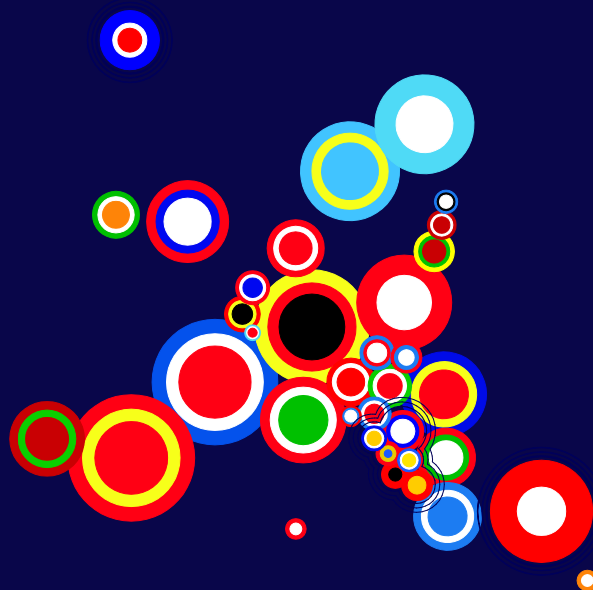




**INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II)
2014-2020**

SERBIA

Towards Lifelong Learning



Action Summary

This action will support ongoing education and training reform in line with the needs of the labour market by building a knowledge-based society through development of the Lifelong Learning process. Implementation of the National Qualification Framework will determine processes and institutions responsible for setting up qualifications and Qualification Standards, ways and conditions for their acquisition, Recognition of Prior Learning, comparison and recognition of qualifications as well as the mechanisms for quality assurance. Development of social partnership and Sector (Skill) Councils will provide mechanisms to reduce mismatch between education offer and economy needs. Optimisation of preschool network and provision of equipment will allow more efficient use of existing capacities and better coverage as well as implementation of new approaches focused on child and improve quality of preschool education. Complementing support to the early childhood and youth development, social infrastructure will be enhanced through the modernisation of children and youth playgrounds. In selected municipalities playgrounds will be reconstructed and refurbished in order to improve their safety.

Action Identification	
Programme Title	Annual Action Programme for Serbia (2014)
Action Title	Towards Lifelong Learning
Action Reference	2014/032-799.08/Serbia/Towards Lifelong Learning
Sector Information	
ELARG Sectors	<i>Education, Employment and Social policies</i>
DAC Sector	11230, 11240
Budget	
Total cost (VAT excluded) ¹	5 750 000 EUR
EU contribution	5 750 000 EUR
Management and Implementation	
Method of implementation	Indirect management
Responsible Unit or National Authority/Implementing Agency	Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU) - Ministry of Finance, Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Projects
Implementation responsibilities	For Result 1 and Result 2: Ministry in charge of education For Result 3: Ministry in charge of youth and sports
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Republic of Serbia
Specific implementation area(s)	Children and youth playgrounds: Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Subotica, Nis
Timeline	
Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement	31 December 2015
Contracting deadline	3 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement
End of operational implementation period	6 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement

¹ The total action cost should be net of VAT and/or of other taxes. Should this not be the case, clearly indicate the amount of VAT and the reasons why it is considered eligible.

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Current developments in market economies show that education and economic development are closely related and interlinked. The change of economic environment requires different structuring and organisation of vocational education and training because the competitiveness of economy at the labour market requires a high level of professionalism and competence of the labour force. Hence the processes of reconstruction and transformation of education, especially vocational, are preconditions for the sustainable social and economic development. A common feature of the education reforms carried out in most European countries is the effort to establish a flexible system of initial and continuing vocational education and training, with the aim of responding to the changing needs of labour market. Consequently, the modernisation and reform of vocational education and training is a complex and long-lasting process. Despite the fact that from year 2001 reform attempts have been made in Serbia, the general view is that the education system still does not prepare students well for the world of work; it is not sufficiently responsive to the needs of the economy and does not offer enough training opportunities for workers to upgrade their skills and improve their employment prospects.

Establishment of the system of qualifications makes the process of vocational education and training implementation easier, allows the modernisation of programmes, and enables the functioning of a quality assurance system. At the same time, it also contributes to the efficiency of the system, to easier and faster employment of those who have finished vocational education and their professional mobility. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is an instrument which regulates the issues of qualifications required in the labour market, represents the basis for the implementation of the concept of lifelong learning and provides support to development of a modern, relevant and flexible system of education and training. The NQF system determines processes and institutions (bodies, organisations) responsible for setting up qualifications and Qualification Standards, ways and conditions for their acquisition, comparison and recognition of qualifications as well as the mechanisms for quality assurance. Qualifications, i.e. Qualification Standards are an integral part of the National Qualifications Catalogue. So far the Republic of Serbia has been developing the NQF in two tracks, the NQF for the levels I to V in secondary vocational education (formal, non-formal and informal education) and NQF for high education (levels VI to VIII). These two documents have been developed separately, and at the end of 2013 Ministry formed a working group to develop one unified/integrated Serbian Qualifications Framework which will include formal, non-formal and informal education, secondary general and vocational education and higher vocational and academic education. Implementation and management of the NQF system will call for new regulations on qualifications and establishing institutions and bodies responsible for this field and will require building capacities of key national institutions, namely the Council for Vocational Training and Adult Education, National Education Council and National Council for Higher Education to steer and oversee the NQF process, the VET and Adult Education Centre to organise the NQF process, develop qualifications and manage the work of Sector (Skill) Councils (SSC).

