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Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)

Regional East Multiannual Indicative Programme - 2017-2020

Introduction

The Regional East Multiannual Indicative Programme 2017-2020 builds on the Regional East Strategy Paper 2014-20 and draws on Strategy's mid-term review. The review showed that the Strategy remains valid. The review has identified developments in the policy framework that will inform the implementation of this Multiannual Indicative Programme 2017-2020, particularly its alignment with the 4 Riga priorities for the Eastern Partnership and with the "20 deliverables for 2020"¹. Priorities for the Northern Dimension and Black Sea Synergy will remain unchanged. Outreach to other Partner Countries and countries beyond the neighbourhood will also be provided where relevant, particularly taking into account the synergy with the EU-Central Asia Strategy for the energy and transport sectors.

1. EU Response

1.1 Strategic objectives of the EU's relationship with the region

In line with the revised European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU wishes to strengthen the prosperity, stability, security, and good neighbourliness in the region. Regional cooperation addresses issues that go beyond borders and that are better addressed in a regional context than by countries individually. It contributes to confidence-building, fostering exchanges, dialogue, best practice and political cooperation between Eastern Partners, EU Member States and the EU.

The overall strategic objective for the EU in the Eastern Partnership is to strengthen state and societal resilience of the Partner Countries. Deeper and stronger relations with the EU will support their modernisation and transformation efforts for the benefit of citizens, contributing to stability, prosperity and security in the neighbourhood. Continued EU engagement with partners builds state and societal resilience in the region and brings the Eastern Partners closer to the EU through reforms, sustainable economic development, trade, improved security more people-to-people contacts, all supported by better connectivity. Particular attention will be paid to human rights, democratic principles and rule of law. The EU applies both a differentiated approach with individual Eastern Partners, as well as an inclusive approach to the Eastern Partnership region through its various multilateral activities. The relationship with the region has been confirmed by a series of Eastern Partnership Summits organised every second year since 2009 (most recently in Riga in 2015) and a number of Eastern Partnership ministerial meetings.

The strategic objective for the EU within the Northern Dimension Policy is to promote dialogue, cooperation, stability, economic integration, competitiveness and sustainable development in Northern Europe across a number of sectors (environment, transport and logistics, health and social well-being, culture and academic cooperation). The Northern Dimension Policy contributes to implementation of the EU's Arctic Joint Communication² in particular tackling the black carbon emissions in the European Arctic.

¹ European Commission/HRVP - Joint Staff Working Document of 9 June 2017 "Eastern partnership – Focusing on key priorities and deliverables" – SWD(2017) 300 final

² Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council of 27 April 2016 "An Integrated European Union policy for the Arctic" – JOIN(2016) 21 final

The strategic objective for the EU within the Black Sea Synergy is to encourage political and economic cooperation between the countries surrounding the Black Sea with specific focus on environment, civil society, maritime affairs, infrastructure development, network interconnections and support to sector partnerships.

Furthermore, cooperation under the Regional East programme will take advantage of synergies with regional organisations pursuing objectives similar to those of the EU, notably, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Both organisations are engaged in supporting the socio-economic transition of the partners in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood and beyond covering areas such as good governance, anti-corruption, border management, addressing trafficking, money-laundering, security and terrorism, migration management, connectivity. Moreover, cooperation involving Eastern Partners, EU Member States, candidate countries and potential candidates, will continue to be pursued through EU macro-regional strategies and 2014-2020 territorial cooperation programmes, including Cross Border Cooperation.

1.2 Choice of sector of intervention

The EU cooperation with the Eastern Partnership focuses on the four key priority areas based on the Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration adopted in Riga in 2015: 1) Economic development and market opportunities; 2) Strengthening institutions and good governance; 3) Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change; 4) Mobility and people-to-people contacts. The programme identifies key actions within these priority areas, in line with the "20 Deliverables for 2020" and the key global policy goals set by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³ and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Complementary support will be provided to cover cross-cutting themes (civil society, gender equality and non-discrimination, as well as strategic communication).

Complementarity between regional and country programmes is ensured through strengthened coordination at the level of policy dialogue, choice of sectors and funding allocations. Strategic use will be made in particular of TAIEX and Twinning to support the reforms and modernisation processes.

The implementation of regional Eastern Partnership programmes will be supported by the new streamlined Eastern Partnership multilateral architecture structured around four thematic platforms, in line with the four Riga priorities. Furthermore, building on the positive results achieved by Eastern Partnership Flagship Initiatives up to now, it is proposed to upgrade them into new branding initiatives such as EU4Business, EU4Energy, EU4Digital, EU4Innovation, and EU4Youth.

With regard to the regional frameworks, cooperation has focused on implementation of: 1) sustainable development and improvement of the environment; 2) support for the development of infrastructure and network interconnections. In addition, cooperation is conducted in the fields of culture, science, health and social well-being.

