More targeted capacity building for EU candidate countries

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**ECHA continues to support the accession process of EU candidate countries with capacity building through bilateral visits, specific trainings and events. To increase the impact of these efforts, an in-depth assessment of the status and needs of two candidate countries, Montenegro and Serbia, will be carried out between 2019 and 2021.**

**Helsinki, 24 January 2019** – As part of its continued efforts to support EU candidate countries in the accession process on behalf of the European Commission, ECHA will run its fifth Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) project between March 2019 and February 2021. The project will enable information sharing and capacity building through participation in EU-level events, specific trainings, study visits to Member States and ECHA on regulatory issues, and the translation of key documents.

The overall aim is to equip candidate countries with the knowledge necessary to fully participate in the implementation of EU chemicals policy and, in particular, in the work of ECHA.

To increase the impact of ECHA’s support activities, the Agency will carry out an in-depth assessment of the legal and institutional capacities in Montenegro and in Serbia – the countries most advanced in the accession process – as part of the project. The outcome will assist in identifying the more specific needs and actions that will help improve the preparedness of these candidate countries.

Background

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) is the means by which the EU provides financial and technical support for reforms in countries that are preparing to join the EU. It includes dedicated measures to foster collaboration between the candidate and potential candidate countries and EU agencies. Since 2009, ECHA has implemented four IPA projects focused on explanatory and training events for the authorities of project beneficiary countries. The Agency's main goal is to assist these countries at a technical level in their alignment with and understanding of ECHA's regulatory activities.