This action is funded by the European Union

Annex IV

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Multiannual Action Plan in favour of Lebanon 2024 and 2025

Action Document on a Cooperation Facility with Lebanon

MULTI-ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
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<th>1. Title OPSYS Basic Act</th>
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2. Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) No

EIP Flagship No

3. Team Europe Initiative No

4. Beneficiary of the action The action shall be carried out in Lebanon

5. Programming document Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027¹

6. Link with relevant MIP objectives/expected results Support Action: Cooperation Facility

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION

7. Priority Area(s), sectors 151 Public sector policy and administrative management

¹ C(2022)8363 final of 24/11/2022
### 8. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

| Main SDG: | Peace, justice and strong institutions |
| Other significant SDGs: | 5 - Gender equality | 17 - Partnerships for the goals |

### 9. DAC code(s)

| Main DAC Code – | 15110 Public sector policy and administrative management (100%) |

### 10. Main Delivery Channel

| 13000 Third Country Government |

### 11. Targets

| ☐ Migration | ☑ Climate | ☑ Social inclusion and Human Development | ☑ Gender | ☐ Biodiversity | ☑ Human Rights, Democracy and Governance |

### 12. Markers (from DAC form)

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| Digitalisation                                                       | ☐   | ☐ | ☒ |

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| Connectivity                                                        | ☒   | ☐ | ☐ |

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| Migration                                                           | ☒   | ☐ | ☐ |

| Reduction of Inequalities                                          | ☒   | ☐ | ☐ |
14. Amounts concerned

Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020110 – Southern Neighbourhood
Total estimated cost: EUR 9 000 000.00
Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 9 000 000.00

The contribution is for an amount of EUR 5 500 000.00 from the general budget of the European Union for 2024 and for an amount of EUR 3 500 000.00 from the general budget of the European Union for 2025, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget, or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

15. Implementation modalities (management mode and delivery methods)

Direct management through Twinning Grants
and
Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.2

1.2. Summary of the Action

The objective of this Action is to support Lebanon to deliver better services and tackle governance challenges in compliance with European standards by capitalising on expertise of EU Member States and EU decentralised agencies.

The first specific objective is to increase the capacity of the Lebanese public administration to deliver better services for the implementation of structural reforms. The second specific objective is to support Lebanese authorities to strengthen their capacity to provide services, information and know-how through bilateral cooperation with EU Agencies. This would be achieved through cooperation with EU decentralised agencies. Agencies of the EU are specialist bodies set up to advise the institutions and EU member states by providing scientific and technical know-how. There are currently over 30 decentralised agencies, which contribute to the implementation of EU policies. They also support cooperation between the EU and national governments by pooling technical and specialist expertise and knowledge from both the EU institutions and national authorities. Decentralised agencies focus on a wide spectrum of areas including across food and medicine safety, rule of law, transport safety, drugs and the environment.

The preparation and implementation of structural and economic reforms in Lebanon would benefit from knowledge transfer and harmonisation of the domestic regulatory and policy frameworks with EU and international standards in order to be effective and successful. The action aims to achieve this objective either by provision of EU Member States’ expertise through twinning instrument, or by capitalising on the know-how of specialised and thematic EU Agencies.

This action focuses on creating partnership cooperation between public administrations of the EU Member States, EU decentralised agencies and Lebanese administration, facilitating progress for essential reforms in Lebanon. This action will support the public sector institutions to develop and implement effective policy and regulatory frameworks by deployment of EU’s institution building tools, notably twinning, and through cooperation with EU Agencies.
Twinning stands as a unique instrument for institution building, fostering peer-to-peer collaboration between the EU Member States and public administrations in third countries to enhance capacity building efforts. This exchange of knowledge and experience between the public administrations of EU Member States and Lebanon through twinning would be complementary to the EU’s strategic priorities and advocacy for reforms in Lebanon, while enhancing capacities of Lebanese institutions. EU and its Member States have been advocating for reforms through the ‘Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)’ working groups, and have been implementing actions in various sectors in support of the reforms agenda. These ongoing initiatives, including the 3RF working groups will be used by EU and EU member states to leverage twinning projects to push for a meaningful change within administration.

By seeking cooperation with EU decentralised agencies, this Action aims to contribute to improving the governance in a variety of areas and anchor Lebanon in EU mechanisms and standards. It would strengthen Lebanon’s capacity to provide essential services to the population in Lebanon to the extent possible in line with EU standards, and for institutions gradually to regain citizens’ trust.

This will include addressing the significant challenges faced in the enforcing rule of law and international cooperation, paying due respect to human and fundamental rights. This will result in enhanced protection of for all, by strengthening security, capacity to manage the borders and combat organised crime.

The Action will contribute to the SDG 16 “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (main) and SDG 5 - Gender equality and SDG 17 - Partnerships for the goals (other significant goals).