One of the main principles of NQF and VET is that they are based on partnership. They are the common responsibility of various actors, social partners: the Government, employers and trade unions as well as other interest groups, chambers of commerce, professional associations, high-school institutions, Universities, science-research organisations, associations, vocational education and training institutions and the associations of vocational education and training institutions. Still there is no overall approach to social partnership in education, although first steps have been made in that direction. A comprehensive concept of social partnership in education will firmly link education with economy but will call for wide-ranging changes, including legal, financial, fiscal, etc. The needs for qualifications in the labour market, or the necessary competences in line with technological and social development, must be continuously upgraded and monitored, which is the key role of Sector (Skill) Councils. In 2012, with the support of IPA 2008, four pilots SSC were established as a way to implement the social partnership concept in VET and reduce the mismatch between education and economic needs. The new law on adult education introduced SSC as bodies of the VET Council, providing legal grounds for their establishment. Since SSC are new institutions and in order to secure

their continuous work support will be needed to develop sector profiles as well as to plan qualifications, linking sector profiles with enrolment policy and school network in VET.

A Qualification Standard is the basis for acquiring a qualification in academic and vocational education and it represents a set of professional competencies. To create a comprehensive national qualifications system, integration and co-ordination of existing qualifications and qualifications systems in Serbia (the higher education qualifications system, the vocational education qualifications system, the adult education qualifications system, the system of qualifications within the private sector, etc.) is necessary. Only the qualifications that are covered and regulated by the National Qualifications Framework represent qualifications recognised at the national level and are registered in the National Qualifications Catalogue. Currently there is only several qualification standards developed and adopted by the VET Council. Further development of the qualification system will require support for the research and identification of new qualifications and for linking the qualification system with occupation standards, the national system of classification of occupations and ISCO 08.

One of the important elements of the NQF is assuring the quality in the processes of developing and acquiring qualifications. NQF (levels I to V) introduced the concept of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as one of its sub-systems and once NQF is developed and implemented, it will serve as a tool for RPL that should enable validation of non-formal and informal learning. The new Law on Adult Education established legal grounds for implementation of RPL. In order to secure quality in this process, the capacity of institutions that will carry out RPL need to be strengthened. Also, development of the RPL system needs to be supported in respect of instruments and procedures that will provide efficient functioning of this system.

Evidence from EU Member States shows that quality early childhood interventions can bring the highest rates of return (for individuals) over the entire lifelong learning process, especially for the most disadvantaged. The Republic of Serbia aims to continue improving its preschool education as part of the lifelong learning system, building upon the positive outcomes of the IMPRES (Improvement of Preschool Education in Serbia) program, funded by IPA 2009. Improvement of the preschool education system means better accessibility and greater coverage, especially for children from disadvantaged groups. Official figures show a lack of involvement of children in preschool education. According to data of the Republic Institute for Statistics, in the school year 2011/2012, the average coverage of preschool education was 54.84%, covering the nursery level (age 0 to 3 years), kindergarten level (age 3 to 5.5 years) and the preparatory preschool programme (age 5.5 to 6.5 years). The preparatory preschool programme (PPP) is part of compulsory education, implemented in the year before primary school. In the school year 2012/2013, according to data of the Republic Institute for Statistics, 70 686 children were of the age group to attend the PPP in the Republic of Serbia. Of this total, 97.3 % (68,778 children) participated in the PPP.

Particularly low is coverage of children in the four year-old age group in Serbia, with about 47% of children aged three to five included in preschool education in 2010/2011. Based on the available data, it can be concluded that the Republic of Serbia still lags behind EU Member States where about 92% of children in this age group are involved in various forms of preschool education. Data for Serbia also shows that significantly more children from the Roma population are enrolled in preschool education in urban areas (10%) as opposed to rural areas (4.1%). Children with disabilities account for only 1.2% of those enrolled in preschool education, designating the need for a continuation of reforms.

According to the results of the 2011 population census, the Republic of Serbia has 7 120 666 inhabitants. Approximately, 70 000 children are born annually. Among important findings from the population census, is that depopulation from less developed to more developed regions in Serbia, as well as migration from rural to urban settlements is present. When it comes to the life conditions of children and young people, a number of municipalities in Serbia are faced with the problem of devastated parks and playgrounds recognising the need for their reconstruction.

Playgrounds are a vital link to nature and open space for children and youth in big cities, where the reduction of private space leads to an increasing need for public parks and play facilities. Playing is an important part of every girl's and boy physical, social, intellectual and emotional development, and

playgrounds give children the opportunity to socialise with others and develop their own ideas of play through individual and group activities. One of the major problems, recognized in the new National Youth Strategy for period 2015-2025, is insufficient physical activity among young people contributes to the development of many diseases. In that sense, the impact of play areas on children's play and physical training is a positive one. There is a notable lack of support for youth initiatives and infrastructure that promote healthy lifestyles and well-being. Also, certain improvements should be implemented with respect to installation and playground equipment safety. Some countries have adopted specific regulation on playground equipment requiring is designed in such a way that ensures adequate protection against health and safety hazards.

In the last two years municipalities were working on identifying the locations where the reconstruction is needed. The citizens' initiative and communication with public has been included in this process, and the criteria for prioritisation are defined as well, in order to enable proper prioritisation. The most important criterion is the number of inhabitants living around the park. As a result, the list of priority locations in need for interventions has been identified. Through this Action children's playgrounds will be built in several of the biggest cities: Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Kragujevac and Subotica.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

The action is fully in line with the Indicative Strategy Paper's (the Strategy Paper) approach to build capacity for inter-institutional cooperation so that more integrated policies, including education employment and social reform programmes, can be developed and implemented in this area. In the light of overall reforms of education processes this Action is focused on development of integrated National Qualifications System that will enable further improvement of the education system in line with labour market needs and thereby support socio-economic development for women as well as men. The NQF is an instrument which will regulate qualifications required in the labour market and represents the basis for the implementation of the concept of lifelong learning.

