

Since 2007, the European Union has provided financial assistance to the Western Balkan countries through the unique Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) which incorporated all former IPAs: PHARE, SAPARD, ISPA and CARDS.

The new IPA Regulation II came into force on 11 March 2014. Overall IPA budget for the 2014-2016 period amounts to EUR 11,668 billion, out of which the financial assistance allocated to the Republic of Serbia amounts to EUR 1,508 billion. The EU support for the above-stated period has been harmonized with the requirements of the accession process and the enlargement strategy, and will be based on support to the national reform processes and the assistance from other donors and international financial institutions. On the basis of the specific needs stemming from the screening process, and at a later stage of the negotiations, the basic support will rely on the strategies and action plans adopted throughout the negotiating process, even though it may be used for the unforeseen priority needs relevant for the negotiations. Co-financing of Serbia's participation in the EU programmes will be continued through the IPA.

The Republic of Serbia, as a candidate for EU membership, is currently in the final stage of development of the EU funds decentralized management system. For the purpose of effective and efficient use of IPA funds, all beneficiary countries, including Serbia, appointed their National IPA Coordinators (NIPAC), tasked with the coordination, planning and monitoring of EU assistance within all IPA components. Tasks of the Technical Secretariat of the National IPA Coordinator are being executed by the Serbian European Integration Office (<http://www.seio.gov.rs>).

The European Commission adopted the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development (IPARD) on 20 January 2015, a multi-annual programme for the Republic of Serbia in the 2014-2020 period, realized within the IPA II. The indicative allocations amounting to EUR 175 million start from 2015 with the following purposes:

- investments in material goods of agricultural holdings;
- investments in material goods related to agricultural products processing and marketing, including fishery;
- measures in the areas of agriculture, environment protection, climate change and organic farming;
- implementation of local development strategies;
- small holdings diversification and business development;

For detailed information on programming EU financial assistance, please visit the web page <http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Evropa/PublicSite/index.aspx>.