1.3. Beneficiary of the action

The action shall be carried out in Lebanon, which is included in the list of ODA recipients.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Since late 2019, Lebanon has been facing an unprecedented crisis, which has led to a dramatic economic contraction, a large increase in poverty, unemployment and brain drain. In March 2020, Lebanon defaulted on its Eurobonds which was followed by a deep recession, a dramatic fall in the value of the Lebanese currency and triple digit inflation. The deteriorating economic situation has hit the public sector to an extent that it is visibly disintegrating. Public authorities lack the necessary funds to maintain operations and to pay their staff more than symbolic salaries. The COVID-19 pandemic and the August 2020 port of Beirut explosion have compounded the crisis.

The crisis has had devastating effects on the country's economy and its people, resulting in a massive impoverishment of the middle classes. The public sector has been particularly hard hit with the bulk of the labour force still paid in Lebanese lira, suffering from plummeting purchasing power. Thousands of highly qualified civil servants are leaving for better paid jobs in the private sector or migrating in search of better opportunities.

The current economic crisis in Lebanon is a result of a complex set of factors, including political instability, corruption, and mismanagement of public finances. The economic contraction has resulted in a sharp increase in unemployment, poverty, and inflation, making it difficult for the government to deliver essential services and for the people to access basic necessities. In addition, the 2020 default on public debt cut Lebanon’s access
to financial markets. In 2021, the devaluation of the national currency against the US dollar accelerated, affecting dramatically an economy highly dependent on imports. The Central Bank and the banking sector severely restricted access to people’s savings and limited cash withdrawals. Subsidies (food, gasoline, medications) were lifted abruptly. Exacerbated by currency depreciation and rapid dollarisation, inflation averaged at 222.4% in 2023 and is expected to decrease in the coming years. Although, the World Bank has refrained from a 2024 forecast, citing high uncertainty, the economy is nonetheless expected to recover modestly, amidst a global economic slowdown and protracted regional conflict. Essential reforms, including those agreed upon with the IMF in the April 2022 Staff-Level Agreement (aimed to address inter alia banking sector restructuring and fiscal policy), have largely not been implemented. The banking system is dysfunctional, and the economy relies on cash.

Lebanon’s leadership has inadequately addressed the crises due to a lack of consensus. The Council of Ministers operates in a caretaker capacity since May 2022, with no consensus on a presidential candidate since November 2022. The absence of a Head of State hinders government formation, causing a political vacuum. It also hinders legislative process. Some of the political parties consider that until a President is appointed, the Parliament is only an electoral body and can only legislate in emergency cases. Since November 2022, there have been only five legislative sessions with twelve unsuccessful electoral sessions to elect a President. In April 2024, the Municipal Elections, originally scheduled for May 2022, were postponed for the third time until May 2025 the latest, claiming the insecurity due to the ongoing conflict as the main reason.

Lebanon has already started to feel the impact of the Israel-Hamas war in terms of hostilities at the southern border. The World Bank assesses that Lebanon is the hardest hit among the neighbouring countries by the conflict. It is estimated that the real GDP growth has contracted by 0.6% to 0.9% in 2023, depending on the extent of the tourism contraction, reversing the positive pre-conflict baseline. Military operations unfolding along Lebanon’s southern border have already caused the internal displacement of 93,040 persons as of May 2024.

Evidently, this situation alongside general lack of political will, has prevented or significantly slowed down progress on the urgently needed reform on crucial economic, social and rule of law dossiers. Due to multiple crises that affected the country, since 2019 the EU has interrupted institutional and structural dialogue with Lebanon’s authorities linked to Partnership Priorities. To promote and facilitate reform the EU Delegation has established ad hoc policy dialogue on specific sectors under the 3RF, using coherently the available tools such as financial assistance, advocacy, strategic communication and donor coordination. A clear example of this was the establishment of the Forum on justice, for a national-owned comprehensive discussion of reform of the justice sector.

Security is high on the political agenda for both the EU and Lebanon due to the persistent instability in the region and pervasive threats by organised crime, including irregular migration, trafficking in human beings, and smuggling of illicit goods and drugs.

Provision of EU expertise in all aspects of rule of law, border security and maritime safety and security aims at accompanying Lebanon as partner in addressing these challenges in line with international standards.

The action is in line with the European Commission’s priority “A new push for European democracy”, as Europe’s strength lies in its unity, based on the EU’s shared democratic values: commitment to fundamental human rights; the protection of a free and independent press; upholding the rule of law; and equality between women and men, rural and urban, young and old. The Action is also aligned with the Joint Communication on a Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean, in particular the policy area “Human development, good governance and the rule of law” and its Flagship 2 – Human rights, the rule of law, and modern, effective administrations, governance and accountability.
It is also in line with the provision of the Cooperation Facility within the Multiannual Indicative Programme for Lebanon 2021-2027. The Cooperation Facility foresees supporting ‘specific technical assistance in sectors which are not part of the main priorities but still important for EU-Lebanon relations, including, where relevant, twinning projects to maximise the return on EU investment in reforms or strengthen the capacities of other Lebanese institutions’ as well as cooperation with EU Agencies, where relevant.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis

Component 1:

Lebanon is experiencing a volatile and complex operating environment for governance. As regards the public sector, around 90,000 individuals are employed in various capacities within the central government's public administrations and establishments, with approximately 49,500 public school teachers and an estimated 25,000 personnel employed across ministries and public administrations. Not all positions are filled.

