

WORK PROGRAMME – PLATFORM 4 (2018-2019)



The Brussels Summit adopted the **revised Eastern Partnership multilateral architecture** to contribute to the goals of the Eastern Partnership, particularly by supporting the **implementation of the "20 Deliverables for 2020"** as endorsed by the **2017 Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration**. The revised architecture will take into account the relevant provisions of the EU **Global Strategy** and of the reviewed **European Neighbourhood Policy**, as well as the key global policy goals set by the **Sustainable Development Goals** of the UN 2030 Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement and the European Consensus on Development.

The revised architecture aims to refine the process of consulting, steering and enabling policy implementation in order to jointly and effectively work towards reaching the "20 Deliverables for 2020". The revised architecture facilitates closer inter-Platform/Panel cooperation, enhanced engagement with relevant stakeholders and strategic, result-oriented activities. The priorities of the Eastern Partnership regional and bilateral multiannual programming documents will also be reflected in order to improve the **link between policy dialogue and financial assistance**.

Overall objectives and role of the Platforms

The Eastern Partnership **Platforms** correspond to the four key priorities for cooperation:

- Economic development and market opportunities;
- Strengthening Institutions and good governance;
- Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change;
- Mobility and people-to-people contacts.

The Platforms are tasked with **ensuring and monitoring progress** of the implementation of the "20 Deliverables for 2020", while discussing barriers to further progress and **exploring synergies and cross-fertilisation** across the architecture to effectively support comprehensive reforms. In this context, while Panels advance the work at technical level under each of the "20 Deliverables", the Platforms steer and monitor them, notably with a view of reporting to the Foreign Affairs Ministerial, with the active engagement of the Senior Officials Meetings. Each platform will approve a **yearly report** on the basis of inputs from the Panels, including political messages to feed high-level political discussions such as sectoral Ministerial meetings, Informal Partnership Dialogues and, ultimately, the Foreign Affairs Ministerial.

This Work Programme translates the objectives of the revised architecture and the "20 Deliverables for 2020" document into **concrete steps for delivering results**. The work of the Platform and the Panels will be in line with the objectives pursued through the cross-cutting Deliverables on civil society, gender equality and strategic communication. Expert Working Groups will provide relevant input to the Panels and platforms as appropriate, including on horizontal topics such as statistics.

Communication will be mainstreamed in all the activities of the Platform, Panels and Expert Working Groups to ensure results focus on delivering tangible benefits to the lives of citizens in the region. All communication should also be in the framework of the priority area of cooperation to ensure a comprehensive communication approach.

The Platform will strive to ensure **ownership, engagement and exchanges** with relevant stakeholders in Partner Countries and EU Member States at all levels: Ministers, representatives of the national Parliaments through EURONEST, local and regional authorities through CORLEAP, Council of Europe, civil society organisations through the Civil Society Forum, International Financial Institutions, business representatives, as well as experts and specialised organisations when relevant.

PLATFORM 4 – Mobility and people-to-people contacts

Core objectives

This Work Programme translates the objectives of the "20 Deliverables for 2020" into **concrete steps for delivery**. In particular, the core objectives of Platform 4 reflect the following Deliverables:

- Support progress on **Visa Facilitation and Liberalisation Dialogues** and **Mobility Partnerships**;
- Substantially strengthen investment in **young people's skills, entrepreneurship and employability**;
- Establishment of an **Eastern Partnership European School** to provide high quality education to Partner Countries' pupils;
- Promote the integration of Eastern Partnership and EU **research and innovation** systems and programmes.

Main goals and actions

So far, good progress has been made on the 22 Milestones for 2017 relating to Deliverables 17 to 20. Challenges remain, however, in keeping momentum and stepping up results. Hence, a strategic and target-oriented approach is needed in order to build productively on the current achievements in this priority area.