The priority sectors captured in this document reflect consensus among international and government partners, the need to consolidate gains, to keep the momentum of the processes in the region, and deliver tangible results to the citizens. The priority sectors also build upon the

³ United Nations, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015 "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" - A/RES/70/1

support provided under the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) 2007-2013 and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) 2014-2016.

The choice of priority sectors has been subjected to a consultation process with the EU delegations, the partner country authorities (via EU delegations) and civil society via the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. Joint Commission services/European External Action Service programming missions took place in order to consult the scope of bilateral and multi-country cooperation.

2. Financial overview

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|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Indicative allocation 2014-2020</i> | EUR 741,000,000 - EUR 906,000,000 |
| <i>Indicative allocation for the 1st period (2014-2017)</i> | EUR 418,000,000 – EUR 511,000,000 |
| <i>Indicative allocation for the 2nd period (2017-2020)</i> | EUR 521,000,000 – EUR 637,000,000 |
| <i>Eastern Partnership</i> | 85% |
| <i>Cross-cutting themes (civil society, gender equality, communication)</i> | 10% |
| <i>Economic development and market opportunities</i> | 20% |
| <i>Strengthening institutions and good governance</i> | 15% |
| <i>Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change</i> | 25% |
| <i>Mobility and people-to-people contacts</i> | 15% |
| <i>Support measures and regional dimension</i> | 15% |

3. EU support per sector

3.1 Eastern Partnership

3.1.1. Cross-cutting themes

Civil Society⁴

An empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and contributes to the democratic and economic transformation of the Partner Countries.

Through this cross cutting theme support will be provided to civil society organisations across the region in view of building stronger democracies, improving accountability of public authorities and overall policy, sustainable development. Actions will also aim at enhancing the enabling environment for civil society action. Cooperation will include support to the

⁴ They include membership-based, cause-based and service-oriented CSOs. Among them, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations, foundations, research institutions, Gender and LGBT organisations, cooperatives, professional and business associations, and the not-for-profit media. Trade unions and employers' organisations, the so-called social partners, constitute a specific category of CSOs. [Roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with civil society in external assistance" COM(2012) 492 final]

Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and the national civil society platforms, which will contribute to the policy dialogues at all levels, from Association Committees to activities under panels and platforms, including ministerial meetings.

The overall objective is promoting the development of a vibrant civil society sector in the Neighbourhood East, including by supporting their engagement into high-quality sector reform dialogues, the development of specific technical expertise and stronger leadership.

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Strengthen management capacities and technical expertise of civil society organisations to constructively engage with governments at grassroots, local and national level;
- (2) Identify and support local and regional leaders to foster change in their communities and influence policy debates;
- (3) Ensure well-functioning and regular multi-stakeholder policy dialogue through the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and its National Platforms.

Main expected results are:

- (1) Functioning large scale funding schemes in place (1 per country), as well as regional actions targeting increased technical capacities of civil society organisations in key sectors.
- (2) 80 Civil Society Policy Fellows have improved skills to generate evidence-based policy input, and at least 300 groups of young leaders identified together with the hosting organisations to provide technical support.
- (3) Improved multi-stakeholder policy dialogue through continued support to the EaP Civil Society Forum and its National Platforms.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

Gender equality and non-discrimination

In line with the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020⁵, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and anti-discrimination principles, support will be provided, in particular to delivering on partners' commitments to gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment. Support will be provided with particular emphasis on ensuring girls' and women's integrity, promoting their social and economic rights as well as empowerment of women and girls, their access to justice, education, health care, and strengthening their political participation. Support for the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, beyond gender equality and non-discrimination, will be mainstreamed and when relevant be addressed through bilateral programmes.

The overall objective is mainstream gender equality in all actions undertaken under the Eastern Partnership and to ensure full outreach to societies within Eastern Partner countries.

⁵ European Commission/HRVP - Joint Staff Working Document of 21 September 2017 "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020" – SWD(2015) 182 final

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Ensure that gender is mainstreamed in public policies and gender specific data and statistics are available;
- (2) Support the adoption and implementation of anti-discrimination legislation and gender based violence/domestic violence legislation in all Eastern Partners;
- (3) Support the ratification of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention in all countries;
- (4) Improve access to financial services at community level for women entrepreneurs.

Main expected results are:

- (1) Disaggregated data available per policy and better gender specific statistics available;
- (2) Gender Analysis conducted;
- (3) Anti-discrimination and gender equality legislation as well as gender based violence/domestic violence legislation adopted in all countries;
- (4) All countries ratify the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention;
- (5) At least 40% of Women Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) achieve increases in employment and at least 50% of assisted Women SMEs achieve increases in turnover.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

Strategic Communication

Through this cross-cutting theme support will focus on effectively communicating the positive impact of EU support across the EaP in order to increase the number of people across the Eastern Partners who associate the EU with positive change and concrete benefits. Actions will aim towards coherent and coordinated messaging and branding and effectively reaching out to a wide range of citizens beyond the capital cities of the Eastern Partners and in EU member states.

Continued support to media plurality and media independence in Eastern Partners shall ensure people's access to factual information and public support for the EU.