In 2019, civil service employees in Lebanon received a minimum salary equivalent to 950,000 Lebanese pounds ($633). However, by 2023, the value of this salary had drastically decreased due to the severe depreciation of the Lebanese lira. This sharp decline in purchasing power significantly impacted civil servants, leading to widespread discontent and unrest within the public sector. To cope with the financial strain, many employees within ministries and public administrations were forced to reduce their working hours to just one day per week. The cost of transportation to work made it financially unfeasible for many to commute regularly. Additionally, numerous civil servants began seeking alternative employment opportunities either within or outside the country, straining the functionality of key public services and exacerbating the country's socio-economic challenges.

Against this backdrop, the ‘Reform, Recovery, and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)’, encompassing urgent reforms aimed at strengthening governance, serves as a platform to advocate for change and exert pressure on both the executive and legislative branches of government. 3RF working groups have been advocating for the state to prove commitment to reforms by presenting their strategies, plans, and challenges. International community has been advocating for adoption of measures to drive forward a meaningful change which would foster transparency, accountability, and good governance in Lebanon.

The administrative and institutional capacity of the Lebanese public administration remains weak compared to international administrative performance standards, the promotion of good governance, the fight against corruption and bureaucracy, and the process of democratisation remain a challenge for the country. Macroeconomic stability needs to be ensured, economic activity needs to be stimulated, the high unemployment rate should be reduced and the efficiency and effectiveness in the management of the infrastructures need to be strengthened. Remaining staff within Lebanese public administrations lack in skill and capacity to contribute to a meaningful step forward. Therefore, twinning projects could assist in transfer of knowledge and expertise, therefore assist in capacity-building of existing staff within public administration.

The EU and its Member States have been promoting reforms agenda through the 3RF working groups. They have also been developing and implementing cooperation projects for institutional capacity building, to promote shared values of democracy and rule of law including good governance and transparent, stable and effective institutions, and pursuing reform efforts aiming at a more efficient public sector. These ongoing initiatives, including the 3RF working groups, will be used by the EU and its Member States to inform possible twinning projects, with the goal to achieve meaningful reforms.
Component 2:

The deterioration of the socio-economic situation further endangers Lebanon’s institution capacity to improve the governance virtually in all sectors.

The crises and deficits described above affect the whole public administration, also at local level. Today these institutions face limited human, financial and technical resources, which severely affect their organisational efficiency and effectiveness and capacity to ensure proper governance.

This situation undermines significantly institutions’ capacity to deliver services to the citizens, undertake and implement effectively reform and to be a reliable actor in the international legal framework. Among the negative consequences, there is Lebanon’s deteriorated reputation with its international partners, which undermines the prospect for much needed economic opportunities and growth. Another consequence is the deep disaffection of the population, for which authorities have lost credibility. The de facto deregulation, whereby compliance became optional, is another negative aspect. Parallel structures, such as the dynamic private sector, the civil society or international donors, have replaced authorities in their duty of administration.

Among the rule of law essential institutions, the judiciary is facing unprecedented challenges. Today, it is widely perceived as being prone to political interference and having limited independence. The system faces chronic shortage of judges due to long-delayed appointment of new recruits and of permutations. Widespread and rooted political interference, the lack of material and financial resources and lack of prospect of career and demotivation, affect Lebanon’s judiciary. The risk of a repetition of the cessation of activities which halted judicial activities in the second part of 2022 remains real.

Similar challenges exist in other sectors including in the field of security, border management, and aviation safety standards just to name few of the most relevant.

The EU is addressing Lebanon crises through a combination of humanitarian assistance and support to development and reform, constantly reflecting on the most adequate approaches to balance these two modalities. As pursuing reform when essential service delivery is disrupted is an unsurmountable challenge, it was decided to adopt a ‘comprehensive and integrated approach’ to reconcile safeguarding authorities’ basic service delivery and their commitment to reform, through securing at least minimum service delivery capacities.

On a broader scale, “the Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood - A new Agenda for the Mediterranean” emphasises that major security threats such as terrorism, hybrid threats as well as cybercrime and organised crime, including the trade of illegal firearms, drug trafficking and money laundering are key challenges, which can only be addressed through joint efforts. Cooperation on law enforcement and judicial cooperation should therefore be strengthened between the EU and partner countries, also with the assistance of relevant EU agencies, such as for instance the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (EuroJust), the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

Engagement and cooperation by EU decentralised agencies is already included in many EU funded regional projects. The Lebanon context would warrant a deepening of this cooperation taking into account its specific context.