This Action Document is contributing to the achievement of the **“National priorities for International Assistance in period 2014-2017 with 2020 projections”** (NAD) through establishment of the NQF system, development of preschool education and refurbishment of children's playgrounds. This action will tackle and have influence on all levels of education, contributing to its quality, coverage and relevance.

As defined in the **National Plan for the Adoption of the Acquis 2014-18 (NPAA)** adopted in July 2014, the process of approximation to the European regulations and standards at all levels of education will continue with adoption of the new Law on Secondary Education (harmonisation with the Council Decision 63/266/EEC - 31963D0266), Law Amending the Law on Higher Education (providing for a more efficient and qualitative higher education system, increased availability, mobility and further alignment with the EU standards), Law on Certification of Qualifications for Regulated Professions (approximation to the Directive 2005/36/EC on certification of professional qualifications – 32005L0036) and corresponding implementing legislation. Implementation of this action will enable Serbia's NQF to be referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The EQF is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems together, acting as a translation device to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems in Europe. It has two principal aims: to promote citizens' mobility between countries and to facilitate their lifelong learning.

The **EC Progress Report for Serbia 2013** noted that the National Qualifications Framework for all levels of education has yet to be introduced and Serbia's participation in the EU's lifelong learning programme has yet to be decided. Foreseen in this action the implementation of the NQF system will facilitate development of Qualification Standards which are based on the economy and labour market requirement, enable orientation towards learning outcomes, improve co-operation among relevant stakeholders, i.e. social partners and secure the international comparability and recognition of Serbian qualifications.

Furthermore the Action is in line with the **Enlargement Strategy** in a way that proposed activities will contribute to the achievement of full compliance with all membership criteria.

This action is in line with the **Europe 2020** strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth targets. The NQF system will improve access to education, flexibility of paths and the mobility within the systems of formal and non-formal education thus supporting both women and men to raise their level of qualification. Preschool education is also linked to a reduction of early school leavers so this result will also contribute to keeping young people in school over the longer term. Furthermore development of the criteria for the optimisation of the preschool network will contribute to better access and coverage of preschool education.

The action is also in line with the **South East Europe 2020 Strategy – Jobs and Prosperity in a European Perspective**, through development of NQ System, work on Sector Skill Councils (SSC) and qualification standards greater emphasis will be placed on developing skills needed on the labour market.

This action is in line with **the Stabilisation and Association Agreement** given that implementation of the NQF will help to raise the level of general education and vocational education and training in Serbia and include non-formal education. Also it will facilitate achievement of priorities for higher education systems set in the Bologna Declaration.

The **Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)** until 2020 aims at supporting further development of educational and training systems in a lifelong learning perspective, covering all levels and contexts (including non-formal and informal learning). One of the strategic objectives is making lifelong learning and mobility a reality for which implementation of NQF system is prerequisite.

The **Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020** defines four main long-term objectives which are all related to and conditioned by implementation of the NQF system as well as the continued development of preschool education.

The new **National Youth Strategy for period 2015-2025**, recognize the problem of insufficient physical activity among children and young people. There is a notable lack of support for youth initiatives and infrastructure that promote healthy lifestyles and well-being. „Supporting the construction, reparation and renovation of public spaces designed for the youth to spend quality leisure time” is one of the defined activities within the specific goal: Created conditions for the development of healthy lifestyles of young women and man.

The **Strategy on Sports Development in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2018** was adopted at the end of 2014, along with the Action Plan for its implementation. The main objectives of the Strategy include the promotion of the school and university sports, development of sports infrastructure, provision of conditions for development of top sports and professional sports, and increase in the number of persons practicing sports in all population segments, especially among children, young people, women, persons with disabilities and among the elderly persons.

SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

Strategic Framework

The Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD) sector encompasses employment, labour market issues, education, social inclusion, health and youth. The HRSD sector counts 25 strategies, including cross-sector ones. Overall, the thematic spread of the HRSD development is too broad for a single strategy in the sector. However, overlapping strategies demonstrate the necessity to systematize the synergies within the sector. Therefore, the Employment and Social Reform Programme (ESRP), will be adopted by the Government to act as an overarching strategy for the sector as a whole.

The sub-sector key and updated strategies indicating how Serbia will proceed towards the achievement of common goals of the EU and setting core priorities are the National Employment Strategy 2011-2020 and the Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020. The **Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020** was adopted in 2012 and is closely related to the previously adopted Vocational Education Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia². The strategy defines four main objectives for long-term development of the education system in Serbia: 1.

² Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 1/07

Improvement of the education process and outcomes; 2. Greater involvement of Serbian citizens at all levels of education, from preschool to life-long learning; 3. Achieving and sustainability of the education relevance, and the structure of the education system which is in accordance with the individual development needs; economic, cultural, research, educational, public, administrative and the other systems; 4. Improved efficiency of the use of educational resources to which this Action Document is closely related. Currently the Ministry is developing an Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy.

Sector Lead Institution and Capacity

The number of entities active in the HRSD sector makes the institutional setting of the sector very complex and widespread. Although there is no HRSD lead institution per se, depending on the topic and in the case of specific task, relevant Ministry and/or institution takes the role of lead institution. The lead institution in the context of this Action Document is the Ministry in charge of education. The Ministry implements, monitors and supervises implementation of standards in preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education; enables expert pedagogical supervision in preschool, elementary and secondary education and establishes student standards and supervise the expert work in higher education; evaluates the professional development of employees in the education sector and attainment of education objectives; and supports construction and maintenance of educational infrastructure in preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education.