The overall objective is to achieve more understanding of and increased credibility for the EU among citizens across the Eastern Partners.

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Strengthen capacities for coherent communication initiatives based on the four Eastern Partnership priority areas;
- (2) Ensure the coordination of a structured narrative for all EU-funded programmes in the EaP, together with the participation of EU Member States' and Eastern Partners ' Governments;
- (3) Identify and support targeted regional outreach to broaden the public support for the EU across the region;
- (4) Strengthen the public and independent media by supporting their capacities of withstanding external pressures and of providing unbiased factual information.

Main expected results are:

- (1) Main priority areas of EU support branded under key initiatives ensuring more coherent messaging, visibility and outreach;
- (2) Functioning large scale programme in place targeting coordinating EU, Member States and Eastern Partners actions;

- (3) Local and regional key opinion leaders identified and supported to foster change in public perception in their communities;
- (4) Strengthened sustainability of public and independent media outlets in the Eastern Partners countries.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

3.1.2. Economic development and market opportunities

The overall objective is promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, creating jobs and contributing to the economic stability and resilience in the region. Initiatives will complement bilateral programmes implemented in the framework of European Neighbourhood Instrument.

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Support SME development; improve the investment climate and the business and regulatory environment, in particular through design and implementation of key structural reforms; facilitate SMEs integration with regional and global value chains (including through specific trade facilitation tools) and stimulate their contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job creation;
- (2) Increase access to finance for SMEs and address gaps in the financial infrastructure;
- (3) Support sustainable local and regional economic development with a view to generating new job opportunities, entrepreneurship, employment and employability with a focus on youth, and support research, innovation and economic diversification;
- (4) Support the regional harmonization of digital markets and the development of the digital economy in the partner countries, in line with EU standards;
- (5) Enhance trade cooperation in the region, including on trade facilitation and trade and investment promotion, participation of Eastern Partners' companies in the regional and global value chains, to enable the best use of opportunities created by the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA) and support the implementation of other trade arrangements.

These objectives will be pursued in close cooperation with activities carried out in the framework of the relevant Eastern Partnership multilateral thematic Platform 2 on economic development and market opportunities and through relevant Panels. The above objectives will also be addressed by the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, through the use of blending instruments, and will contribute to Pillar 3 of the future External Investment Plan.

Main expected results are:

- (1) Improved investment climate, as well as the business and regulatory environment, including through the implementation of structural reforms
- (2) Broadened access to finance through a modernised financial infrastructure, allowing for alternative financing and better collateralisation conditions;
- (3) Economic development at a local and regional level, creating jobs and supporting the diversification of the economy;
- (4) Removal of barriers to the provision of pan-European online services for citizens, public administrations and businesses. This will promote bigger choice of innovative online services, at better prices. This will also attract investment and benefit trade, entrepreneurship and employment;

(5) Substantial progress in the implementation of the DCFTAs, enhanced trade cooperation in the region.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

3.1.3. Strengthening institutions and good governance

The **overall objectives** are to improve the quality of governance, through strengthened rule of law, judicial and public administration reforms, and to make Partner Countries more resilient to security threats. Regional assistance will complement bilateral actions in order to make full use of the multilateral angle of cooperation, including experience exchanges and peer reviews.

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Enhance the prevention and fight against corruption and money-laundering by supporting the development of the relevant mechanisms, in line with international and EU best practices, and ensure their proper implementation;
- (2) Support the implementation and monitoring of key judicial reforms in the fields of independence, efficiency, quality and accountability of the judiciary, including the public prosecutor's office;
- (3) Promote and support national efforts on public administration reform, in line with the Principles of Public Administration to establish professional, accountable and transparent public administrations – including where relevant at regional and local level - that are able to develop evidence-based policies and legislation based on official statistics, and efficiently deliver public services;
- (4) Strengthen cooperation in the area of civilian security, security sector reform, law enforcement cooperation, disrupting organised crime, fighting cybercrime, reinforcing cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, confidence-building measures, health security, border management, and disaster risk management, including the protection of critical infrastructure. These priorities will be pursued in close cooperation with activities carried out in the framework of the relevant Eastern Partnership multilateral thematic Platform 1 on strengthening institutions and good governance and through its dedicated Expert Panels.

Main **expected results** are:

- (1) Strengthened prevention mechanisms and enforcement measures to tackle corruption and money-laundering more effectively;
- (2) Increased public trust in the independence, quality and efficiency of the judiciary, through implementation of key judicial reforms demonstrating results on the ground;
- (3) More professional and accountable public administrations that are able to develop policies and legislation in an inclusive and evidence-based process and deliver better services to citizens and businesses;
- (4) Eastern Partners more resilient to security threats, including those of hybrid nature, and to disasters, and better prepared to prevent conflicts and manage crisis.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

3.1.4 Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change

The **overall objective** is to open new opportunities for sustainable low-carbon economic development, protect the environment and facilitate closer exchange between the EU and the Partner Countries, as well as among the Eastern Partners themselves.