The European Union has been implementing a number of regional programmes in the field of rule of law, such as the EuroMed Justice project. Established in 2005, in January 2024 started its 6th phase, as a capacity-
building project designed to develop a sustainable cross-regional mechanism of judicial cooperation in criminal matters between EU Member States (EU MS), 9 South Partner Countries (SPCs) and EU justice and home affairs agencies. Lebanon has been very active and participated fruitfully to the project’s activities. Lebanon also benefited extensively of the Council of Europe (CoE) expertise provided under the EU-funded South program, now in its 5th phase. Currently, CoE experts advise Ministry of Justice officials in the drafting of a new legislation on data protection, aiming at meeting the requirements for the application of the EU-Lebanon international agreement on judicial cooperation in criminal matters. The EU Delegation and HQ services (DG JUST and DG NEAR) are ensuring coordination with the CoE.

Frontex is currently engaging with Lebanon through the implementation of the regional NEAR-funded EU4BorderSecurity project. All the activities implemented seek to enhance the border security of the country with light capacity-building initiatives that contribute to enabling sustainable operational ties with the European Border and Coast Guard. Building on the close cooperation in the framework of the EU4BorderSecurity project, in 2023 Frontex Management Board authorised the Agency to pursue working arrangement negotiations with the competent authorities of the country. Amid rising migratory flows from Lebanon, Frontex is further strengthening capacity building support to Lebanon and is in the process of starting the negotiations to conclude the Working Arrangement. Once concluded, the Working Arrangement will enable a more structured cooperation framework, particularly focusing on information exchange and shared situational awareness.

The SAFEMED V project, implemented by EMSA, provides technical assistance to national and international stakeholders with the aim of raising maritime safety, security and protection of marine environment standards in the Mediterranean basin and Lebanon is part of the project.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action.

Component 1:

As concerns support to the public administration, the action will provide demand-driven assistance aiming to strengthen Lebanese public administration’s strategic and technical capacity to plan and implement structural reforms by enhancing human resources capacity. The implementation will be needs-based and contingent upon the demonstrated political commitment of public institutions and the assurance that adequate staff are employed and actively engaged in their roles. Therefore all Lebanese public administration are potential stakeholders for this action.

The availability of a twinning envelope to be activated in times of need is crucial for capitalising on the prospect of sector-led reforms, serving as a catalyst for significant improvements in governance and administration. By leveraging this envelope effectively, Lebanon can harness the expertise and best practices shared through twinning arrangements to drive tangible improvements in public services and governmental operations. Ultimately, these efforts will contribute to the benefit of Lebanese citizens, fostering sustainable development and enhancing the overall well-being of the nation. Thus, activating the twinning envelope represents an invaluable opportunity to facilitate collaboration, foster institutional growth, and advance the collective prosperity of Lebanon.

The main target groups of the proposed action are the ministries and other government institutions, public administrations, including State control bodies and institutions. The beneficiaries and the projects to be financed will be selected by mutual agreement by the Lebanese authorities and the Commission. However, it should be noted that the final beneficiaries of the Action are all the population in Lebanon.
As concerns support through mobilisation of EU decentralised agencies, as for Component 1, implementation will also be needs-based on a variety of sectors such as food, medicine, justice, transport safety, drug addiction and the environment. However, focus is expected to be on rule of law security issues, border management and civil aviation.

Relevant stakeholders are potentially all public institutions and entities responsible for governance of all sectors, in particular rule of law authorities such as those described below, as well as civil society organisations.

2.3. Lessons Learned

Twinning has already been deployed in the past in Lebanon. The Annual Action Programme 2016 for Lebanon included an action for ‘Support to the implementation of the EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities Programme (SIPP)’ with allocation of EUR 9.5 million for twinning instrument. Due to the COVID-19 and the socio-economic crisis since 2019, only two twinning projects were able to be successfully implemented and finalised since 2016.

The first twinning project, “Supporting Civil Aviation Authorities in Lebanon in the fields of Safety and Security” aimed at strengthening administrative and technical capacity of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, through leveraging expertise of Italian Civil Aviation Authority – ENAC. In order to improve safety and security of civil aviation, regulations, procedures and manuals were updated, which constitutes important reforms in civil aviation in Lebanon.

The second project, “Strengthening the Veterinary Services and Food Safety Capacities of the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture” aimed to enhance Lebanon's veterinary services and food safety capacities, focusing on the Animal Resources Directorate (ARD). Competent leadership within the ARD and collaboration between headquarters and regional ARD offices are seen as positive developments for future advancements in the sector upon finalisation of the project.

Whereas the use of TAIEX and Twinning instruments were suspended over the past few years due to the severity of the crisis post 2019, the new momentum as regards the 3RF with the adoption of the new mandate in April 2023 and the emphasis on the sectoral Working Groups offer the opportunity to relaunch twinning as an important instrument to provide expertise for reforms. Lessons learnt from the previous project is indeed the need of commitment and minimum level of absorption capacity by the Lebanese public administrations.

