



This action is funded by the European Union

ANNEX IV

of the Commission Implementing Decision on ENI East Regional Action Programme 2015
Part 1

Action Document for the Implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension and support to the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy

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|--|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Title/ CRIS number | Implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension and support to the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy CRIS number: ENI/2015/038-026 financed under European Neighbourhood Instrument | | | |
| 2. Zone benefiting from the action | (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine) | | | |
| 3. Programming document | Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) - 2014-2020- Regional East Strategy Paper (2014-2020) and Multiannual Indicative Programme (2014-2017). | | | |
| 4. Sector of concentration | Multi-sector aid | | | |
| 5. Amounts concerned | Total estimated cost: EUR 4,000,000.00 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 4,000,000.00 | | | |
| 6. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies) | Project Modality Direct management (procurement of services) | | | |
| 7. DAC code(s) | 43010 | | | |
| 8. Markers (from CRIS DAC form) | General policy objective | Not targeted | Significant objective | Main objective |
| | Participation development/good governance | <input type="checkbox"/> | x | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Aid to environment | <input type="checkbox"/> | x | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Gender equality (including Women In Development) | <input type="checkbox"/> | x | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Trade Development | <input type="checkbox"/> | x | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health | x | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | RIO Convention markers | Not targeted | Significant objective | Main objective |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Biological diversity | x | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Combat desertification | x | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change mitigation | x | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Climate change adaptation | x | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagships | Not relevant. | | | |

SUMMARY

The present action provides funding for activities directly necessary for the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and for the achievement of its objectives. It provides a flexible mechanism giving the European Commission the possibility to finance small-scale actions (e.g. studies, technical assistance, events) in line with the objectives of the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy as well as its operational and policy priorities, by supporting the multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy.

1 CONTEXT

1.1 Regional context/Thematic area

The multilateral framework of the Eastern Partnership provides for cooperation activities and a forum to share information and experience on the partner countries' steps towards transition, reform and modernization and gives the EU an additional instrument to accompany these processes. It is aimed at fostering links among partner countries themselves. It is also a forum for discussion on the Eastern Partnership and provides the setting to support legislative and regulatory approximation of partner countries to the EU.

Four thematic platforms allow for target-oriented sessions on the main areas of cooperation:

- Democracy, good governance and stability (Platform 1)
- Economic integration and convergence with EU policies (Platform 2)
- Energy security (Platform 3)
- Contacts between people (Platform 4)

Meetings are held at least twice a year at the level of senior officials engaged in the reform work in the relevant policy areas. The platforms report to the annual meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Eastern Partnership countries. The work of the platforms may occasionally be promoted through sector-specific Ministerial meetings.

Each EaP platform has a work programme and can establish panels in order to support its work in specific areas. To date the following panels have been created in the framework of the respective Platforms:

Platform 1:

- Integrated border management
- Fight against corruption
- Public administration reform
- Asylum and migration
- Improved functioning of justice
- Cooperation in the area of CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy)

Platform 2:

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Trade and trade related regulatory approximation
- Environment and climate change
- Agriculture and rural development
- Transport
- Statistics

Platform 2 also has Work Areas (taxation and public financing, labour market and social policies, macroeconomic and financial stability, information society and media) in addition to the Panels.

Platform 4:

- Research and innovation

Panel meetings take place in between the Platform meetings and are of a more technical nature. The results of the discussions in the panels are presented in the Platform meetings, which in the last round of meetings in autumn 2013 approved work programmes for 2014-2017.

1.1.1 Public Policy Assessment and EU Policy Framework

The **Eastern Partnership (EaP)** was launched in 2009 at a summit held in Prague, in an effort by the EU and its Eastern European partners to help promote political and economic reforms and assist the countries of the region move closer to the EU. At its basis lies a shared commitment to international law and fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good governance.

Though each country has an individual relationship with the EU, under the Eastern Partnership umbrella the EU and its partners have committed to further developing a multilateral dimension - involving all EU Member States and partner countries. This multilateral dimension is intended to strengthen and complement the bilateral track, and facilitate the development of common positions and joint activities. The commitment of Eastern European Partners and EU Member States to this dimension was reaffirmed in the Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit held in November 2013 in Vilnius, which calls for further strengthening of the multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership.

The EU supports regional development in South-East Europe with its **Black Sea Synergy (BSS)**, which was created at the Black Sea Ministerial Conference in Kiev in 2008. By encouraging cooperation between the countries surrounding the Black Sea, the Synergy offers a forum for tackling common problems while encouraging political and economic reform.

The Black Sea Environmental Partnership was launched in March 2010 and activities are already underway in the fields of transport, energy, environmental monitoring, civil society, research and information society. Additional initiatives may follow on higher education, public health and the fight against organised crime.