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Enhance transport connections among the Partner Countries, with the EU, and in the wider region (neighbours of neighbours), including through investment and good governance sector (notably on the extended trans-European transport network (TEN-T) via establishing clear investment plans and priorities), and through the extension of the Common Aviation Area, as well as improve road safety, maritime and aviation safety and security;
- (2) Increase security of energy supply through enhanced gas and electricity interconnectivity among Eastern Partners themselves, between them and the EU, and in the wider region, including through the frameworks of trans-European networks for energy (TEN-E), the Energy Community and EU4Energy;
- (3) Improve energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy with the view to move towards a low-carbon economy, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Eastern Partners' commitments in the context of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and beyond;
- (4) Support improved environmental governance, as well as environmental protection and adaptation to climate change by promoting green growth and transition to green and circular economy.

These objectives will be pursued in close cooperation with activities carried out in the framework of the relevant Eastern Partnership multilateral thematic Platform 3 dealing with connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change and through its dedicated Expert Panels.

The above objectives will also be addressed by the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF - ongoing negotiations on updating the name to Neighbourhood Investment Plan), through the use of blending instruments, and will contribute to Pillar 3 of the future External Investment Plan.

Main expected results are:

- (1) The core TEN-T network extended and the transport logistic chain improved, Common Aviation Area extended, road safety improved;
- (2) Gas and electricity interconnectivity among Eastern Partners themselves, between them and the EU and in the wider region is enhanced;
- (3) Energy efficiency and use of renewable energy improved, and greenhouse gas emissions reduced, in line with the Paris Agreement;
- (4) Environmental protection, opportunities for green growth and resilience to environmental impacts improved.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

3.1.5 Mobility and people-to-people contacts

The **overall objective** is to bring EU and Partner Countries' societies closer together and offer tangible benefits to citizens.

Specific objectives include:

- (1) Foster youth leadership and entrepreneurship through support to youth, youth organisations and youth workers, including disadvantaged youth;
- (2) Support broad skills development through actions in education and vocational training, including support to teacher training and modernisation of teaching methods, apprenticeships and non-formal learning, and life-long learning with a particular focus on youth employment and employability and establishment of EaP European school;
- (3) Support cultural cooperation, assist in developing cultural policies and creative industries;
- (4) Further improve migration management including via integrated border management.

These priorities will be pursued in close cooperation with activities carried out in the framework of the relevant Eastern Partnership multilateral thematic Platform 4 on mobility and people-to-people contacts and through relevant Panels.

Support to higher education will be provided through European Neighbourhood-wide programme funding the external dimension of the Erasmus + programme.

Main expected results are:

- (1) Enhanced capacity of youth and youth organisations in key competences and skills related to citizenship, entrepreneurship and leadership needed to support their active participation in democratic life;
- (2) EaP youth benefits from increased skills matching market demand, enhanced employability and job opportunities, better teaching and learning, and better vocational education and training, EaP European school set up and operational;
- (3) Institutional and policy structure and capacity-building in support of culture in Eastern Partner countries established and participation in Creative Europe enhanced;
- (4) Network of Border Crossing Points among partners and between them and EU Member States meeting the EU standards in the area of Integrated Border Management;
- (5) Increased people-to-people contacts in a safe and secure environment.

For each result, the main **indicators** for measuring the aforementioned results are contained in the sector intervention framework attached in Annex 1.

3.1.6. Regional programmes

EU cooperation will be implemented through regional programmes, including new EU branding initiatives, in line with the priorities captured in sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.5. Among others, they will include:

- **EU4Business** - from the beginning of 2016 all EU activities that support small and medium-sized enterprises in the Eastern Partners come under the umbrella of EU4Business;
- **EU4Digital** - will implement cooperation for the harmonisation of digital markets in the Eastern Partnership and the development of the digital economy. The objective of the new programme is to support cooperation on priority topics including: telecom

rules; digital innovation and start-up ecosystems; digital skills; trust services and cybersecurity; eHealth; and eTrade, including eCommerce, eCustoms and eLogistics.

- **EU4Energy** - the four-year programme was launched in June 2016 to support evidence-based energy policy-making in the Eastern Neighbourhood and Central Asia. The key objectives of the programme include enhanced energy data management, preparation of the relevant primary and secondary legislation, enhancement of the investment climate through improved legal framework, and identification of priority energy infrastructure projects.
- **EU4Innovation** - was launched in November 2016 with the view to offer a more visible and consistent framework for better coordinating the different EU instrument supporting the reinforcement of Eastern Partners' research and innovation capacities.
- **EU4Youth** - will tackle youth employability, leadership and entrepreneurship through a variety of actions including capacity building, fellowships, support to policy dialogue as well as grants to organisations active in these areas.
- **Partnership for Good Governance (implemented by the Council of Europe)** - these cooperation activities will strengthen the capacity of Eastern Partners, which are member states of the Council of Europe with the exception of Belarus; to implement domestic reforms to bring them closer to the standards of the Council of Europe and the European Union in the fields of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;

New programmes replacing the Eastern Partnership Flagship Initiatives are envisaged, notably in the area of integrated border management, PPRD (prevention, preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters), statistics and other areas. New avenues of cooperation will be developed dealing with security issues, including with organisations such as OSCE (i.e. security sector reform supporting, civilian security, cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, and confidence-building measures).