Future twinning projects for Lebanese public administration would need to be carefully assessed, in terms of demonstration of political commitment and availability and active participation of its personnel by the beneficiary institution. In line with progress made on 3RF working groups on policy dialogue in reforms, alignment with sector-specific reform agendas advocated by the EU and its Member States will be ensured.

Over the past decade, the EU has played a significant role in supporting public administration reforms in Lebanon. Through various programmes, the EU has aimed to strengthen governance, enhance institutional capacity, and promote transparency within the public sector. The Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) has provided demand-driven technical, legal, and training assistance to more than 20 government institutions. This assistance has been instrumental in supporting public administration reform efforts, focusing on enhancing accountability and transparency for citizens through strengthened administrative systems.

Despite these efforts, several weaknesses have been observed in previous interventions, including lack of ownership by the government, and inadequate inter-institutional coordination and cooperation among
government institutions. While many Lebanese public bodies request twinning projects for their administration, as a first step for implementation, a clear political commitment on jointly agreed priorities and including mobilisation of sufficient needed resources (financial, staff etc.) by the Lebanese public administration will be sought.

The EU has been providing financial assistance to Lebanon for over two decades with the objective to promote and facilitate reform and enhance standards of governance.

Recent negative developments such as the financial, economic and banking crises, the widespread and unprecedented civic unrest in 2019, the 2020 port explosion, the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently the dramatic devaluation of the national currency, have severely affected the country, its institutions and the citizens.

This deteriorating situation has impacted the results achieved through previous assistance, jeopardising progress achieved and making extremely difference to have reliable interlocutors to undertake, adopt and effectively implement urgently needed reform measures. Hence, the EU adopted to focus on strategic sectors, where there are the conditions to achieve tangible results and are essential to maintain acceptable level of governance and security. Beyond direct results to these crucial areas, there will be also a beneficial spill over effect on other sectors.

Since 2010 the EU has concentrated its efforts on key areas that can serve as entry points for broader justice reform, such as enhanced access to justice and legal aid, independence, effectiveness and accountability of justice institutions, automation, juvenile justice, capacity building, prison administration, also supporting models compliant with human rights. The EU invested in the justice and penitentiary sector over EUR 28 million. However, the results and impact were affected by poor management and by the effects of the multiple crises. Accordingly, the EU opted for additional assistance to be depending on tangible sign of reform as well as by the Government allocation of the necessary resources to ensure the sustainability of EU funded projects.

To facilitate and promote this approach the EU engaged in a partnership and dialogue with the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, judiciary and security and law enforcement institutions. In the field of justice, this work was propaedeutic for the establishment in February 2024 of the Lebanese-owned and led Justice Forum for a comprehensive reform of the justice system. In the meantime, targeted assistance aimed to support the functioning of rule of law in Lebanon to the best possible standards in the given circumstances.

The action will significantly benefit from the extensive experience, and the approaches and mechanism developed by the EuroMed Justice project, which have led to tangible results in solving concrete cases between EU Member States and Partner Countries in the Southern Neighbourhood. The project has also delivered legal and gaps analyses in several fields, which have served for the preparation of action plans of the EuroMed Justice VI (2024-2027). It will consider also the work of the Council of Europe (CoE) South Programme “Protecting human rights, rule of law, and democracy through shared standards in the Southern Mediterranean” (in its 5th phase, which focuses on the progressive establishment of a common legal space between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean based on Council of Europe conventions.

In line with the findings of the mid-term evaluation of the EU security portfolio as key lesson was identified that it is crucial to engage at strategic level with the Lebanese Government to enhance the strategic and legal framework in security. However, the top-to-bottom approach has to be complemented by a bottom-up approach to deliver feasible results at programmatic level. Recommended was to strengthen the collaboration with European expertise or agencies in a view to complement the reform of the policy framework and collaboration in cross border topics.
As concerns EMSA, as indicated above, the SAFEMED V project is being implemented in the last few years working on the development of a the policy framework of the maritime sector in line with international conventions. While some limited results are recorded, progress is slow. This program has been recently connected to bilateral assistance and the EU advocated for more focused activities with the Ministry of transport.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is implementing the regional EuroMed Transport Aviation Project, to encourage and facilitate the States' regulatory convergence with EU and international standards; develop capacity for regulatory oversight; support regional dialogue and the pooling of resources at regional level; support the implementation of Aviation Agreements by assessing regulatory convergence and working arrangements concluded between countries and the EU and/or EASA.