The **workload** of the Ministry in charge of education, science and technological development will be substantial. The Ministry will be in charge of management of contracts in the context of HRSD and Competitiveness sectors. Taking into consideration the staff utilisation ratio in the context of the HRSD sector it shall be stressed out that the total staff utilisation ratio of the PMU staff within the Ministry in charge of education, science and technological development for management of IPA 2012 and 2013 contracts in both sectors will be close to saturation. This refers to the fact that although the Ministry PMU will not employ full capacities for management of IPA 2012 contracts in the HRSD sector (1 service and 1 supply – centralised management by DEU) and IPA 2013 in the Competitiveness sector (1 Direct Grant and 1 Contribution Agreement - decentralised), management of IPA 2012 and 2013 contracts will employ a high proportion of capacities indicating that the Ministry in charge of education, science and technological development will have to carefully plan and sequence IPA II sector programmes (2014-2016 time frame).

Sector and donor coordination

The **Sector Working Group (SWG)** for HRSD is responsible to coordinate activities related to programming of EU funds and other international assistance, to propose relevant measures and activities. The Group is formally established by NIPAC's Decision. The composition, functioning, management and organization of all SWGs is regulated by the Rules of Procedures for Sector Working Groups for Programming of IPA funds and other development assistance. The mechanism of SWG has two dominant functions:

- 1) To provide transparency and wide participation of relevant partners and stakeholders through all stages of IPA II programming process. The secretariat for SWGs is provided by the Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO) as a NIPAC TS/BCPME (Body responsible for coordination of programming, monitoring and evaluation), which is responsible for organizing and managing this mechanism.
- 2) Effective and efficient aid coordination which is led by a 'task force' composed of the lead national institution, the lead donor and NIPAC TS/BCPME.

In order to enable more inclusive and transparent dialogue, consultation and communication with all relevant stakeholders sectors, SEIO established Sectorial Civil Society Organisations (SECOs), a consultation mechanism with the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Members of SECO are participating at the SWG meetings and take part in consultation processes for analysing sector priority goals, measures and operations for financing from EU funds and international assistance. SECO and SWG are part of the consultative process that leads to the elaboration of SPD and ADs.

Sector budget and medium term perspective

Important steps in the direction are being undertaken with a preparation for programmes budgeting which is legally mandated to be introduced in year 2015 for all budget beneficiaries. Currently fourteen institutions are implementing the Programme based budget. In the HRD sector, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development is one of the three out of the fourteen pilot institutions that are currently implementing the Programme based budget.

In accordance with the Programme Budgeting Instructions (PBI), the Programme based budget in the pilot institution the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development is structured through Programmes and activities/projects. A programme budget is developed in line with medium-term beneficiary's plans and other strategic documents that relate to their competencies. A programme is a set of measures undertaken by the budget beneficiary in line with its key competencies and medium-term objectives. Each programme is made up of independent yet closely interlinked components, activities and/or projects. Each programme and projects has objectives. In addition, indicators have also been developed.

In the pilot institution, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Development, there are eight Programmes with related projects. The Programmes are: Organisation and monitoring of the education system with 5 related projects, Pre-school education with 3 related projects, Elementary education with 6 related projects, Secondary education with 6 related projects, Higher education with 4 related projects, Support services in Education with 3 related projects, Student standard with 4 related projects, Support to Institute for the development of education with 1 related project and Support for Quality evaluation in education.

Performance Assessment Framework

The sector **Performance Assessment Framework (PAF)** is currently under development. For the time being the sector PAF is based on two key mechanisms: (i) system of indicators which have been developed to accompany the document "National Priorities for International Assistance for period 2014-17 with 2020 projections (NAD)" and (ii) periodical review of the implementation of strategies and action plans relevant for the sector.

A result-based system of indicators accompanying the NAD defines baseline and target values (benchmarks) for the period up to 2020 and will be revised in 2017. Indicators are linked to the relevant sector priorities and measures defined in the NAD. Definition of the NAD indicators took into account the availability of information and their sources (statistics, information that are collected by sector institutions, etc.); sector indicators used in the PEP (Pre-Accession Economic Programme) and internationally accepted indicators measured by the relevant IO/IFIs. It is important to note that the NAD indicators and targets have been prepared by the responsible sector ministries in consultation with SEIO, Sector Civil Society Organisations and key donors. NAD HRSD sector priorities were formulated at the level of national sector strategy objectives and are therefore set at the impact level of national public policies (Context indicators). The indicators at the level of NAD HRSD sector measures were designed to measure impact taking into account mainly international assistance (Programme indicators).

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Human Resource and Social Development sector has received substantial assistance from the international donor community over the period 2007-2012, with estimated total disbursement amounting to 425 000 000 EUR. The largest and most important donor in the sector has been the EU with total disbursement within IPA component I amounting to 213 000 000 EUR in the **period 2007-2013**.