3.2 Implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension and support to the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy and the Northern Dimension

The EU regional cooperation in the East encompasses the implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension and other regional fora - the Northern Dimension and Black Sea Synergy. Within the Northern Dimension and Black Sea Synergy, cooperation will focus on promoting sustainable development, the improvement of the environment, support for the development of infrastructure and network interconnections.

Synergies and complementarity with other European Neighbourhood instruments notably the Cross Border Cooperation programmes and the NIF as well as other EU policy instruments will be sought.

3.2.1 Implementation of the Eastern Partnership cooperation and other regional fora

The EU will provide horizontal and sectoral support to the Eastern Partnership multilateral cooperation processes, including the organisation and functioning of thematic Platforms, Panels and Expert Working Groups, in order to support Partner Countries towards reforms and to foster dialogue and information sharing among Partner Countries and between them and the EU.

Information and communication activities to strengthen capacities for coherent narrative based on the Eastern Partnership priority areas will be supported, in order to raise awareness

and the visibility of EU assistance, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership. The EU will provide support associated with preparation, follow-up, monitoring, audit and evaluation for the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Instrument. Both of these support measures are in Article 3 of Regulation 236/2014 (Common Implementing Rules).

3.2.2 Promote sustainable development and the improvement of the environment

Under the **Northern Dimension** (Northern Dimension Partnerships, Northern Dimension Institute and the Northern Dimension Business Council) EU assistance will focus on environmental protection (including water, wastewater management and treatment, nuclear safety, reduction of carbon emissions), and energy efficiency (e.g. district heating).

Activities will take place within three sectorial Partnerships dealing with environment (Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership), public health and social well-being (Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being) and culture (Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture). The main **expected result** is improved cooperation on environmental protection, energy efficiency and people-to people contacts in the Northern Dimension region.

Concerning the **Black Sea Synergy**, actions will focus on developing sustainable blue economy, fighting against pollution, environmental monitoring, protecting biodiversity and the Black Sea ecosystems. Support to civil society initiatives (Black Sea NGOs Forum) and Cross-Border Cooperation programmes in the Black Sea basin will also be provided. Synergies will be ensured with the Black Sea Commission, the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. The main **expected result** is improved environmental situation in the Black Sea region and better governance of the Black Sea.

3.2.3 Support for the development of infrastructure and network interconnections

The EU will provide support in the framework of the **Northern Dimension Partnership for Transport and Logistics**, with the aim to improve major transport connections and logistics in the Northern Dimension region, and to stimulate sustainable economic growth at the local, regional and global level. The Regional Transport Network of the Northern Dimension simplifies planning of infrastructure improvements in line with the TEN-T and other regional programmes. The partnership also serves as a regional forum for transport and logistics issues, complementing the work of already existing fora. EU assistance in the Baltic and Barents Sea regions will focus on maritime and road safety, fostering connections among road surveillance database, and on transport corridors. The main **expected result** is the establishment of transport links between the TEN-T network and the network developed by the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics.

Under the **Black Sea Synergy**, EU assistance will focus on fostering connections among road surveillance systems and databases for maritime transports; inland waterway corridors and new integrated transport systems (intermodal hubs); and maritime safety and security. All activities will be aligned and complementary with the TEN-T network and other sectoral initiatives involving the wider region. The main **expected result** is improved transport cooperation in the Black Sea region.

