Basic information

2018/0247(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Procedure completed
Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027 **Subject** 8.20.04 Pre-accession and partnership	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	ZOVKO Željana (EPP) PICULA Tonino (S&D)	15/07/2019 15/07/2019
	Shadow rapporteur GROŠELJ Klemen (Renew) VON CRAMON-TAUBADEL Viola (Greens/EFA) DZHAMBAZKI Angel (ECR) VILIMSKY Harald (ID) MATIAS Marisa (GUE/NGL)	

Former committee responsible	Former rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	SALAFRANCA SÁNCHEZ-NEYRA José Ignacio (PPE) FLECKENSTEIN Knut (S&D)	10/07/2018 10/07/2018

Former committee for opinion	Former rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
INTA International Trade	BORRELLI David (NI)	09/07/2018
BUDG Budgets	MALETIĆ Ivana (PPE)	11/07/2018
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	VĂLEAN Adina (PPE)	21/06/2018
REGI Regional Development	ZELLER Joachim (PPE)	20/06/2018

	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	VALERO Bodil (Verts/ALE)	09/07/2018
Council of the European Union			
European Commission	**Commission DG**	**Commissioner**	
	Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations	HAHN Johannes	
European Economic and Social Committee			
European Committee of the Regions			

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/06/2018	Legislative proposal published	COM(2018)0465	Summary
02/07/2018	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
04/02/2019	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
11/03/2019	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A8-0174/2019	Summary
26/03/2019	Debate in Parliament		
27/03/2019	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T8-0299/2019	Summary
27/03/2019	Results of vote in Parliament		
08/10/2019	Committee decision to open interinstitutional negotiations after 1st reading in Parliament		
09/10/2019	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations announced in plenary (Rule 73)		
01/07/2021	Approval in committee of the text agreed at early 2nd reading interinstitutional negotiations	PE693.657	
09/09/2021	Council position published	06604/1/2021	Summary
13/09/2021	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
13/09/2021	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		
13/09/2021	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A9-0266/2021	
14/09/2021	Debate in Parliament		
15/09/2021	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T9-0375/2021	Summary
15/09/2021	Final act signed		
20/09/2021	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/0247(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 212
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/9/01502

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE627.819	30/10/2018	
Committee opinion	BUDG	PE626.961	22/11/2018	
Committee opinion	ENVI	PE630.627	22/11/2018	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE630.714	29/11/2018	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE628.720	05/12/2018	
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE625.581	25/01/2019	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE629.571	31/01/2019	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A8-0174/2019	11/03/2019	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T8-0299/2019	27/03/2019	Summary
Text agreed during interinstitutional negotiations		PE693.657	02/06/2021	
Committee draft report		PE696.415	30/08/2021	
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		A9-0266/2021	13/09/2021	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T9-0375/2021	15/09/2021	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Council position	06604/1/2021	09/09/2021	Summary
Draft final act	00067/2021/LEX	15/09/2021	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
	COM(2018)0465		

Legislative proposal		14/06/2018	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2018)0337	14/06/2018	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2019)437	30/07/2019	
Commission communication on Council's position	COM(2021)0575	10/09/2021	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2018)0465	10/08/2018	
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2018)0465	26/10/2018	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR4008/2018	06/12/2018	
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES4092/2018	12/12/2018	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Parliament	Briefing	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Regulation 2021/1529
OJ L 330 20.09.2021, p. 0001

Delegated acts

Reference	Subject
2021/2921(DEA)	Examination of delegated act

Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027

2018/0247(COD) - 11/03/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the report by Knut FLECKENSTEIN (S&D, DE) and José Ignacio SALAFRANCA SÁNCHEZ-NEYRA (EPP, ES) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III).

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Objectives

IPA III shall assist beneficiary countries in adopting and implementing the political, institutional, legal, legal, administrative, social and economic reforms required to ensure that they comply with the values of the Union and gradually align with the Union's rules, standards, policies and practices for accession.

Members set out the specific objectives of the instrument, namely:

- to strengthen the rule of law, democracy, the respect of human rights, including those of minorities and children, gender equality, fundamental rights and international law, civil society, academic freedom, peace and security, the respect for cultural diversity, non-discrimination and tolerance;

- to address forced displacement and irregular migration, ensuring that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner, and safeguarding access to international protection;

- to reinforce the effectiveness of public administration and support transparency, structural reforms, judicial independence fight against corruption and good governance at all levels;

- to strengthen the rules-based multilateral international order as well as well as peace-building and conflict prevention, including through confidence-building and mediation, inclusive and integrated education people to people contacts, freedom of the media and communication;

- to strengthen economic, social and territorial development and cohesion;

to reinforce environmental protection, increase resilience to climate change, accelerate the shift towards a low-carbon economy and develop the digital economy and society, thereby creating job opportunities, in particular for the youth;

- to support territorial and cross border cooperation including across maritime borders, and enhance trade and economic relations by fully implementing existing agreements with the Union, reducing regional imbalances.