In this context, in 2018 and 2019 the work of Platform 4 will mainly focus on:

➤ *Under Deliverable 17 – Mobility and migration management*

Promoting the movement of people and the diversification of professional cross-regional networks in a secure and well-managed environment, notably by selecting best practices for the effective implementation of Visa Liberalisation, **Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements, Mobility Partnerships**, and **Integrated Border Management (IBM)** actions.

➤ *Under Deliverable 18 and 19 – Youth and education*

Supporting the implementation of the **Youth and Education Package** endorsed at the Brussels Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration, namely by:

- **Identifying key areas where conditions must be improved** to ensure the development of young people, boost their creativity and entrepreneurship, and provide them with high quality education and work opportunities;
- Promoting **non-gender stereotypical attitudes** in education, in order to prevent gender-biased career paths and ultimately a segregated labour market;
- Overseeing and monitoring the creation of **youth engagement roadmaps and youth action plans** – on the basis of already existing ones - aimed at ensuring coherence among various instruments available to support youth policies;
- Fostering **mutual learning among key labour market intermediaries** to support youth transition to work.

➤ *Under Deliverable 20 – Research and innovation*

Exploring possibilities to create **closer links between research and innovation initiatives and market demand**, thus improving competitiveness and innovation in the economic field, and increasing employment and career prospects of both female and male researchers. Best practices will also be identified to support Partner Countries' enhanced association and participation in **Horizon 2020 and other funding opportunities** for research and innovation.

To ensure **cross-sectoriality** among the deliverables under the Mobility and people-to-people sector - notably in the case of the Youth and Education Package - and across the four Eastern Partnership key priorities, Platform 4 will **explore synergies** with the other Platforms whenever needed or useful, namely when dealing with cross-sectorial topics such as: *economic migration, mutual learning, skills matching and innovation*.

Sectoral Ministerial meetings may be recommended, when Ministerial level intervention would help to strengthen the implementation of the objectives pursued.

Panel on Migration, Mobility and IBM

The Panel on Migration, Mobility and IBM will contribute to the implementation of **Deliverable 17**. Considering that visa and readmission matters are mostly in the remit of bilateral relations, the Panel will rather discuss multilateral matters in this regard (inter alia cross-cutting processes supporting **mobility, visa matters** of general interest to visa-free countries, issues of common interest related to **return and readmission**, alignment of the **asylum** framework to EU standards, management of exceptional **migratory flows**, discussions on migrant **smuggling and trafficking** in human beings - including the especially precarious conditions for women and girls - and international protection), focussing on best practices.

In 2018 and 2019 the Panel will mainly focus on the following:

- Ensuring continued exchanges on mobility and migration related issues, in particular to underpin the implementation of the **Mobility Partnerships**¹;
- Supporting the facilitation of **legal migration**, including visa policy, and preventing **irregular migration** and **trafficking** in human beings - especially the precarious conditions for women and girls - including through IBM, return and readmission;
- Promoting **international protection** and maximising the development impact of migration and mobility;
- Creating synergies with the new **IBM concept**, to be adopted in 2018, and steering the implementation of IBM projects; cooperation through European Border and Coast Guard Agency as well as cooperation in the field of customs.

To achieve the above the following **activities** are planned:

2018

Up to 5 meetings on migration, mobility and IBM:

- Up to 3 Panel meetings on more general policy issues related to migration and IBM: (1) improving migration management; (2) Integrated Border Management (synergies with EUROSUR, cooperation in the field of customs and continued EU support), (May/June, TBC);
- Up to 2 Expert Working Group meetings to explore: (1) the different methods of migration data collection, and (2) circular migration, cooperation with diaspora and remittances.

2019

Up to 5 meetings on migration, mobility and IBM:

- 3 Panel meetings on more political and horizontal issues related to migration and IBM;
- 2 Expert Working Group meetings.

Panel on Education, Culture and Youth

The Panel will contribute to the implementation of **Deliverables 18 and 19** within the framework of the **Youth and Education Package**, leading the technical discussion on young people's skills, entrepreneurship and employability, as well as on how to best implement the ambitious project of establishing a **European Eastern Partnership School** for Partner Countries' pupils.