Annex 1. Sector of intervention framework

| Cross-cutting priorities | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Overall objective for civil society: promote the development of a vibrant civil society sector in the Neighbourhood East, including by supporting their engagement into high-quality sector reform dialogues, the development of specific technical expertise and stronger leadership.</p> | | |
| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
| <p>Functioning large scale funding schemes in place (1 per country), as well as regional actions targeting increased technical capacities of CSOs in key sectors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sub-grantees with less than 5 employees that have been supported • Number of pilot actions including operating grants • Number attendees to regional capacity development trainings in areas related to either not-for-profit management or sector expertise | <p>Project monitoring reports</p> |
| <p>80 Civil Society Policy Fellows have improved skills to generate evidence-based policy input, and at least 300 groups of young leaders identified together with the hosting organisations to provide technical support.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the alumni network • Number of Fellows finding permanent positions in CSOs 2 years after the completion of the Fellowship programme • Number of grassroots projects developed by Fellows after the completion of the Fellowship | <p>Project monitoring reports</p> <p>Media monitoring reports</p> |
| <p>Improved multi-stakeholder policy dialogue through continued support to the EaP Civil Society Forum and its National Platforms.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new members in the EaP Civil Society Forum • Number of local policy initiatives driven by EaP National Platforms • Number of donors pledging funds to the EaP Civil Society Forum • Number of joint statements issued by working groups on the Riga priorities • % of CSOs in the Forum who perceive their work as having a policy impact | <p>Project monitoring reports</p> <p>Media monitoring reports</p> <p>Survey data</p> |
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| Overall objective for gender equality and non-discrimination: mainstream gender equality in all actions undertaken under the Eastern Partnership, to ensure full outreach to societies within Partner Countries. | | |
| Expected Results | Indicators | Means of verification |
| Disaggregated data available per policy and better gender specific statistics available. Gender Analysis conducted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of regional and bilateral programmes including where gender is mainstreamed. • Number of public policies where gender is mainstreamed. • Indicators related to individuals should be disaggregated by sex | Gender Analysis Project monitoring reports |
| Anti-discrimination and gender equality legislation as well as gender based violence/domestic violence legislation adopted in all countries. All countries ratify the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress in the implementation of existing anti-discrimination legislation and establishment of equality bodies or equivalent. • Extent to which national action plans aimed at combating violence against women are in place • Number of countries that have ratified the Istanbul Convention • Extent to which equality bodies are established. • Extent to which an effective monitoring of anti-corruption law is undertaken | Track records Monitoring of progress in legislation National Action Plans and/or strategies aimed at combating violence against women |
| At least 40% of Women SMEs achieve increases in employment, and at least 50% of assisted Women SMEs achieve increases in turnover. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of women-run SMEs benefitting from programmes on tackling the issue. • Number of jobs created and sustained. • Activity rate and employment rate of women | Project monitoring reports |
| Overall objective for strategic communication is to achieve more understanding of and increase credibility for the EU among citizens across the Eastern Partners. | | |
| Expected Results | Indicators | Means of verification |
| Main priority areas of EU support branded under key | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of thematic initiatives launched | Project reports including media monitoring and social media |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| initiatives ensuring more coherent messaging, visibility and outreach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of audiences reached • Increase in information inquiries • Improved reputation | <p>statistics</p> <p>Annual surveys and focus groups in each Eastern Partner country</p> |
| Functioning large scale programme in place targeting coordinating EU, Member States and Partner Countries' actions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of coordinated communication campaigns launched • Number of coordinated events organised | <p>Project reports, including media monitoring and social media statistics</p> <p>Annual surveys and focus groups in each Eastern Partner country</p> |
| Local and regional key opinion leaders identified and supported to foster change in public perception in their communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of key opinion leaders engaged in outreach • Outreach to new target audiences/new credible multipliers • Behavioural change | <p>Project reports, including media monitoring and social media statistics</p> <p>Annual surveys and focus groups in each Eastern Partner country</p> |
| Strengthened sustainability of public and independent media outlets in the Eastern Partners' countries. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of initiatives launched | <p>Project monitoring reports</p> |

Sector 1: Eastern Partnership priorities

Economic development and market opportunities

Overall objective: promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, creating jobs and contributing to the economic stability and resilience of Partner Countries.

| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
|---|--|--|
| Improved investment climate, as well as the business and regulatory environment, including through the implementation of structural reforms or specific trade facilitation tools. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % in Small Business Act (SBA) assessment of SME policy frameworks • Number of Public-private working groups established to regularly consult with the private sector on prioritisation and monitoring of reforms • Number of client-oriented business support organisations providing support to SMEs • Number of structural reform support programmes designed and implemented • Rank in Doing Business Reports • Rank in Global Competitiveness | <p>EU4business secretariat</p> <p>OECD SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Countries (2019)</p> <p>Annual reports of the Government, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund</p> <p>Ministries of Economy and Central Banks</p> |

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| Broadened access to finance through a modernised financial infrastructure, allowing for alternative financing and better collateralisation conditions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of SMEs receiving access to finance • Share of non-banking sources of finance by SMEs out of total credit provided • Number of credit registries developed • Volume of loans in local currency provided to SMEs, out of total loans to SMEs | <p>EU4business secretariat.</p> <p>Ministries of Economy and Central Banks.</p> <p>Annual reports of the Government, the WB and IMF</p> |
| Economic development at a local and regional level, creating jobs and supporting the diversification of the economy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of local authorities submitting a plan for local economic development • GDP and employment growth rates at regional level • % of unemployment and youth unemployment at national and regional levels | <p>Mayors for Economic Growth</p> <p>Ministries of Economy and Central Banks.</p> <p>Annual reports of the Government, the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF)</p> |
| Removal of barriers to the provision of pan-European online services for citizens, public administrations and businesses. Bigger choice of innovative online services, at better prices. Better climate for investment, entrepreneurship, trade and employment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of independent telecom providers; progress in spectrum coordination and roaming pricing harmonisation. Broadband coverage/take-up. • Number of pilots for cross-border eSignature and cross-border eServices for businesses; number of fully operational national - Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs); • Level of harmonisation on eCommerce, eCustoms and eLogistics legislation; number of pilots for cross-border eTrade and for Digital Transport Corridor between the Baltic and the Black Sea; • Number of national coalitions for digital skills and jobs; • Number of well-structured and interconnected innovation ecosystems • Level of harmonisation in eHealth legislation; number of pilots for cross-border eHealth. | <p>European Commission</p> <p>Relevant Ministries in Eastern Partners</p> <p>EU4Digital Implementation Monitoring Reports</p> <p>Studies, national statistics.</p> |

