the legal basis for any accession. Under this Article of the Treaty, any European State, which respects the values of democracy and rule of law and is committed to promoting them, may apply to become a member of the Union. There are several steps undertaken, before a country becomes a Member State (MS) of the EU. So, before being a MS a country can have a “potential candidate status”, “candidate status”, and “accession status” and then become a Member State of EU. Currently, Macedonia, Turkey, Island, Croatia and Montenegro are candidate countries. Meanwhile, Albania, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina are potential candidate countries. A special relation exists between EU and Kosovo. Before a country applies for membership, it signs an agreement with European Union, which aims to prepare the country for candidacy and eventual membership. This agreement is mainly a set of duties and rights strongly related to the Copenhagen criteria. In the case of Western Balkans, this agreement is called “Stabilization and Association Agreement” which is signed with each country. This economical data will be presented for the first time in this scientific international activity, since it is a recent study.

Introduction

Centralised and Decentralised Management

The key element of IPA is to transfer know-how and experience to beneficiary countries, by enhancing ownership and responsibility of the implementation of assistance on the countries’ side. Throughout IPA duration, it is therefore expected that decentralized management will become the norm also for potential candidate countries.

However, programmes for potential candidate countries are initially managed on a centralized basis, with a clear focus on assisting countries to gradually take on more responsibility and in progressing towards decentralized management.

Each country should therefore have specific strategies, action plans and timetables in place for moving towards more decentralization, while at the same time preparing national authorities to take on board increased responsibilities and have adequate capacity.

Centralised Management

Centralised management can take the following forms:

- Centralised direct management in the form of implementation by the Commission services at Headquarters;
- Centralised de-concentrated (devolved) management in the form of implementation by the Commission Delegation in the beneficiary country;
- Centralised indirect management in the form of implementation through Community agencies, Community bodies, national/international public-sector bodies or bodies governed by private law with a public service mission, as defined in Article 54 of Regulation (EC) 1605/2002⁸¹ (the Financial Regulation).

¹ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

Joint management:

- “Joint management” is a specific form of management by international organisations, to which the Commission can have recourse in the following cases: wherever the Commission and the international organisation are bound by a long-term framework agreement laying down the administrative and financial arrangements for their cooperation; wherever the Commission and the international organisation elaborate a joint project or programme; where the funds of several donors are pooled and are not earmarked for specific items or categories of expenditures, that is to say, in the case of multi-donor actions.
- The conditions governing joint management are set out in Article 53d of the Financial Regulation and 43 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation (hereafter: the Implementing Rules).

In the event of centralised or joint management, the beneficiary country shall designate a national IPA coordinator (NIPAC), who shall act as the representative of the beneficiary country vis-à-vis the Commission. He shall ensure that a close link is maintained between the Commission and the beneficiary country, with regard both to the general accession process and to EU pre-accession assistance under IPA.

The national IPA coordinator shall also be responsible for coordinating the beneficiary country's participation in the relevant cross-border programmes, both with Member States and with other beneficiary countries, as well as in the transnational, interregional or sea basins programmes under other Community instruments. (IPA Implementing Regulation Art.32)

The Directorate-General for Enlargement is responsible for the overall coordination of assistance under IPA.

The EU Delegation is responsible for the management of IPA assistance, including: programming, jointly carried out with NIPAC, tendering, contracting, payments, and monitoring. Beneficiary Institutions are involved in the formulation of project proposals during the programming process and technical preparation of projects.

Decentralized management: Structures and authorities established in Albania

The Decentralised Implementation System (DM) is the implementation system of the EU external aid programmes, where the European Commission confers the management of certain actions to the authorities of Albania, while retaining the final responsibility for general budget execution in accordance with Article 53c of the Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 1605/2002, and the relevant provisions of the EC Treaties.

The DM is a system of administrative structures and standard procedures to manage the implementation stage of the project cycle. The DM systematises and allocates institutional and individual post responsibilities; introduces the use of standard documents and procedures and establishes clear internal audit trails.

DM implies a key role of the beneficiary country in the whole project cycle: programming, implementation (tendering and contracting) and follow-up (monitoring and evaluation). Under DM, the Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) has sole responsibility for tendering, contracting, payments, accounting and financial reporting of EU funded programmes and projects.

In order to increase the responsibility of the beneficiary country in the process of taking over management powers, the national authorities should accredit the structures and authorities set up in the framework of IPA before asking for a formal conferral of management responsibilities by the Commission.