Budget

Members proposed that the financial envelope for the implementation of IPA III for the period 2021-2027 shall be set at **EUR 13 009 976 000 at 2018 prices** (EUR 14 663 401 000 in current prices). The European Parliament and the Council shall authorise the annual appropriations within the limit of the multiannual financial framework for the period 2021 to 2027.

Programmes and actions shall aim to contribute to at least 16% of the overall financial envelope being devoted to climate-related objectives.

Increased involvement of civil society

The Commission shall act in partnership with the beneficiaries. The partnership shall involve, as appropriate, relevant national and local authorities, as well as civil society organisations, allowing them to play a meaningful role in the design, implementation and monitoring phases.

IPA programming framework

The IPA programming framework shall be established by the Commission by means of delegated acts. The programming framework shall expire on 30 June 2025 at the latest. The Commission shall adopt a new IPA programming framework by 30 June 2025 based on the mid-term evaluation, ensuring consistency with other external financing instruments and taking due account of relevant European Parliament resolutions.

The IPA programming framework shall be based on clear and verifiable performance indicators set out in Annex IV to the Regulation to assess progress towards the objectives set out therein.

Suspension of Union assistance

Members proposed to strengthen the conditionality of IPA aid by considering the possibility of suspending assistance in the event of violations of the principles of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms or commitments made under agreements concluded with the Union.

Budget support shall be reduced or suspended in the event of systemic irregularities in management and control systems or unsatisfactory progress towards the objectives agreed with the beneficiary.

Governance

A horizontal steering group composed of all relevant Commission and EEAS services and chaired by the VP/HR or a representative of that office shall be responsible for the steering, coordination and management of this instrument throughout the management cycle.

The European Parliament shall be fully involved in the design, programming, monitoring and evaluation phases of the external financing instruments in order to guarantee political control and democratic scrutiny and accountability of Union funding in the field of external action.

Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027

2018/0247(COD) - 27/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 513 votes to 97, with 45 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III).

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Objectives

IPA III shall assist beneficiary countries in adopting and implementing the political, institutional, legal, legal, administrative, social and economic reforms required to ensure that they comply with the values of the Union and gradually align with the Union's rules, standards, policies and practices for accession.

Parliament set out the specific objectives of the instrument, namely:

- to strengthen the rule of law, democracy, the respect of human rights, including those of minorities and children, gender equality, fundamental rights and international law, civil society, academic freedom, peace and security, the respect for cultural diversity, non-discrimination and tolerance;

- to address forced displacement and irregular migration, ensuring that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner, and safeguarding access to international protection;

- to reinforce the effectiveness of public administration and support transparency, structural reforms, judicial independence fight against corruption and good governance at all levels; including in the field of public procurement, state aid, competition, foreign investment and intellectual property;

- to strengthen the rules-based multilateral international order as well as well as peace-building and conflict prevention, including through confidence-building and mediation, inclusive and integrated education people to people contacts, freedom of the media and communication;

- to strengthen economic, social and territorial development and cohesion;

to reinforce environmental protection, increase resilience to climate change, accelerate the shift towards a low-carbon economy and develop the digital economy and society, thereby creating job opportunities, in particular for the youth;

- to support territorial and cross border cooperation including across maritime borders, and enhance trade and economic relations by fully implementing existing agreements with the Union, reducing regional imbalances.

Budget

Parliament proposed that the financial envelope for the implementation of IPA III for the period 2021-2027 shall be set at **EUR 13 009 976 000** at 2018 prices (EUR 14 663 401 000 in current prices). The European Parliament and the Council shall authorise the annual appropriations within the limit of the multiannual financial framework for the period 2021 to 2027.

Programmes and actions shall aim to contribute to at least 16% of the overall financial envelope being devoted to climate-related objectives.

Increased involvement of civil society

The Commission shall act in partnership with the beneficiaries. The partnership shall involve, as appropriate, relevant national and local authorities, as well as civil society organisations, allowing them to play a meaningful role in the design, implementation and monitoring phases.

IPA programming framework

The Regulation shall be complemented by an IPA programming framework established by the Commission by means of delegated acts. The IPA programming framework shall be established by the Commission by means of delegated acts. The programming framework shall expire on 30 June 2025 at the latest. The Commission shall adopt a new IPA programming framework by 30 June 2025 based on the mid-term evaluation, ensuring consistency with other external financing instruments and taking due account of relevant European Parliament resolutions.