1.1.2 Stakeholder analysis

The main stakeholders are authorities and administrations of EU Member States and Eastern Partnership and Black Sea Synergy countries as well as civil society organisations. The end beneficiaries are citizens of the partner countries overall. The review of cooperation with Russia due to developments in the EU-Russia relationship may affect the type of Russian stakeholders that may benefit from Black Sea Synergy activities.

1.1.3 Priority areas for support/problem analysis

The priority area for support is policy dialogue between the EU and partner countries participating in the Eastern Partnership and/or the Black Sea Synergy initiatives.

Thematically, the areas for support will cover the topics dealt by the four Eastern Partnership thematic platforms:

- Democracy, good governance and stability (Platform 1)
- Economic integration and convergence with EU policies (Platform 2)
- Energy security (Platform 3)
- Contacts between people (Platform 4)

For what concerns the Black Sea Synergy, possible areas of intervention could be:

- Civil society;
- Integrated maritime policy;
- Environment.
- Education (developing curricula)

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

| Risks | Risk level (H/M/L) | Mitigating measures |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Developments in the EU-Russia relationship arising from Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and support to the destabilisation of Ukraine may affect activities that can be implemented in the framework of the Black Sea Synergy. | H | Cooperation with Russia under this programme will be kept under review. |
| Changes in concerned Ministries | M | Anticipation, recognition and flexible |

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| (for instance after national elections) or relevant authorities will disrupt or delay Programme implementation | | response and calling on local and early intelligence through EU Delegations. |
| Weak institutional capacity and rivalry between organisations and individuals | M | Recognition and acceptance of such context. |
| Lack of dialogue among stakeholders | M/L | Creating opportunities and platforms – physical and digital – for interaction between state, civil society and private sector. |
| National authorities are reluctant to take advantage of available technical assistance | L | The authorities will not engage if the activities are not managed professionally, addressing the countries’ real interests. |
| Assumptions | | |
| Willingness and ability of the different organisations and actors involved (public, civil society, private) to develop co-operation at the level of the Eastern Partnership and Black Sea Synergy region amongst themselves as well as with the EU. | | |
| Political, economic, and social stability in the Eastern Partnership and Black Sea Synergy regions is sufficient to carry out the programme. | | |

3 LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

3.1 Lessons learnt

Since its creation in 2009 the Eastern Partnership has proven to be a key policy initiative to foster policy dialogue and share experience between Eastern partner countries, EU Member States, and the relevant EU institutions. The participation of civil society and international financial institutions has further contributed to cooperation among interested parties.

The creation of panels within Platforms responds to the requests of participants for deeper cooperation on certain areas. In this regard, the increased number of panels and specialised seminars on specific topics shows that the policy dialogue at regional level between the EU and its Eastern partners is steadily advancing. Ministerial meetings on specific sectors and so-called informal dialogues also contribute to furthering political cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

To enable the various dialogue processes to successfully pursue their activities it is necessary to finance the organisation of events and ensure that participants have the resources to attend. Experience of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension has shown so far that maintaining a certain level of flexibility as regards the original planning of activities is necessary to take account of developments that may take place in the work programmes of the Eastern Partnership Platforms throughout the year.

In the context of the Black Sea Synergy, further coordination in policies and legislation between the Black Sea countries proved to be a common interest to both the EU¹ and its partner countries. An example of this is the harmonisation process in cooperation activities aiming at building the regional infrastructure for marine environmental monitoring.

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

This action is complementary to the technical assistance allocations existing in the framework of the bilateral and regional Annual Action Programmes in favour of the Eastern Partnership and Black Sea Synergy partner countries.

The multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership entails by its own nature close coordination with EU Member States and partner countries in the framework of the Platforms and related panels. Other donors/entities are also represented in the Platforms and panels (e.g. European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, Economic and Social Committee, Council of Europe).

3.3 Cross-cutting issues

Crosscutting issues such as human rights and gender equality are taken into account in all activities. Support to environmental and climate activities in the Black Sea Synergy and Eastern Partnership frameworks contribute to environmental protection, climate action and disaster risk management.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Objectives/results

The overall objective of this action is to contribute to the implementation of the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy.

The specific objective is to support the multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy.

The result of this action is increased policy dialogue within the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy through small-scale activities, including events, studies and technical assistance are implemented.

4.2 Main activities

As part of the operational structure of the **Eastern Partnership**, the Commission Communication on the Eastern Partnership establishes four thematic platforms and panels to support the work of the platforms in specific areas. In their work programmes, the platforms identify seminars, training programmes, studies or other small scale activities (e.g. technical assistance) to be implemented in order to advance the objectives of the Eastern Partnership.