In the education sub-sector, assistance under **IPA I** has been focused on strengthening institutional capacities and support to VET reforms and development of the NQF, design and implementation of quality assurance systems in primary and secondary education (and VET), support to early inclusion of vulnerable children in the education system, establishment of a system of "second chance" – functional elementary education for adults, and improvement of the quality of higher education teaching and infrastructure. **Multi-Beneficiary IPA** funds for the Western Balkans and Turkey have enabled Serbia to participate in numerous programmes since 2007, including the following in the HRSD sector: Erasmus Mundus Actions 1 and 2 (2007-2013) are building understanding and mutual

enrichment between the European Union and Serbia by promoting the mobility of students and academic staff in higher education; Tempus (2007-2012) has achieved positive results in terms of encouraging reform and the process of modernisation in individual universities, faculties and departments in Serbia, particularly with regard to exposing university staff to higher education institutions in an EU environment and to implementing the Bologna process; Regional Support for Inclusive Education (2012) will endeavour to promote inclusive education and training through awareness-raising, mutual learning and capacity building measures; Youth in Action has supported non-formal education and youth by supporting exchanges of young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations as well as initiatives that reinforce young people's mutual understanding, sense of solidarity and tolerance (2007-2013). **Other donors**, namely the World Bank, EIB, UN organisations (UNDP, ILO, UNICEF, IOM, etc.) and bilateral aid from Austria, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, have been supporting reforms in the HRSD sector. VET reform is complemented by bilateral support from the German government and the Austrian government, while the establishment of the teacher training system is supported by the Swiss government.

IPA 2008 Municipal Infrastructure Support Programme (MISP) aimed to strengthen capacity in Serbia, to develop and implement policy reforms on the decentralisation of local government leading to improved local governance, better management of municipal infrastructure services, and the capacity of municipalities to programme and absorb EC investment funds for new and rehabilitated assets. This will be achieved by: improved institutional and regulatory framework for municipal infrastructure services and support for Public Utility Companies (PUC) transformation, improved municipal infrastructure programming and project preparation as well as implementation of selected municipal infrastructure projects. The **EU Progress Programme** should be mentioned as one of the initiatives that contributed significantly to childcare in south and south-west Serbia. Its list of relevant activities of support to this underdeveloped region of Serbia, list of relevant linked activities includes: building of additional facilities adjacent to the existing kindergarten in Tutin, construction of a childcare centre in the Municipality of Raska, equipping and finishing works on the Kindergarten in LC Bukovica in Ivanjica Municipality, "Škola u prirodi" - infrastructure for special training of the children and youth with disabilities.

However, although the Report on the "Evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of development assistance to the Republic of Serbia per sector" assesses relevance of the assistance to the HRSD sector as **very high**, the general conclusion related to the effectiveness and efficiency is that it is **medium**, while the overall rating of the impact and sustainability is **low**. It is concluded that in the education sub-sector and VET, further support should be given to the development of an effective in-service teacher training for all levels. A financially-viable system for updating/raising the skills and competences of teachers in line with modern standards is still to be developed and implemented. There is also a case for applying the principles and methods of inclusive education to the VET sector. Finally, a concerted effort to establish a process of lifelong learning is needed.

The beneficiary's sense of ownership is the key to the success of the action. Therefore, a close and regular involvement of the beneficiary from the very early stages of the activities and throughout the entire project cycle is of utmost importance. Active participation of all relevant institutions and their representatives as well as political will and commitment to the reforms is required in order to facilitate implementation and move from the policy to the practice. Experience shows that municipalities very often underestimate or even neglect the costs for maintenance of facilities implemented for and handed over to them. Therefore formal agreements (i.e. Memoranda of Understanding) regarding maintenance will be signed with the selected municipalities' relevant services. Despite the serious infrastructure deficit at the municipal level, it is vital that the municipalities properly prioritise their needs.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To support the ongoing education and training reforms, including in the area of preschool education and lifelong learning process, in line with the needs of the labour market	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased part of population covered by adult education and lifelong learning programmes 2. Proportion of children attending preschool education increased 3. Percentage population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education increased 4. Percentage youth aged 20-24 having attained at least upper secondary level education increased 	SORS/EMIS, Eurostat, , Annual Innovation Union Scoreboard report	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
To develop an enabling environment for the Lifelong Learning process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established a continuing work of all Sector (Skill) Councils. 2. Institutions accredited for recognition of prior learning 3. Optimised network of preschool institutions - Networks of preschool institutions defined more optimally in accordance with new procedures developed by local self-governments (LSGs) 4. At least 17000 children regularly using newly refurbished playgrounds 	Education Gazette SORS/EMIS MESTD, database from the Institute for Improvement of Education	Implementation of AP for the Education Strategy LSG support to broaden the development of preschool education
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Result 1: Integrated National Qualification Framework system for lifelong learning established.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laws, bylaws adopted regulating NQ system 2. Number of trainings, workshops organised for National Education Council, Council for Vocational Training and Adult Education, HE Council and VET and Adult education Centre 3. Concept of Social partnership in education adopted 4. Number of Sector profiles developed 5. Number of Qualification Standards developed 6. Instruments and procedures for quality assurance of RPL system 	Official Gazette Education Gazette Annual MoESTD report	Active participation of all 3 education Councils Continuous political and financial support from the government Continuous commitment and cooperation between National and Local
Result 2: Preschool education systems reforms continued to enable a constructive start to lifelong learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of trainings completed by teachers, expert associates and mentors 2. Training program for employees in local governments prepared with a focus on the optimisation of the network of preschool institutions and promoting preschool education 3. Number of trainings held for (LSGs) 4. Act on optimisation of the network of preschool institutions adopted 5. Number of preschool institutions equipped (with the supplies that are needed for more child-focused preschool education) 	MESTD, database from the Institute for Improvement of Education Official Gazette Statistical data	institutions in planning and implementation of the activities
Result 3: Enhanced social infrastructure through reconstruction, refurbishment and improved safety conditions of Children' playgrounds.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 20-25 playgrounds reconstructed 	Occupational permit Mid-term and final Activity Report	Final beneficiaries will allocate funds for maintenance costs
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	OVERALL COST	ASSUMPTIONS
Activities to achieve Result 1: Activity 1.1. Development of integrated National Qualification System	Activity 1.1. – Technical Assistance	Total cost for the entire Action is 5 750 000 EUR	Adequate capacities in relevant institutions to