In June 2023, a team of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) visited Lebanon in the framework of the new phase of the regional EuroMed Aviation Project (2022-2025), accompanying a team of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The mission’s purpose was to prepare Lebanon to the periodic general audit of Lebanon’s civil aviation sector by ICAO, which should take place in 2024 although a date has not yet been set. The mission report highlighted a number of shortcomings at Beirut’s international airport, namely concerning safety and security aspects. The most worrying finding concerned the shortage of air traffic controllers. The report leaked to the press in August, causing public outrage and an announced night-time strike of air traffic controllers in September. The Minister therefore requested the temporary recruitment of 25 additional air flight controllers, 10 of which from Iraq, hence avoiding the strike.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective/Impact of this action is to enhance the administrative capacity of the Lebanese government in alignment with international and European standards.

The Specific Objective (Outcome) of this action is to:

1. Enhanced service delivery and improved governance in Lebanon, capitalising on EU Member States expertise and EU Agencies.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)

1.1 Strengthened institutional, technical and staff capacities and mechanisms within the selected institutions to lead in inclusive and rights-based governance and preparation of sectoral reforms capitalising on EU Member States’ expertise.

contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)

1.2 Strengthened institutional, technical and staff capacities and mechanisms within the selected institutions to lead in inclusive and rights-based governance and preparation of sectoral reforms capitalising on the expertise of EU agencies.

3.2. Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1:
- Conducting workshops, seminars, and training sessions to enhance the skills and knowledge of public administration officials.
- Providing specialised training on EU laws, regulations, and administrative practices.
- Deploying short-term and long-term experts from EU Member States to work directly with counterparts and offering on-the-ground support and mentorship.
- Organising study visits for officials from Lebanon to EU Member States to observe best practices and successful implementation of EU standards.
- Assisting in the drafting, review, and implementation of new policies, laws, and regulations and offering legal and technical advice on legislative reforms.
- Supporting the development and restructuring of public institutions to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Enhancing organisational structures, procedures, and workflows.
- Developing manuals, guidelines, and standard operating procedures to support the implementation of new policies and legislation.
- Conducting public information campaigns to raise awareness about new laws, rights, and responsibilities among the general population and specific stakeholders.

Activities related to Output 1.2:
- Stakeholder consultations, preparatory work and drafting of documents, including SoPs for endorsement and signature;
- Capacity building and training to relevant public servants and stakeholders to familiarise to new practices and working arrangements;
- Modernisation for implementation of relevant authorities infrastructure and equipment and digitalisation as required;
- Upgrade of technical equipment and skills of relevant authorities;
- Monitoring of the effective implementation of the joint action;
- Awareness raising of the benefits of joint enhanced security for stakeholders and the public in Lebanon and in EU Member States.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Outcomes of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening (relevant for budget support and strategic-level interventions)
The SEA screening concluded that no further action was required.

Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project).
The EIA screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project).
The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality and empowerment of women may be addressed during the design stage of activities.
Human Rights

The proposed Action is fully aligned to the existing EU human rights strategies and action plans. Human rights concerns are mainstreamed throughout the action and will be taken into consideration in all activities to be drawn up during implementation stage. The Action has been designed following a “rights-based “and “leave-no-one behind” approach. It promotes equal participation of women in the decision-making at various levels, and will respond to people’s participation in public life and other support ownership of the action by local actors within the framework of international human rights standards. The action will also encourage and promote the civil society actors, mainly CSOs active in women’s rights advocacy and monitoring.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as D1. This implies that the proposed intervention is a significant objective as inclusion will be mainstreamed within the Action whenever possible and relevant, by favouring the participation of people with disabilities in public, political, economic and social spheres following a people-centred and inclusive approach.

Democracy

Respect of democracy in Lebanon are underlined under the objectives of the Action. In line with EU commitment to promote legally binding international standards to the fundamental rights and the rule of law, the action will promote Lebanon commitment to international conventions.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

This action takes applies conflict-sensitivity and a do-no harm approach throughout the planning and implementation of the action, and addresses related priorities and recommendations.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Not applicable.

3.4. Risks and Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)</th>
<th>Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)</th>
<th>Mitigating measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. External Environment</td>
<td>The escalation of hostilities along the Southern Border of Lebanon intensifies and extends to a nationwide scale</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Activities will be adjusted to identified needs through an ongoing monitoring and maintain on stand-by the components that cannot be implemented until adequate conditions are in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- External Environment</td>
<td>Political stalemate and social tensions resulting</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Project execution will be contingent upon the possibility to operate under the prevailing conditions counting on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- External Environment</td>
<td>All institutions, including Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, security and law enforcement institutions, judicial bodies and other competent authorities of the justice sector are not committed to enhance cooperation in criminal matters, on security and law enforcement with the EU and the EU MS.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>The competent authorities will be encouraged through the established policy dialogue, promoting the relevance and benefit of this important reform and prospecting additional assistance in case of achievement of initial objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2- Planning, processes and systems | The selected administration lacks of resources and efficient and | Medium | Medium | The EU will engage with political leaders and authorities, also through the 3RF mechanism, to persuade them to undertake the reform path. |
Effective structures, including for coordination with other relevant entities, will benefit from specific technical and legal assistance, and expertise. The Delegation will provide continuous strategic guidance, support and coordination in line with the established partnership with justice-sector authorities.