The IPA programming framework shall be based on clear and verifiable performance indicators set out in Annex IV to the Regulation to assess progress towards the objectives set out therein, in particular in the following areas: democracy, rule of law, judicial independence, human rights and fundamental freedoms, gender equality, anti-corruption, reconciliation and peacebuilding, press freedom, climate change.

Suspension of Union assistance

Members proposed to strengthen the conditionality of IPA aid by considering the possibility of suspending assistance in the event of violations of the principles of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms or commitments made under agreements concluded with the Union.

Budget support shall be reduced or suspended in the event of systemic irregularities in management and control systems or unsatisfactory progress towards the objectives agreed with the beneficiary.

In the event of suspension, the aid granted by the Union shall mainly be used to support civil society organisations and non-state actors for actions to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Governance

A horizontal steering group composed of all relevant Commission and EEAS services and chaired by the VP/HR or a representative of that office shall be responsible for the steering, coordination and management of this instrument throughout the management cycle.

Parliament shall be fully involved in the design, programming, monitoring and evaluation phases of the external financing instruments in order to guarantee political control and democratic scrutiny and accountability of Union funding in the field of external action.

The Union Delegations in the beneficiary countries shall take all necessary measures to ensure the visibility of the financial support provided by the Union.

Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027

2018/0247(COD) - 14/06/2018 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) for the period 2021-2027.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) expires on 31 December 2020. In order to safeguard the effectiveness of the Union's external actions, the Commission proposes to maintain a framework for the planning and delivering external assistance under the next multiannual financial framework for the period 2021-2027.

The Commission considers it essential to maintain a **dedicated instrument in support of enlargement policy**, while ensuring its complementarity with the general objectives of the Union's external action and in particular those of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

The enlargement process is based on well-established criteria ("the Copenhagen criteria") and fair and rigorous conditionality. The objective of the proposed instrument is to **provide increased assistance to candidate and potential candidate** countries to pursue the necessary far-reaching reforms.

In November 2015, the European Commission set out a medium-term strategy for the Union's enlargement policy, which remains valid today. The current enlargement agenda covers the partners of the Western Balkans and Turkey. On 17 April 2018, the European Commission recommended to the Council the opening of accession negotiations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania in light of the progress achieved. This would maintain and deepen the current reform momentum.

The Commission reaffirmed the firm, merit-based prospect of Union membership for the Western Balkans. It is also keen to continue the dialogue with Turkey on a number of key areas of common interest such as economic and trade relations, energy, transport, migration and asylum, foreign policy, security and the fight against terrorism.

CONTENT: the proposal for a Regulation - presented for a Union of 27 Member States - seeks to establish the **instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) programme** for the period 2021-2027.

IPA III shall support the beneficiary countries in adopting and implementing the **political, institutional, legal, administrative, social and economic reforms** required by those beneficiaries to comply with Union values and to progressively align to Union rules, standards, policies and practices with a view to Union membership.

IPA III shall be clearly positioned in the context of the **new Western Balkans strategy**, and reflect the developments in the relations with Turkey.

As regards **political priorities**, IPA III shall focus on the main priorities set out in the enlargement policy and relevant strategy papers, namely: the rule of law, fundamental rights and governance, socio-economic development, EU policies and acquis, and people-to-people contacts, as well as reconciliation, good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation.

In addition to these priorities already included in IPA II, other key issues such as migration, security, environmental protection and climate change are more visibly addressed in the proposal.

Programming framework: this shifts the focus from partner allocations to performance in achieving the objectives. Assistance will continue to be targeted and adjusted to the specific situation of the beneficiaries. However, access to funds should, in addition to a principle of **'fair share'**, be based on criteria such as **project/programme maturity**, expected impact and progress on the rule of law, fundamental rights and governance.

Proposed budget: the European Commission has proposed an amount of **EUR 14.5 billion** (in current prices) for the new instrument for pre-accession assistance for the period 2021-2027.

Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027

2018/0247(COD) - 09/09/2021 - Council position

The Council adopted its position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) for the period covered by the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027.

The aim of the instrument is to **prepare the beneficiaries** - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Kosovo, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey - for future membership to the EU and to support their accession process, in complementarity with other instruments, in particular the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI).

Objectives

IPA III has the following specific objectives:

- strengthen the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular through the promotion of an independent judiciary, the fight against corruption and organised crime, respect for international law, freedom of the media and the rights of persons belonging to minorities, the promotion of gender equality and the improvement of migration management;

- reinforce the effectiveness of public administration and supporting transparency, structural reforms and good governance at all levels;

- shape the rules, standards, policies and practices of the beneficiaries with those of the Union and to reinforce regional cooperation, reconciliation and good neighbourly relations;

- strengthen economic and social development and cohesion, with particular attention to youth, through supporting investment and private sector development, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as on agriculture and rural development;

- reinforce environmental protection, to increase resilience to climate change;

- support territorial cohesion and cross-border cooperation across land and maritime borders, including transnational and interregional cooperation.