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

Activities related to **Result 1** are aimed at assisting the Republic of Serbia to develop and implement the integrated National Qualification System. With assistance of European Training Foundation, IPA 07 “Modernisation of the VET System in Serbia” and IPA 08 “Support for quality assurance within the national primary and secondary education examination system”, the NQF document for levels I to V was developed. It is expected that IPA 12 “Increasing the capacity of the Serbian VET system in improving the quality, coverage and relevance of the vocational education and training” will provide a unified/integrated NQF document for all levels and types of education that will present bases for development of the NQ System within this action. Assistance will be provided for institution building of the NQ System, by mapping the processes and institutions in the NQ System, capacity building of identified institutions and bodies and providing legal bases for the operationalisation of these processes (rules and procedures). In developing the NQ System quality assurance principles will be integrated into the system matching and building upon IPA 08 results in assuring quality in the process of obtaining qualification. Building upon experience of IPA 08 in piloting 4 SSC, assistance for Sector (Skill) Councils, social partnership in education and training will be further developed by identifying its modalities on different levels (local, regional and national level) thus providing for better planning of qualifications and school network. Also, continuous work of the SSC will be supported by development of a methodology for development of the Sector Profiles which presents bases for informed work of the SSC and for better matching education offer with the labour market needs. Furthermore at school and individual levels, social partnership will provide better cooperation between local community, enterprises, and schools, securing professional practice and enabling students to obtain skills and competencies needed for employment and further education. Apart from Sector Profiles, an instrument for planning of qualifications that would link sector profiles with education and enrolment policy and school networks in VET will be developed. In order to further develop the qualification system to populate the NQF with qualifications (National Catalogue of Qualifications), assistance will be provided in research and identification of new qualification and for linking the qualification system with occupation standards, the national system of classification of occupations and ISCO 08. As an element or sub-system within the NQ system, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), will be supported with respect to instruments and procedures that will provide efficient functioning of this system and quality assuring accreditation and licencing of providers. Development of RPL will build upon findings and results achieved within the IPA 07 project that piloted an RPL model in selected schools (Regional training centres for adult learning).

Activities leading to **Result 2** will help the Republic of Serbia to promote inclusion in preschool education through the optimisation of space capacities, better needs analysis and improved access to preschool education for children from disadvantaged families. Outputs of the IPA 09 IMPRES project serve as the foundation upon which the aims of this result are built. Activities will comprise strengthening the professional capacities of LSGs to optimise the network of preschool facilities at the local level in accordance with the Government's document regarding the criteria for the network of preschool institutions and facilities; raising the professional capacity of educators in preschool institutions; and providing some of the material support for inclusion in preschool education for children from socially disadvantaged families. A promotional campaign will be designed and implemented to help raise public awareness about the necessity and the importance of early involvement of children in the educational system. Also, a need assessment will be conducted to produce a list of priority supplies that are most needed as teaching tools for preschool institutions. The supply contract will help to equip target preschool institutions with these priority items, many of which will have been identified as part of this action.

Activities leading to **Result 3** correlate to the preschool education because social infrastructure should be also taken into consideration as additional, especially important component in improving the quality of life and contributing to the early childhood development. Furthermore, this activity should contribute to enhanced capacity of young women and men to spend quality their leisure time, and take part in sports and recreational activities. The list of priority locations have been identified taking into consideration the density of children population as well as existing conditions at these public areas.

Children and youth play areas haven't been renewed for more than 20 years, with outdated equipment jeopardising children's safety. Therefore, their reconstruction would make significant change in terms of improvement of children safety, in line with the EU standards on playground equipment (EN1176 Playground Equipment Standard). To be more specific, it is expected that around 700 children and young people would benefit per reconstructed playground. In that sense, the special value of this initiative is reflected in improvement of children's safety and promotion of healthy lifestyle among youngsters,, while contributing to more pleasant environment that offers significantly better life condition. This activity focuses on the reconstruction of 20-25 playgrounds in five municipalities including procurement and installation of the equipment that complies with the safety standards. The activity is designed in a way to contribute to the visibility of the EU. This effect is planned to be achieved through specific thematic design that will be embedded at rubber surface and decoration of parks.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This Action Document under IPA II assistance was prepared and will be implemented and managed in accordance with provision of respective legislation, implementing and operating agreements and procedures.

In the context of the institutional framework for HRSD sector, the following institutions have been responsible for programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the interventions foreseen under this action document: the Ministry in charge of Education and the Ministry in charge of Youth, as well as SEIO as a NIPAC TS.

Other bodies and actors such as the CFCU as a Contracting Authority, NAO SO, NF, and EU Delegation have specific roles in the programming and implementation process in line with respective legislation and procedures and depending on the determined modality of implementation (Direct vs. Indirect). **The Ministry in charge of education is final beneficiary and end recipient of the support foreseen under Result 1.** The Ministry will have to secure active participation and coordination of all relevant institutions, namely the National Educational Council, the National Council for Higher Education and its Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance, the Council for Vocational Education and Adult Education, the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation, the Institute for the Improvement of Education, Conference of Serbian Universities (CONUS), Conference of Academies of Professional Studies (CAPS) Ministry in charge of employment, National Employment Service, representatives of employers, schools and faculties.

The Ministry in education is final beneficiary while the preschool institutions in selected local self-governments are end recipients under Result 2. Prior to the start of activities, the line Ministry will identify target LSGs and preschool institutions. Service contract will support updating of the needs assessment and technical documentation for the supply contract.

