# Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey (Frontex, EASO, IOM, UNHCR)

The *"Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey"* is **a European Union-funded multi-country programme** aiming to provide a comprehensive and holistic regional approach to effective and protection-sensitive migration management systems in the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) and as part of the EU accession processes of the **Programme's seven beneficiary countries,** namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*[1], Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

The programme is focused on the introduction and sharing of EU standards and best practices on protection-sensitive migration management**. It aims to support the target countries in developing a protection-sensitive response to mixed migration flows**.

All Programme actions are implemented by Frontex, EASO, IOM and UNHCR in a spirit of joint partnership to complement national efforts in the area of migration management by providing a mixture of horizontal and regional support.

The duration of the programme is 42 months (it started in 2016) and it comprises **two project components** – Component 1 led by Frontex, and Component 2, led by IOM; with a total budget of 8 million EUR.

The specific objectives under **Contract 1 led by Frontex** aim at:

➢ Strengthening **identification mechanisms** regarding irregular migrants and asylum seekers, including identification and screening procedures, collection, as well as interpretation and use of Country of Origin Information. It also supports countries with transposing identification and screening procedures to national systems;

➢ Enhancing the Beneficiary countries' capacity and tools to perform **the registration of mixed migration flows** in a harmonized manner, observing future interoperability with EU/Schengen MS systems and practices, and in full respect of fundamental rights;

➢ Setting up and streamlining of **referral framework** into national mechanisms; including referral into asylum systems and integration and also into return procedures – EASO in the lead of this intervention;

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[1] * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

➢ Assisting the IPA II Beneficiaries to work on establishing **EU compatible asylum systems for persons in need of international protection** – EASO in the lead of this intervention;

➢ Establishing appropriate non-voluntary **return mechanisms** at regional level and operational cooperation with selected countries of origin (excluding Turkey) with a view to preparing the Beneficiary countries to offer sustainable and holistic return solutions.

The specific objectives under **Contract 2 led by IOM** aim at:

➢ Strengthening exchange of non-personal data within and beyond the region so that accurate and up-to-date risk analysis information on mixed movements is readily available on cross-border movements along the Western Balkan migration route. Regionally harmonised and EU compliant templates for data collecting will promote greater standardization and facilitate direct comparison of trends in the region;

➢ Establishing regional voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) mechanism and cooperation with selected countries of origin. Regionally harmonized AVRR standard operating procedures will provide a common standard of assistance in accordance with international law principles, and ensure operational consistency of assisted voluntary return;

➢ Piloting a regional pool of interpreters for Arabic, Pashto, and Farsi in Serbia and North Macedonia to enhance the identification of migrants for better migration management and greater protection of their rights.