Performance-based approach and fair share principle

Assistance will be differentiated in scope and intensity according to performance of the beneficiaries. It will be targeted and adjusted to their specific situations and will take into account the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries.

Assistance may be modulated in the event of significant regression or persistent lack of progress by a beneficiary in the core areas (rule of law and fundamental rights, functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reform, and economic development and competitiveness), including by reducing funds proportionally and redirecting them in a way that avoids compromising support for improving fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law, including support to civil society and, where appropriate, cooperation with local authorities. Where progress has resumed, the assistance should also be modulated to further support those efforts.

Strategy Board for the Western Balkans

The Commission will be advised by a specific Strategy Board in the management of EFSD+ operations for the Western Balkans. It will set the main investment goals for the Western Balkans in terms of the use of the external action guarantee in support of EFSD+ operations. The European Parliament will have observer status.

The Commission will report annually to the Strategy Board on progress in the implementation of operations covering the Western Balkans.

Evaluation, monitoring, visibility

The results of the EU's action will be monitored and evaluated on the basis of pre-defined, transparent, country-specific and measurable indicators. The recipients of EU funding will have to ensure visibility, in particular when it comes to promoting the actions and their results.

The Commission may adopt delegated acts to supplement this Regulation in order to set out specific targets and thematic priorities for assistance.

Budget

The financial envelope for the implementation of IPA III for the period 2021-2027 is set at **EUR 14 162 000 000** in current prices.

Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027

2018/0247(COD) - 15/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution **approving** the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Preaccession Assistance (IPA III).

The proposed regulation establishes the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) for the period covered by the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027.

IPA III ensures continuity with IPA II (which covers the period 2014-2020) and complementarity with other instruments, in particular the Neighbourhood, Development Cooperation and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe and EU policies (e.g. on climate change).

Objective

The overall objective of the IPA III is to assist the beneficiaries - **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Kosovo, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey** - in adopting and implementing the political, institutional, legal, administrative, social and economic reforms required for these beneficiaries to become fully operational, social and economic reforms required for these beneficiaries to conform to the values of the Union and gradually align themselves with the EU's rules, standards, policies and practices with a view to their future accession to the Union, thereby contributing to the stability, security, peace and prosperity of each of the parties.

Budget

The financial envelope for the implementation of IPA III for the period 2021-2027 is set at **EUR 14 162 000 000** in current prices.

Thematic approach

Actions under IPA III should be financed through a thematic approach, in order to maximise the impact of EU assistance, while ensuring coherence, synergies and complementarities with other areas of EU external action, and with other relevant EU policies and programmes.

Assistance under the Regulation should focus on enabling the beneficiaries to strengthen their democratic institutions and the rule of law, to undertake judicial and public administration reform, to respect fundamental rights, including those of persons belonging to minorities, and to promote gender equality, tolerance, social inclusion and non-discrimination, including with regard to persons in vulnerable situations, children or persons with disabilities.

It should also support the development of a social market economy in line with the key principles and rights set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Results-based approach and fair share principle

Assistance should be targeted and tailored to their specific situations and the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries will be taken into account in order to avoid an unreasonably low level of assistance compared to other beneficiaries.

The scope and intensity of assistance may be **modulated in the event of significant backsliding or persistent lack of progress** by a beneficiary in the core areas (rule of law and fundamental rights, functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reform, and economic development and competitiveness), including by **reducing funds** proportionately and redirecting them in a way that should avoid undermining support for the improvement of fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law, including support to civil society and, where appropriate, cooperation with local authorities.

If progress is resumed, assistance should also be modulated accordingly, in order to sustain the effort.

In a statement annexed to the legislative resolution, the European Parliament considers that any suspension of assistance under the instrument would modify the overall financial scheme as approved under the ordinary legislative procedure. As co-legislator and co-branch of the budgetary authority, Parliament would be entitled to exercise its full prerogatives in this respect, if such a decision were to be taken.

Monitoring and visibility

The results of EU action should be monitored and evaluated on the basis of pre-defined, transparent, country-specific and measurable indicators. The recipients of EU funding should ensure visibility, in particular when it comes to promoting the actions and their results.

Parliament called on the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to set up a strategic coordination structure composed of all relevant Commission and EEAS services to ensure coherence, synergy, transparency and accountability, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2021 /947 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe.

For its part, the Commission commits to a high-level geopolitical dialogue between the two institutions on the implementation of the instrument. This dialogue should allow for exchanges with the European Parliament, whose views on the implementation of IPA III will be fully taken into account.

The European Commission also recalled that the Western Balkans Investment Framework Strategy Board is an advisory body to the Commission.