In 2018 and 2019 the Panel will mainly focus on the following:

- Developing **youth engagement roadmaps and youth action plans** - on the basis of already ones - including the establishment of inclusive and evidence-based youth policy development and decision-making structures;
- Launching a **mutual peer learning dialogue on policies and institutions** to support youth transitions to work or education and training;
- Strengthening **youth civil engagement** and intercultural dialogue, including in the area of cultural heritage on the occasion of the European Year of Cultural Heritage;
- Promoting modernisation, quality, internationalisation and digitalisation (e-learning) of **higher education and VET systems**. In particular, encouraging broader recognition of non-formal

¹ Mobility Partnerships are based on the four pillars of the Global Approach on Migration and Mobility (GAMM)

education by Partner Countries governments, particularly in the areas of civic education, inclusion, democracy, environment;

- Enhancing **teachers' training** and career development;
- Promoting the development of **cultural and creative sectors**;
- Supporting the successful start of the **Easter Partnership European School**, advising on possible ameliorations and providing guidance on the post-pilot phase.

To achieve the above, the following **activities** are planned:

2018

- 1 Panel meeting focused on the Youth and Education Package (June/July, TBC);
- 3 conferences on youth: 1) on youth advisory bodies, organised by Ukraine; 2) on youth entrepreneurship, organised by the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, and 3) on youth transitions to employment (organised by EMPL and ETF, October/November, TBC);
- Conference on integrity in higher education (organised by EAC, October);
- Event/Workshop on active support to youth, organised by EMPL/ETF (TBC);
- Event on teacher training (TBC);
- 2 expert meetings on creative hubs and cultural heritage;
- 1 peer learning organised with ETF (possibly in September) on the results of the work of Make-It-Match;
- “Work-based learning week” in Tbilisi (beginning of October, 3 days).

2019

- 1 Panel meeting focused on the innovative aspects of learning and teaching (September);
- Expert Working Group on delivering active support to youth transitions;
- 2 expert meetings on support for music industry;
- Events and workshops on culture and creative sectors, quality of apprenticeships and work-based learning education, Make-it-Match Network delivering active support to youth (organised by partners, EAC, EMPL, ETF);
- 4th Eastern Partnership Youth Forum;
- Progress in VET modernisation (Torino Process regional meeting) organised by ETF (November);
- (TBC) 1 peer learning organised with ETF on the results of the work of Make-It-Match (June);
- 2 or 3 Peer learnings (active measures for youth, Public Employment Services, partnerships for delivery);
- The Panel will prepare ground for potential ministerial level meetings on quality of education and on youth employment and employability.

Panel on Research and Innovation

The Panel will focus on the implementation of **Deliverable 20**, leading the technical discussion on how to promote the integration of Eastern Partnership and EU **research and innovation systems** and programmes, within the framework of the **EU4Innovation**.

In 2018 and 2019 the Panel will mainly focus on the following:

- Identifying a concrete **EU4Innovation implementation roadmap** for each Partner Country;

- Promoting relevant elements of the **Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-20** in coordination with the EaP Plus platform;
- **Developing synergies between relevant EU instruments** - including COST, COSME and Smart Specialisation - to support Partners' research and innovation capacities, and facilitate their access to financial, technical and political support;
- Promoting the exchange of **best practices between policymakers** in the field of research and innovation.

To achieve the above, the following **activities** are planned:

2018

- 1 Panel meeting;
- 1 Panel annual event (training-type) on industry-academic partnerships

2019

- 1 Panel meeting;
- 1 Panel annual event (training-type) on a topic directly related to the EU4Innovation objective (topic and host country TBC).

Within the core objectives of the four Platforms, the **Work Programme can be reviewed and adapted**, as appropriate, on the occasion on future Platform meetings.