### 3. People and the Organisation

| Lack of motivation and commitment of Civil Servants, including resistance to change | High | High |
| Strong policy dialogue would be initiated by the EU Delegation and with the support of twinning advisers to ensure motivation for contributing to the application of an important reforms, |

| Poor coordination among stakeholders, leading to fragmented efforts and inefficient use of resources | Low | Low |
| Use established coordination mechanisms to streamline collaboration and communication among stakeholders |

### External Assumptions

**Stability of the political and security situation in Lebanon:**
The effective implementation of the Action depends on a stable political and security environment in the country. In the absence of stability, the implementation of reforms may be hampered, and progress may be slow or ineffective.

**Willingness of authorities to reform:**
The success of the action will depend on the commitment and willingness of Lebanese authorities to implement the necessary reforms. This will include the Lebanese authorities’ readiness to making tough decisions, undertaking structural changes, and ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the process as well as ownership of the reform and a resolute buy-in throughout the process.

#### 3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that:

**Component 1:**

IF the Lebanese public administration demonstrate the political commitment the availability and active participation of its personnel, AND the EU, its Member States and targeted Lebanese public institutions agree on joint specific priorities, THEN preparations for starting a twinning project would commence.
IF the required resources (financial, staff etc.) are provided by the targeted Lebanese public administration AND political commitment is demonstrated, THEN the institution would be matched with a partner EU Member state.

IF the twinning project is implemented successfully and made progress in implementation of jointly agreed reform priorities THEN targeted Lebanese public administrations would have improved their effectiveness in advocating and implementing said priorities AND have increased their capacity in leading inclusive and rights-based governance and preparation of sectorial reforms.

Component 2:

IF Lebanon’s political leaders engage in preparing, adopting and establishing appropriate legal and administrative measures to allow Lebanon to be capable to engage with EU Member States and EU rule of law decentralised agencies for enhanced security, law enforcement and judicial cooperation;

IF Lebanon’s public administration, Ministries and other entities, such as the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, security and law enforcement institutions and judicial bodies continue to be committed to enhance standards and promote reform with EU decentralised agencies and the EU Member States;

IF the agreement on the framework for cooperation between Lebanon and EU rule of law decentralised agencies, such as the procedure for the signature of the Financing Agreement for this Action and the ratification of the International Agreement between the Eurojust and Lebanon, is completed within reasonable timeframe;

THEN the strategic and operational cooperation between the EU and Lebanon, will result in the strengthening of the governance in a variety of sectors for the benefit of Lebanese and EU citizens.
3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Results chain:</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baselines</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Sources of data</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>to enhance the administrative capacity of the Lebanese government in alignment with international and European standards.</td>
<td>1.1 Target 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere; Indicator 16.1.4: proportion of population that feels safe walking alone around the area they live</td>
<td>1 SDG webpage (Progress of Goals 16 in 2024)</td>
<td>1 SDG webpage (Progress of Goals 16 in 2028)</td>
<td>1 Regular feedback from national counterparts with respect to value of project interventions 2 SDG review</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1</td>
<td>1. 1. Enhanced service delivery and improved governance in Lebanon, capitalising on EU Member States expertise and EU Agencies.</td>
<td>SDG 16 Indicator 16.6.2: Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services</td>
<td>1.1 TBD</td>
<td>1.1 TBD</td>
<td>1.1 Official Gazette indicating passage of legislation and/or decrees 1.2 Published institutional policies 1.3 Progress and final reports</td>
<td>Government of Lebanon expressed commitment in reforms agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 1 related to Outcome 1</td>
<td>1.1 Strengthened institutional, technical and staff capacities and mechanisms within the selected institutions to lead in inclusive and</td>
<td>1.1.1 Beneficiaries’ overall satisfaction on the quality of projects</td>
<td>1.1.1 1.1.2</td>
<td>1.1.1 1.1.2</td>
<td>1.1.1 Project evaluations 1.1.2</td>
<td>Government of Lebanon expressed commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 2 related to Outcome 1</td>
<td>2.1 Strengthened institutional, technical and staff capacities and mechanisms within the selected institutions to lead in inclusive and rights-based governance and preparation of sectoral reforms capitalising on the expertise of EU agencies.</td>
<td>1.1.2 Number of new or revised policies with EU support</td>
<td>2.1.1 Adoption of policies/guidelines/practices that streamline or otherwise improve the governance in variety of sectors</td>
<td>1.2.1</td>
<td>1.2.2</td>
<td>1.2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the Government of Lebanon.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 48 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission’s responsible authorising officer by amending this financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures. 2

4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)

4.3.1.1. Twinning Grants

a) Purpose of the grant(s)

Twinning grants will contribute to achieve Output 1.1.

b) Type of applicants targeted

Applicants must be EU Member State administrations or their mandated bodies.