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| Substantial progress in the implementation of the DCFTAs, enhanced trade cooperation in the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market openness index • Date on trade flows • Number of new customs facilitation projects launched | European Commission Eastern Partners' Ministries of Economy/Trade in DCFTA and other Eastern Partners |
| Strengthening institutions and good governance | | |
| Overall objective: improve the quality of governance, through strengthened rule of law, judicial and public administration reforms, and make Partner Countries more resilient to security threats. | | |
| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
| Strengthened prevention mechanisms and enforcement measures to tackle corruption and money-laundering more effectively. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of asset declarations introduced and verified • Number of discrepancies identified in the declarations and extent to which measures have been taken • Number of corruption cases reported, disaggregated by source (State or non-State actors), as well as number of investigations and convictions of these cases • Number of investigations and convictions of money-laundering cases • Track record for identification, freezing, management and confiscation of unjustified wealth (number of cases and value) | EU-Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance Eastern Partners' Ministries of Justice, Interior, Finance and anti-corruption bodies European Commission Justice and Home Affairs sub-committees with Eastern Partners |
| Increased public trust in the independence, quality and efficiency of the judiciary, through implementation of key judicial reforms demonstrating results on the ground. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track record of transparent and merit-based recruitment of judges • Number of reported disciplinary cases, number of proceedings initiated and number of convictions (sanctions and reasoning) • Level of user satisfaction • Amount of legal aid spent per capita in relation to GDP • Clearance rate, number of pending cases and disposition time | EU-Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance Eastern Partners' Ministries of Justice and Judiciaries European Commission |
| More professional and accountable public administrations that are able to develop policies and legislation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of alignment with the Principles of Public Administration | OECD/SIGMA Eastern Partners' |

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| <p>in an inclusive and evidence-based process and deliver better services to citizens and businesses.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of use of official statistics in the decision-making process of the Eastern Partners and level of use, by the EU, of official statistics to measure progress done by these countries | <p>administrations and National Statistics Institutes</p> <p>European Commission</p> |
| <p>Eastern Partners more resilient to security threats, including those of hybrid nature, and to disasters, and better prepared to prevent conflicts and manage crisis.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall capacity to tackle cybercrime • Structures in place for intelligence-led actions to fight organised crime • Level of regional and international law enforcement cooperation including information exchange • Level of participation of Partner Countries in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy operations • Number of national, trans-boundary and regional disaster risk management plans developed and based on risk assessment and mapping • Number of preparedness activities with the Eu Civil Protection Mechanism, including Host Nation Support for international assistance in case of disaster response • Number of multi-stakeholder mechanisms on disaster risk reduction strategies, including local actors and civil society | <p>EU-Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance</p> <p>Eastern Partners' administrations</p> <p>European Commission</p> <p>Europol</p> <p>European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training</p> <p>Sub-committees with Eastern Partners</p> <p>Eastern Partners Civil Protection Authorities</p> <p>Sendai Framework reporting</p> <p>Regional, national and cross-border projects reporting</p> |
| <p>Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change</p> | | |
| <p>The overall objective: is to open new opportunities for sustainable low-carbon economic development, protect the environment and facilitate closer exchange between the EU and the Partner Countries, as well as among the Eastern Partners themselves.</p> | | |
| <p><u>Expected Results</u></p> | <p><u>Indicators</u></p> | <p><u>Means of verification</u></p> |
| <p>The core TEN-T network extended and the transport logistic chain improved; Common Aviation Area extended, road safety improved.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of implementation of missing links on the extended core TEN-T network according to agreed pipeline of projects. • Status of removing bottlenecks in the logistic chain, through 'quick win' projects. | <p>EaP Panel reporting and studies</p> <p>EaP project database and traffic model</p> <p>International Financial Institutions (IFIs) annual</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Common Aviation Area Agreement in place in the countries. • Status of inclusion of inland waterways (IWW) into the indicative TEN-T network. • Number of fatalities and serious injuries due to road accidents reduced. • Status of adoption of national road safety action plans adopted and national road safety agencies/platforms established in all countries. • Status of alignment of road design standards with EU standards and vehicle technical inspection services operational according to EU standards. | reports Project-specific reporting National statistics on road accidents |
| Gas and electricity interconnectivity among Partner Countries themselves, between them and the EU, and in the wider region. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of adoption, updating and review of infrastructure projects of strategic importance (Projects of Energy Community Interest (PECI) and Projects of Mutual Interest (PMI)). • Status of definition of infrastructure projects involving Eastern Partners outside Energy Community framework. • Status of construction and operationalization of the gas and electricity interconnections (e.g. between Romania and Moldova). • Status of operationalization of the Southern Gas Corridor. • Status of operationalization of back-to-back electricity interconnection between Georgia and Armenia. | EaP Panel reporting and studies Reports of international organisations IFI annual reports Project-specific reporting Disbursements under the Neighbourhood Investment Facility in favour of the objective |
| Energy efficiency and use of renewable energy improved, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduced, in line with the Paris Agreement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy intensity levels of the economies in the Eastern Partners. • Share of renewable energy in electricity and overall energy consumption • Degree of adoption and implementation of renewable | EaP Panel reporting and studies United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) data and reports Project-specific reporting |