¹ Bulgaria and Romania are also parties to the Black Sea Commission (BSC).

As a result of this structure, the following meetings can be expected per year (indicative figures):

- 5 Ministerial level meetings
- 8 Platform meetings
- 24 panel meetings
- 30 seminars and meetings in the framework of panels

Capacity building activities may also be implemented in support of the Flagship initiatives launched under the Eastern Partnership.

In addition, this support will cover the organisation costs of **ad hoc meetings** related to one or several countries to gain practical knowledge and experiences as regards transition and modernisation process in the context of the Eastern Partnership.

The implementation of the **Black Sea Synergy** supposes the establishment of partnerships in different areas. Activities to take place in the context of these partnerships, such as meetings, studies or technical assistance, will also rely on support from this programme.

4.3 Intervention logic

Aim of this action is to increase cooperation on specific policies pertaining to the Eastern Partnership by facilitating the policy dialogue process. This will be achieved through a series of initiatives such as meetings, seminars, workshop, events related to the work of the Eastern Partnership platforms and panels. In 2010, the number of events held with a similar tool were 30 in a year, while in 2014 this number increased to 80 thank to the EaP Events contract. In view of the increasing interest in such an instrument, the target for 2015-2016 is to increase this figure even more.

For what concerns the Black Sea Synergy, in order to increase the cooperation within this region and with the EU, local civil society may be supported by the same instrument.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries, referred to in Article 184(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4.2 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Action Document.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's authorising officer responsible by amending this decision and the relevant contracts and agreements; such amendments to this decision constitute technical amendments in the sense of point (i) of Article 2(3)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014.

5.3 Implementation modalities.

5.3.1 Procurement (direct management)

| Subject | Type | Indicative number of contracts | Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure |
|---|----------|--------------------------------|---|
| Technical assistance, activities and support aiming at facilitating the implementation of the multilateral dimension of EaP and BSS | Services | Up to 10 | Throughout 2015 and 2016 |

5.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with Article 9(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

5.5 Indicative budget

| | EU contribution (in EUR) | Indicative third party contribution |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 5.3.1 - Procurement (direct management) | 4,000,000.00 | N.A. |
| Totals | 4,000,000.00 | N.A. |

5.6 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The projects and activities will be implemented under the responsibility of the implementing partners (contractors) that will allocate a project manager to coordinate the actions, ensure progress is made and report to the Commission both through regular contacts and when milestones are reached or exceptions identified. The project manager will mobilise human resources as appropriate.

The Commission will review and approve reports.

5.7 Performance monitoring and reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner (Contractor) shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial

monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) or the list of result indicators (for budget support). The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

5.8 Evaluation

In case an evaluation is not foreseen, the Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 3 months in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and *inter alia* provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner countries and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

5.9 Audit

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

The financing of the audit shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

5.10 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation and supported with the budget indicated in section 5.5 above.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action² shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

² https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en

APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX

The activities, the expected outputs and all the indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix are indicative and may be updated during the implementation of the action without an amendment to the financing decision. The indicative logframe matrix will evolve during the lifetime of the action: new lines will be added for listing the activities as well as new columns for intermediary targets (milestones) when it is relevant and for reporting purpose on the achievement of results as measured by indicators.

| | Intervention logic | Indicators | Baselines (incl. reference year) | Targets (incl. reference year) | Sources and means of verification | Assumptions |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| Overall objective: Impact | Contribute to the implementation of the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy. | Regional cooperation among the Eastern Partnership and the EU and the Black Sea regions and the EU is enhanced. | Support to the EaP and BSS in 2014. | Full support from all partners to the EaP and BSS until 2018. | ENP Progress Reports. | |
| Specific objective: Outcome | Support the multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy. | Policy dialogue within the Eastern Partnership is increased and cooperation with Black Sea Synergy civil society is enhanced. | Countries Participation in the multilateral dimension in 2014. | Full participation of all countries in the multilateral dimension until 2018. | Public statements outlining the participation of EaP and BSS countries in the multilateral dimension. | Political, economic and social stability in the regions is sufficient to carry out the programme. |
| Outputs | Increased policy dialogue within the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy through small-scale activities, including events, studies and technical assistance are implemented. | Number of meetings, events and projects within the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy. | All initiatives carried out in 2014 until the last quarter of 2015 (approx. 80). | From last quarter of 2015 until last quarter of 2016: more than 80 - Ministerial level meetings; - Platform meetings; - Panel meetings; - Seminars and meetings in the framework of panels. | - Reports from the Contractor. - Attendance lists for the various initiatives (seminars, workshops, conferences, events...) - Satisfaction surveys. | Willingness and ability of all stakeholders to develop cooperation amongst themselves and with the EU. |