The Ministry in charge of youth is final beneficiary, while the local self governments (selected children and youth's playgrounds) are end recipients under Result 3. Prior to the start of this activity the Ministry in charge of youth will have to establish close cooperation with municipalities and their services/public companies responsible for the playgrounds to select their exact locations.

The share of responsibilities for implementation of this Action Document is as follows: The Ministry in charge of Education will have the overall responsibility for managing the implementation of the Service and Supply contracts foreseen in this Action for Results 1 and 2, through its Department for International Cooperation, European Integration and Projects. Furthermore, the Ministry in charge of Education is responsible for preparation of all necessary documentation in order to secure timely implementation of operations and its submission to the Contracting Authority (CFCU) that will hold responsibility for the management of procurement and contracting. The Ministry will secure that all institutions involved in implementation and monitoring are structured in a way to fulfil their tasks and responsibilities. The Ministry in charge of youth will have responsibility for managing the

implementation of contracts pertaining to Result 3 – Children playgrounds, Works and Service contracts (supervision of works).

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING

Result 1: Integrated National Qualification Framework system for lifelong learning established

The activities under the result 1 will be implemented through service contract.

The Ministry in charge of education is responsible for the implementation of activities to achieve Result 1.

There is no national co-financing foreseen.

Result 2: Preschool education systems reforms continued to enable a constructive start to lifelong learning

The activities under the result 2 will be implemented through service contract and supply contract.

The Ministry in charge of education is responsible for the implementation of activities to achieve Result 1.

There is no national co-financing foreseen

Result 3: Enhanced social infrastructure through reconstruction, refurbishment and improved safety conditions of Children' playgrounds.

The activities under the result 3 will be implemented through works contract and service contract.

The Ministry in charge of youth is responsible for the implementation of activities to achieve Result 3.

There is no national co-financing foreseen.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

Monitoring of the progress in implementation of actions will be done in accordance with the respective rules and procedures for monitoring under indirect management mode. Manuals of procedures include detailed procedure for monitoring on different levels with clear responsibilities and deadlines in the monitoring process.

IPA II monitoring process is organised and led by the NIPAC/ Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO) as a NIPAC TS/BCPME. National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC) is the main interlocutor between the Serbian government and the EC regarding strategic planning, co-ordination of programming, monitoring of implementation, evaluation and reporting of the overall IPA assistance and is responsible for ensuring the linkage of IPA assistance to the EU accession process. NIPAC monitors the process of programming, preparation and implementation as well as the sustainability and effects of actions aiming to improve these processes, timely identification, remediation and alleviation of potential problems and issues in the process of programming and implementation of Action documents.

Through the support of the NIPAC TS/BCPME (SEIO), the NIPAC is responsible to establish the monitoring procedure and roles and responsibilities of the institutions in the programming and monitoring process. Furthermore, with the support of NIPAC TS/BCPME (SEIO), NIPAC is responsible to establish, chair and organise the work of the IPA Monitoring Committee (IPA – MC) and submits to the EC annual and final reports on the overall IPA implementation. In addition, NIPAC establish, chair and organise the work of the IPA Sectorial Monitoring Committees (SMCs), prepare regular monitoring reports for the Government and the EC based on the reports drawn up by the final beneficiaries responsible for implementation, it reports on the formulation and implementation of Action Documents, monitor the fulfilment of preconditions for the initiation of public procurement procedures and organise the process of evaluation of IPA support. The NIPAC

prepares regular reports for the IPA Monitoring Committee that includes information on status and progress in implementation of all relevant actions. In addition, NIPAC prepares reports to be examined by the NAP Sector Monitoring Committees. Monitoring process envisages participation of various stakeholders such as EC/EUD, NIPAC/NIPAC TS/BCPME, final beneficiaries, CFCU, NF, AA and other institutions and civil society organisations.

In line with institutional set up in HRSD sector, monitoring and reporting on activities foreseen under this Action document will be organised and performed within the monitoring framework elaborated above and through the structure and roles described under sections 2. Roles and responsibilities and 3. Implementation method and type of financing.

So as to avoid duplication of monitoring systems, the system of NAD indicators and indicators of relevant national strategies were used for the preparation of the Action, thus allowing harmonization of PAF with the monitoring provisions defined by the procedures.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Description	Baseline (year)	Last (year)	Milestone 2017	Target 2020	Source of information
(%)	Life-long learning: share of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (at any time during a four week period prior to being surveyed)	2012 3,6				Eurostat
<i>Innovation Union Scoreboard indicator</i>	Percentage population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education ³	2013 69				Eurostat
<i>Innovation Union Scoreboard indicator</i>	Percentage youth aged 20-24 having attained at least upper secondary level education ⁴	2013 104				Eurostat
(%)	Increased coverage of children with preschool education	2012 46%	2014	75%	85%	Data of the Republic Institute for Statistics
(Number of)	Established a continuing work of all Sector (Skill) Councils (SSC).	2012 4SSC	2013 4 SSC	20 SSC	20 SSC	Report of IIE, Ministry in charge of education
(Number of)	Institutions accredited for recognition of prior learning	2012 0	2013 0		10	Strategy implementation Report, Ministry in charge of education
(%)	Optimised network of preschool institutions	2012 5,5%	2014	70%	100%	Act on criteria for the network of preschool institutions, Gazette of LSG
(Number of)	At least 17000 children and young people regularly using newly refurbished playgrounds	2013	N/A	17000	17000	
<i>Action output indicator (%)</i>	Laws, bylaws regulating NQ system adopted	2013 0			100%	Official and Education Gazette, Ministry in charge of education
<i>Yes/No</i>	Concept of Social partnership in education adopted	2013 No		Yes		Annual Report of Ministry in charge of education
<i>Yes/No</i>	Adopted Instruments and procedures for quality assurance of RPL system	2013 No		Yes		Education Gazette, Ministry in charge of education
(%)	Act on optimisation of the network of preschool institutions adopted	2012 10%	2014	70%	100%	Gazette of LSG
(Number of)_	20-25 playgrounds reconstructed	2013 No	N/A	Yes	Yes	Mid-term and final Activity Report

