

AGREEMENT ON EU'S NEW PRE-ACCESSION INSTRUMENT

Published at: 20-07-2006

Source: [Портал ЕВРОПА](#)



The new EU instrument to govern EU financial assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries was formally adopted on July 17. Based on a Commission proposal, the EU Council adopted a regulation establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, IPA. This follows a favourable opinion voted by the European Parliament on July 6.

The new financial instrument simplifies and streamlines EU external assistance during the pre-accession period. IPA will, as from the beginning of 2007, replace five existing instruments (PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, the Turkey pre-accession instrument and CARDS), and will cover all EU pre-accession actions, both for candidate and potential candidate countries.

IPA provides a single coherent tool for providing financial assistance to the countries with a clear European perspective and with EU accession as the ultimate goal: the candidate countries of Croatia, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and the potential candidates countries, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia including Kosovo.

Welcoming the Council's adoption of the regulation, European Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn said: "Financial assistance has always been and remains a corner stone of our enlargement policy. We stand ready to help countries on their way towards the EU with advice, political guidance and with substantial financial assistance. I welcome the decision of the Member States which allows us to continue to support the preparation of candidate and potential candidate countries during the next budgetary period."

The rationale for the new mechanism is that following the successful accomplishment of the 2004 enlargement, a new financial instrument was needed to give more focused, targeted and coherent EU assistance during the pre-accession period. EU assistance is justified because preparation for EU membership is a demanding process for the countries on the road towards the EU, requiring costly investments for institution building and infrastructural projects - as well as political will, strong leadership and democratic support.

IPA will provide up to €11.47 billion during the 2007-2013 budgetary period, and assistance will take account of each country's different objectives and progress. In all countries, it will help to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law, reform public administration, carry out economic reforms, and increase respect for human and minority rights. For candidate countries, an additional objective is the adoption and implementation of the full requirements for membership, the so-called "acquis communautaire" - including in particular the preparation for the implementation of EU's agricultural and cohesion policies. For potential candidate countries, assistance will include approximation to the EU laws and standards, and measures similar to those available for candidate countries in the areas of regional, human resources and rural development.