When DM is established, the implementing agency shall be the Project Implementation Units (within beneficiaries) in charge of technical management and implementation of each project.

Decentralised management by the beneficiary country (with or without ex-ante control over procurement and grant project selection, contracting and payments) must be preceded by an assessment by the Commission confirming that the beneficiary country is in a position to implement assistance in accordance with Article 53c of the Financial Regulation and meets the conditions set in Article 56(2) thereof.

For that purpose, the management and control systems in the beneficiary country shall fulfil at least the criteria set out in the Annex to the IPA Implementing Regulation and provide for effective controls for at least the standard list within that Annex.

The specific institutional requirements for the decentralised management of IPA-TAIB programmes are given in the IPA Implementing Regulation Article 21 (for all IPA components), Article 75 (for IPA-TAIB) and Article 83 (for monitoring IPA-TAIB).

Comparative cost analysis of financial allocation

The purpose of this comparative analysis is to present the project realized for IPA in Albania. We will attempt to present the status for the period of 2007-2013 years.

A. Secondary Road - Xhafzotaj - Fllake - Bregdet (IPA 2008)



Shijak, construction of secondary road

Shijak is a little town located about 30 km west of Tirana. Even though it is a very small town, several small factories are located there. However, due to the lack of a paved road the transport in and out of the goods produced was very difficult.

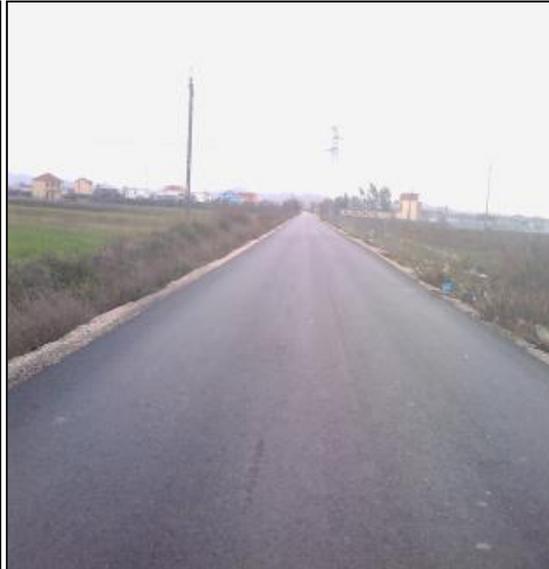
In March 2010 the construction work of a secondary road linking Shijak to Durrës city (the most important seaport of the Country) started, with a total investment of 2.3 mln Euros from IPA funds. This road is part of the Xhafzotaj Commune.

We met the Mayor of Xhafzotaj Commune, Mr. Agim Hoxha, to talk about the social/economical impact that derived from the construction of this road (Xhafzotaj –Fllakë - Coast, Durrës) and how the life in this Commune (but not only) has changed in general after the construction of this road.

Before ...



After reconstruction....



B. Golem, improvement of water sewerage system





Photo 2: the tubes through which the waste water is going to pass, to be discharged to the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Golem is a coastal village in the Kavaja region which has become a popular tourist destination in the last years. Due to complete lack of the sewerage collecting and treatment systems in Golemi beach area, most of the sewerage waste is discharged directly to the surface waters, streams or even into the sea.

Furthermore, most of the construction investments in Golem area use septic tanks which allow infiltration of wastewaters in the streams and the sea since they are built in sandy terrain.

In addition to the negative impact on the environment and public health the septic tanks has caused, this situation has also a negative impact on the development of the tourism industry in the area. The construction of the sewerage system for Golem Commune (including the village of Golem) is partially funded by IPA 2007. The cost of the sewerage system for Golem is 4.3 million Euros.

Through IPA 2007 project, the wastewater discharged and collected from the Golem area will be disposed to the existing Kavaja Waste Water Treatment Plant.

There are about 20-25 thousand residents in the Commune who will benefit from this very important investment throughout the year, and around 90-100 thousand people during peak seasons.

However, only 21% of the population of the area of Kavaja is connected with the sewerage system and is served from the treatment plant. The Waste Water Treatment Plant was constructed for 25.000 inhabitants, while the population amount over 92 400 inhabitants.

That's the reason why we needed the existing Waste Water Treatment Plan to be enlarged in order to increase its capacity, which will be implemented through a project under IPA 2009.

Hopefully there shall be no more cases of poisoning or skin disease and the local entrepreneurs in the tourism sector will benefit.

C. Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Albania (IPA 2008)



Overall objective of this project is to support the implementation of Albania's National Education Strategy with special focus on Pre-University Vocational Education and Training, supporting national socio-economic development and cohesion through development of a coherent VET system and a well skilled labour force.

The project purpose is to improve quality of learning conditions for students in VET schools and to provide better education and training opportunities for the poor communities/areas; to consolidate the network of VET schools and to expand the opportunities for vocational education for the poor, through upgrading of the VET school infrastructure;

- to consolidate the VET didactical and technological equipment in selected VET schools;
- to consolidate the on-going VET reform through measures at national /regional and/or local level;
- to support on-going VET curriculum reform and to boost standards through development of the Albanian

Qualification Framework agenda

To further support implementation of the new regional VET Centre concept based on EU standards in order to allow for more rationalised usage of available school space and VET didactical and technological equipment.

D. IPA - CBC PROJECTS

IPA Cross-border Programme Albania - Montenegro

TWO LANGUAGES – ONE BOOK (Total Project Budget: € 91,266.84)

The project seeks to create a new and longterm communication between the Republic of Albania and Montenegro so as to improve the cultural and socio-economic situation of the two countries' border areas and provide conditions for the good development of civic multi-ethnic communities. The project will improve communication and establish good quality cooperation between people and cultural institutions in both the Albanian and Montenegrin languages, improve literary translations of both languages and promote the values of contemporary literary work on both sides of the border.

***IPA Cross-border Programme Albania – Macedonia
BUSINESS WITHOUT BORDERS
(Total Project Budget: € 48,523.97 – AL/ € 56,548.40 - MK)***

The project goal is to contribute to a wider economic development of the cross-border area of the southwest region in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Struga, Ohrid, Zajaz, Debar municipality) and Korca region in the Republic of Albania (Pogradec and Korca municipalities). The project plans to establish interactive communication between representatives of Economic Chambers of Albania (Tirana-Korca) and the Macedonian Chambers (OEMVP). The resulting partnership will contribute to further regional development by using a new tool of cross-border cooperation.



***IPA ADRIATIC
BUILDING WASTE SUSTAINABILITY- BWS : NEW CAPACITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE
WASTE MANAGEMENT
Total budget: 1,601,500.00 €***

The aim of the project BWS is to disseminate existing knowledge and know-how to various target groups (competent authorities, industries, decision makers, NGOs, scientific community and public) in the field of innovative techniques for the integrated solid waste management.



ANNEXES:

ANNEX I:

KEY DATES IN ALBANIA'S PATH TOWARDS EUROPE

- 1992: Trade and Co-operation Agreement between the EU and Albania. Albania becomes eligible for funding under the EU Phare programme (see box below)
- 1997: Regional Approach. The EU Council of Ministers establishes political and economic conditionality for the development of bilateral relations
- 1999: The EU proposes a new Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) for five countries of South-Eastern Europe, including Albania
- 1999: Albania benefits from Autonomous Trade Preferences with the EU
- June 2000: Feira European Council (June 2000) states that all the SAP countries are "potential candidates" for EU membership
- November 2000: Zagreb Summit launches the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) for the five countries of the South-East Europe, including Albania
- 2001: First year of the new CARDS programme specifically designed for the SAP countries
- 2001: The Commission concludes that it is now appropriate to proceed with a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with Albania. The Göteborg European Council (June 2001) Invites the Commission to present draft negotiating directives for the negotiation of a SAA
- 2002: Negotiating Directives for the negotiation of a SAA with Albania are adopted in October
- June 2003: at Thessaloniki European Council the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) is confirmed as the EU policy for the Western Balkans. The EU perspectives for these countries is confirmed
- June 2004: Council decision on a first European Partnership for Albania
- May 2006: Entry in force of the EC- Albania readmission agreement
- June 2006: Signature of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA)
- December 2006: Entry in force of the Interim Agreement
- January 2007: Entry in force of the new instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)
- January 2008: the Visa facilitation agreement between Albania and the EU enters into force
- June 2008: The European Commission presents a road map identifying specific requirements for visa liberalization with Albania
- 1 April 2009: Entry into force of the Stabilization and Association Agreement
- 28 April 2009: Albania submits its application for EU membership
- 15 April 2010: Albania delivers replies to the Commission's Questionnaire
- 27 May 2010: the European Commission adopts a proposal to enable citizens of Albania and Bosnia Herzegovina to travel to Schengen countries without needing a short term visa
- 8 November 2010: EU decision granting visa liberalisation to Albania
- 9 November 2010 adoption of the Commission Opinion on Albania's application for membership of the European Union.