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| | <p>energy and energy efficiency legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO2 emissions related to the municipal sector. • Number of local authorities committed to more ambitious CO2 emission objectives. • Number of low GHG emission development strategies drafted and ready to communicate to UNFCCC. • Number of national GHG monitoring, reporting and verification practices upgraded in line with the Paris Agreement. • Number of major climate action investment facility per country in place. | Energy Community reporting |
| Environmental protection, opportunities for green growth and resilience to environmental impacts improved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of the river basins managed based on the EU Water Framework Directive. • Number of marine litter clean-up actions and people involved. • Number of SMEs engaged and cost savings realised by enterprises due to cleaner production and energy efficiency. • Share of implemented commitments in the environmental chapters of Association Agreements • Number of infrastructure projects and sectoral strategies developed in compliance with environmental assessment benchmarks. • Number of sectoral plans with adaptation measures reflected. • Accessibility and number of users of on-line environmental data. • Share of officially designated protected areas under the Emerald Network. | <p>EaP Panel reporting and studies</p> <p>Reporting on SDGs</p> <p>Project-specific reporting</p> <p>National statistics</p> <p>Environment monitoring data and scientific reports</p> <p>Studies by international organisations</p> |
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| Mobility and people-to-people contacts | | |
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| The overall objective is to bring EU and Partner Countries' societies closer together and offer tangible benefits to citizens. | | |
| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
| Enhanced capacity of youth and youth organisations in key competences and skills related to citizenship, entrepreneurship and leadership needed to support their active participation in democratic life. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Civil Society Fellowships for youth and Partnerships for Entrepreneurship. • Number of transnational cooperation projects implemented. | EaP Panel reporting and studies Programme-specific reporting CSO reporting |
| EaP youth benefits from increased skills matching market demand, enhanced employability and job opportunities, better teaching and learning and better vocational education and training. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and transition strategies and skills-development actions in place. • Youth unemployment and Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)s rates. • Number of persons enrolled in Vocational Education and Training (VET). | EaP Panel reporting and studies Programme-specific reporting Sector-related reporting National statistics and legislation |
| EaP European school set up and operational. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which EaP European school are set up | EaP Panel reporting and studies Programme-specific reporting |
| Institutional and policy structure in support of culture in Eastern Partner countries established and participation in Creative Europe enhanced. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policy briefs developed. • Number of creative industries promotional activities. • Number of successful projects under Creative Europe. | EaP Panel reporting and studies Programme-specific Creative Europe Reporting National statistics |
| Network of Border Crossing Points among partners and between them and EUMSs meeting the EU standards on the area of Integrated Border Management. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Border Crossing Points meeting EU standards in the Area of Integrated Border Management. | Justice and Home Affairs sub-committees with EaP countries EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) reports EaP Panel reporting |
| Increased people-to-people contacts in a safe and secure environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of implementation of Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements (VFA/RA). • Number of people crossing the border between the partner country and the Schengen zone. | Commission reports on visa-free regime Statistics on people crossing the border between the partner country and the Schengen zone VFA/RA Joint Committees |

| Sector 2: Implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension and support to the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy and the Northern Dimension | | |
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| Implementation of the Eastern Partnership cooperation and other regional fora | | |
| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
| Enhanced cooperation between the EU, the EU MSs and the Eastern Partner countries and the countries of other regional fora through multilateral cooperation. | Number of Eastern Partnership, Northern Dimension and Black Sea Synergy activities under the multilateral architectures for each region. | Minutes of meetings, activity reports, including conducted studies |
| Promote sustainable development and the improvement of the environment | | |
| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
| Improved cooperation on environmental protection, energy efficiency and people-to people contacts in the Northern Dimension region. | Number of projects funded in the framework of Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership. | Project reports |
| Improved environmental situation in the Black Sea region. | Number of activities aiming at improving environment in the region. | Activity reports |
| Support for the development of infrastructure and network interconnections | | |
| <u>Expected Results</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Means of verification</u> |
| Improved transport links between TEN-T network and the network developed by the NDPTL. | Number of projects dedicated to improving transport links. | Project reports |
| Improved transport cooperation in the Black Sea region. | Number of activities aiming at improving transport cooperation in the region. | Project reports |