4.3.2. Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity which will be selected by the Commission’s services using the following criteria:

- Established expertise in internal policies with external dimension relating to the rule of law,
- Strategic relevance for EU multilateral engagement,
- Mandate to carry out the specific actions on behalf of the EU and availability to establish an enhanced partnership with EU Member States on the topic,
- Mandate to operate in the local context and neutrality in conflict/crisis situations,
- Demonstrated logistical and/or management capacities to implement an action of the relevance and technical and political difficulty, like those in question.

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2 www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.
This implementation by this entity entails the achievement of the objectives and implementation of the activities described under section 3, Output 1.2

4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances

If the implementation modality under direct management as defined in section ‘4.3.1.1’ cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by indirect management would be used, using the following criteria:
- Specific sector / thematic expertise:
  (a) adequate capacities to engage with a variety of Lebanese stakeholders across public administration
  (b) experience with strengthening the capacities of institutions in reform process and policy dialogue
- Logistical and/or management capacities:
  (a) experience in the implementation of capacity building programmes in Lebanon of similar value.
  (b) proven experience and expertise in implementing capacity building activities and in policy dialogue.

If the implementation modality under indirect management as defined in section ‘4.3.2’ cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by grants under direct management would be used:
(a) Subject matter of the grant(s): Outputs and activities described in section 3 leading to achievement of output 1.2
(b) Type of applicants targeted: Public bodies and Non-governmental organisations

4.4. 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, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission’s authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5. Indicative Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative Budget components</th>
<th>EU contribution in 2024 (amount in EUR)</th>
<th>EU contribution in 2025 (amount in EUR) (indicative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1 composed of</td>
<td>3 800 000.00</td>
<td>1 000 000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twinning - Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1</td>
<td>3 800 000.00</td>
<td>1 000 000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2 composed of</td>
<td>1 500 000.00</td>
<td>2 500 000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect management with EU Agencies –cf. section 4.3.2</td>
<td>1 500 000.00</td>
<td>2 500 000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

For each project funded under the Action Document, a steering committee (SC), including representatives from the relevant Ministries, EU Member State counterparts and Civil Society shall be set to oversee and validate the overall direction of the project activities. Project Steering Committee shall meet every six months or earlier in case projects implemented faces an urgent issue. Each project Steering Committee will be responsible of providing guidance and direction for the implementation of activities as foreseen by the action plan, ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in implementation of the project, and ensure consistency and synergies with the relevant government strategies.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

### 5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

#### 5.1. 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 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 Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

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).

Arrangements for monitoring and reporting, including roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

- Implementing partners will be requested to identify clear baselines setting and targets and specify whether additional surveys are needed in case data are not yet available and/or should be refined during the inception phase. If needed, additional survey can be funded at contract level and budget lines to this aim to be clearly identified in the contract.
- Implementing partners will set in place a robust system to monitor the impact of the actions (in terms of personnel trained, laws drafted, etc)
- Collection of data will be the responsibility of the implementing partners and baselines data must be available at the latest at the end of the inception phase while results data must be collected on time for the submission of the final report.
- Analysis of sex-disaggregated data will be done whenever relevant and possible.
- Implementing partners will be requested to identify yearly milestones/targets to ensure a proper monitoring of the achievements at the time of the submission of the annual report. Grants contracts (or relevant agreements with final beneficiaries) logical framework will be developed based on the logical framework for each of the Outcomes to promote coherent data collection and reporting.
- To promote the measurement of the impact of the action, the programme will make use of and possible participate in surveys done by others (i.e. national authorities or other donors).
- Peer review mechanisms will be favoured, alongside with the engagement of relevant national stakeholders in order to promote stronger national M&E capacities.

Monitoring and reporting shall assess how the action is considering the principle of gender equality, human rights-based approach, conflict sensitivity and rights of persons with disabilities including inclusion and diversity. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex and, where possible, by disability.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components contracted by the Commission. It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision).

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join. The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least one month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation exercise and 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 country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. 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.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

Evaluations shall assess to what extent the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women’s empowerment and disability inclusion. Expertise on human rights, disability and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

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 audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. To that end they must comply
with the instructions given in the 2022 guidance document *Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions* (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and contribution agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.
Appendix 1: IDENTIFICATION OF THE PRIMARY INTERVENTION LEVEL FOR REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

✓ Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);
✓ Articulating Actions and/or Contracts according to an expected common chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure a more efficient and aggregated monitoring and reporting of performance;
✓ Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

The present Action identifies as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract level (i.e. Grants, Contribution Agreements, any case in which foreseen individual legal commitments identified in the budget will have different log frames, even if part of the same Action Document)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒ PC-36421</td>
<td>Twinning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ PC-36258</td>
<td>Indirect Management with EU Agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>