Establishment of new Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) for a period
2021-2027
Inputs made by Belgrade Open School

1. Do you think that there are thematic priorities or other important elements missing in the proposed structure of the programming framework?

A) The thematic priorities established in the 5 window are defined in a very broad way so it is very hard to evaluate whether some important elements are missing or not in the proposed structure. This kind of division will only make sense if first two steps of Strategic response are performed well (proper analysis and presentation of sector context and relevance with EU enlargement process properly fed in to the process of definition of priorities, objectives and actions the IPA assistance). Thus, we can discuss about effectiveness and justification of selected windows and thematic priorities only after defined priorities, objectives and actions.

In Window 2 (Good Governance, Acquis Alignment, Strategic Communication and Good Neighbourly Relations) the thematic priority Compliance and alignment with the acquis and Union's values, rules, standards and practices should be extracted. By its nature this should be cross-cutting theme, because it intervenes whit all five windows.

In the Window 4 (Competitiveness and inclusive growth) we suggest that under point 1. A synthesis education & employment should be introduce – this two policies should be addressed as joint and intervened.

B) At this stage, following our experience, we would strongly argue for a certain priorities to be taken under consideration:

Window 2: Good Governance, Acquis Alignment, Strategic Communication and Good Neighbourly Relations

- Participation in decision making and policy development process of nongovernmental actors and citizens

Window 3: Green Agenda and sustainable connectivity

- Improvement of the air quality monitoring system – supporting the development of a robust air quality monitoring network for production of reliable and accurate data of air quality in all urban communities, on all relevant parameters – gases, particulates and biological molecules. Current state air quality network is facing limited funds for necessary maintenance works and concentration on particulates isn't timely measured in more than half of stations within the existing network, depriving major parts of population in urban areas from timely information on air quality.

Bolje društvo zasnovano na slobodi, znanju i inovacijama.

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- Improvement of energy efficiency in residential sector – supporting projects related to improvement of energy efficiency: carrying out renovation works, change and adaptation of heating and cooling systems, improving energy consumption data collecting. Residential sector accounts for almost 40 percent of total energy consumption in Serbia. Investing in energy efficiency would contribute to energy savings (as Serbia is currently spending 3 to 4 times more energy to generate the same amount of GDP, in comparison with Western Europe countries), improve the comfort for citizens and directly address certain environmental challenges, such as household heating-generated air pollution during the heating season (household heating accounts for more than 50% of emissions of PM10 and PM2.5 particles in Serbia).

- Introducing the just energy transition platform of coal-reliant communities: Serbia's energy sector is long-term deadlocked on coal consumption for energy production (low-quality lignite is the primary energy source of Serbia, as almost 70% of Serbia's electricity is generated through burning coal in thermal power plants). On the other hand, EU policies are supporting decarbonisation, increase of renewables in energy mix and coal phase-out through various policies and mechanisms, such as Emission Trading System – ETS, and recently announced Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. Lack of long-term planning towards transition to renewables hampers long-term sustainability of coal-reliant communities. A platform for dialogue between relevant stakeholders from all sectors on just transition and development of coal-reliant regions in a sustainable manner should be supported.

Window 4: Competitiveness and inclusive growth

In area of education & employment:

- Implementation of career guidance policies in practice (establishing and implementing standards for career guidance services, setting up national online information systems);

- improving the practices for traineeships;

- active labour market measures for youth (strengthening the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the measures, improving the dissemination of information of these measures, creating space for stakeholders to participate in the creation and implementation of measures);

- entrepreneurial learning and enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship (forming a clear national structure such as National Partnership in countries of the region, with participation of public, private and civil sector organizations, with a mandate to coordinate and support the development and promotion of lifelong entrepreneurial learning, enhancing recognition arrangements *of* non-formal learning,

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2. Do you have any specific suggestions in relation to the process of preparation of the strategic response by IPA III beneficiaries?

From the perspective of the civil society in Serbia this process should be in a way to gather the reliable and applicable information needed for preparation of two initial steps of the strategic response. This particularly stands for info needed to properly define the contextual framework (step 1). The entire process from the civil society could be organised in a sectorial way – by choosing the existing, functional networks of CSOs that will facilitate the process of getting the inputs from the CSOs from the sector. Here the lessons learned from the previous IPA II framework regarding the CSOs involvement should be taken into account too.

3. Do you have any specific suggestions relating to how support of civil society is reflected in the programming framework?

The support to civil society should not be reflected only to the Window 1 – The civil society can play a significant role firstly in defining priorities, objectives and actions in all 5 windows, and afterwards in implementation of the activities needed to address these objectives and priorities.

4. Do you have any other comment or suggestion?

N/A