ANNEX II

LIST OF IPA PROJECTS

IPA 2007

- Support for the PAMECA mission
- Support for the establishment of the decentralized EC assistance structures (CFCU)
- Support for the implementation of the pre-detention system masterplan in Fier and Elbasan
- Contribution to Multi beneficiary programmes: • Tempus - 1.0 Erasmus Mundus (Western balkans Window)-.08, Erasmus Mundus (External Cooperation Window) - Nuclear Safety

- Support for INSTAT
- Support for the SME policies
- Support for the construction and/or rehabilitation of the Water and Sewerage Systems: • Continuation of the KfW project in Shkodra, Construction of the Sewerage System and the Waste Water treatment facilities in Velipoja-Shkodra region, Construction of the Sewerage System of the Shengjin-Lezha region, Construction of the Sewerage System of the Golem-Durres-Kavaja region
- CUSTOMS Support
- TAXATION Support

IPA 2008

- Support to strengthen Albania's administrative capacity to manage and coordinate the SAA implementation process.
- Technical Assistance to Ministry of Public Works, Transport and telecommunications (MPWTT)
- Support to Civil Service Reform
- Support for the strengthening of the Albanian Public Procurement, Concessions and Public Auctions systems
- Support and Expansion of the Albanian Treasury System
- Support to the Penitentiary Infrastructure
- Support to the alignment of Customs Procedures with EU Standards
- Project against Corruption in Albania
- Participation Community Programmes, CIP, Europe for Citizens, FP 7
- Project Preparation facility
- Improvement of management and conditions of the secondary and local roads
- Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Albania
- Kukes Region Tourism and Environment Promotion - KRTEP (Component II)
- Strengthening of national metrology infrastructure and achievement of international recognition
- Capacity Building for implementing the rural development strategy
- Support for the Albanian Competition Authority and State Aid Department
- Strengthening and enforcement of the capacities of Albanian Copyright Office and other state institutions involved in the process of respecting and protecting copyright
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the Albanian Central bank particularly in the areas of banking supervision, statistics, payment systems and the implementation of money policy
- Improving public protection against zoonotic diseases
- Support/Twinning to Albanian Civil Aviation Safety management
- Pre-feasibility/feasibility studies and detailed design for strategic inter-urban and trans-urban highway routes in Albania
- Improving of Albanian Maritime Sector
- Establishing and Strengthening of Monitoring Control and Surveillance system in fisheries (MCS)
- Consolidation of Environmental Monitoring system in Albania

IPA 2009

- Blue Border Management
- Support/Twinning for Anti-Money Laundering and Financial Crime Investigations Structures
- Technical Assistance/Twinning for the Justice System

- Support for enhancing the operational and logistical capacities of the Witness and Special Persons Protection Unit within the Department of Criminal Investigation in the General State Police
- Support for enhancing the Decentralised Management System
- Support for the Population and Housing Census 2011
- Project Preparation Facility
- Civil Society Facility – Civic Initiatives and Capacity Building
- Improvement of management and conditions of the secondary and local roads
- Support for cultural heritage
- Kukes Region
- Improvement of water supply and sewerage systems
- Improvement of industrial property rights
- Consolidation of the food safety system
- Building an e-Government Infrastructure that is in line with EU Personal Data Protection standards
- Support for participation to Community Programmes: in particular CIP, Europe for Citizens, FP 7

IPA 2010

- Support to the Penitentiary Infrastructure and improvement of training and accommodation capacities in the Police Education Centre
- Modernisation of the Albanian Justice system
- Support to the EU integration process
- Strengthening the Assembly of Albania
- Improvement of rural roads in Albania
- Human Resources Development
- Improvement of Drinking Water Supply and Sewerage Systems
- Support to the Food Safety Infrastructure
- Project Preparation Facility
- Capacity strengthening of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration for law drafting and enforcement of national environmental legislation

IPA 2011

- Construction of a new pre-detention centre and prison in Shkodra
- Support to the Albanian Custom Administration
- Improvement of Rural roads in Albania
- Construction of Vlora Bypass
- Construction of Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment Plant in Velipoja area, Phase III
- Rehabilitation of Vocational Education and Training (VET) schools in Lezha, Fier and Cerrik
- Supporting social inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities
- Support to Agriculture and Rural Development
- Support to participation to Union Programmes

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