³ (Performance relative to the EU where the EU = 100)

⁴ (Performance relative to the EU where the EU = 100)

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this Action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

The action will have no negative environmental effects. Additionally, sustainability and environmental protection are taken into account throughout programme management and implementation. Through awareness raising the action will help to mainstream the need of environmental protection and the role of individual citizens and civil society in that process, as well as an understanding of global trends and authorities' obligations in that arena. The reconstruction works will be consistent with Environmental implications as set out in relevant Regulations consistent with the Law on Environmental Protection.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)

In order to associate civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of the SPD and in general in programming of international assistance, SEIO established a statutory consultation process with the representatives of Civil Society Organisations. This mechanism is based on the consultative process with Sectorial Civil Society Organisations (SECOs) and serves as a platform that enables exchange of information and contribution of CSOs in relation to planning development assistance, particularly programming and monitoring of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). The SECO consortium for the HRSD sector has intensively been involved in preparation of the NAD, preparation of the SPD and preparation of this Action Document within the framework of HRDS SWG and thus actively contributed to the creation of recommendations within the network which influenced on decision related to identification of the activities presented in this Action Document.

Furthermore, based on EC evaluations, consideration will need to be given to broadening the Steering Committee's membership to ensure that cross-cutting issues at the sector level are fully integrated into the delivery of IPA II assistance. This may call for the inclusion of relevant representatives from civil society as appropriate.

In developing the NQF system CSOs will be included and consulted as a part of working groups that will be formed for different aspects/issues (accreditation, RPL, etc.). As for the preschool education, CSOs will be included at the local level as a means of encompassing a consultative approach in the preschool network optimisation. Same model will be used in selecting locations for the children's playgrounds.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the actions activities will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, sex or sexual orientation. The gender equality issue will work in line with the National Strategy for Improved Status of Women and Gender Equality Promotion (2009-2015) which comprises fields concerning the participation of women in the economic area through mechanisms to improve women's political position, education, health, the problem of violence against women, and other issues that will contribute to a changed role and position for women in Serbia.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

The action will be sensitive to minority issues and will ensure access for all ethnic groups to resources and services. The needs of minorities will be considered as an integral part of the Action.

Activities related to preschool education will improve access to preschool education for children from disadvantaged families. Also in developing and delivering trainings specific needs of children from disadvantages families and minorities will be taken into consideration and incorporated. As for the children playgrounds, all children will use children playgrounds no matter of their nationality of vulnerability.

Anti-Corruption

The Anti-corruption National Strategy (2013-2018) and accompanying Action plan, envisages preparation of integrity plans as a preventive measure in the fight against corruption, enabling institutions to apply self-control in the implementation of their competences. In 2012 the OECD have produced a report on “Strengthening Integrity and Anti-Corruption in Education, Serbia” as an evidence-based approach for targeting and eradicating corruption in education systems. In implementing this action, recommendations and findings from the Report will be taken into consideration and safeguard measures will be integrated into procedures.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

This action responds to national priorities stated in the national strategic framework and policy (Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2020). In addition, this action builds on the impact of prior actions supported under previous IPA assistance and enables continuity and follow-on reached achievements. In this sense, national institutions (e.g. Council for Vocational Training and Adult Education and Ministry of education, science and technological development, VET and Adult education Centre), will be further empowered to steer and oversee the National Qualification System and its process. Development and adoption of a legal framework will provide sustainability and demonstrate commitment of the beneficiary.

Active participation of LSGs that are primarily responsible for financing preschool education and infrastructure will enable development of a preschool institution network that is tailored to the needs of individual local communities and their resources, thus securing sustainable financing and incorporation of foreseen costs into local budgets.

Maintenance of reconstructed children playgrounds will be under the responsibility of the relevant municipalities’ services (public companies). The funds for this purpose are provided from the local budgets on the annual basis, and transferred to responsible local services. Public companies (PC) are responsible for parks although there are differences in approaches. The differences mainly derive from different set up of organisations at the local level.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action. The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the beneficiary, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

An integral part of each activity in the AD will be the definition of a communication strategy and related visibility activities. These activities will be carried out in order to raise the profile of the activities, to increase awareness among various target audiences and to ensure successful communication of information about the operations and results that will be accomplished.

All actions and tools will be fully aligned with the EU visibility guidelines “Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions”. Through development of a communication strategy communication objectives will be set, enabling successful identification of visibility activities (in order to pull existing resources and create maximum impact when directed to the target groups). Furthermore, a communication strategy will identify target groups (as recipients of the information); identify key messages (to be transferred to targets in a way to motivate them to perceive information in the desired manner) and set up a communication approach.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions. Visibility actions should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The following actions and tools should be carried out: definition of visual identity standards; preparation of written materials (factsheets, training compendia, manuals, etc.); production of branded

material (panels, folders, promotional material); website; events (trainings, retreats, workshops, round tables, initial and closing events).

Communication and visibility will be ensured through information and promotion campaigns that will be implemented from the very beginning of the action.

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities. The beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectoral monitoring committees.