

EVALUATION ROADMAP			
TITLE OF THE EVALUATION	<b>Evaluation of the European Union's co-operation with Azerbaijan - Country Level Evaluation</b>		
LEAD DG RESPONSIBLE UNIT	NEAR DG NEAR A3 (EVALUATION LEAD)	DATE OF THIS ROADMAP	15/09/2016
TYPE OF EVALUATION	Evaluation Mid-term	PLANNED START DATE	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2016
		PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2017
		PLANNING CALENDAR	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/index_en.htm</a>
<b>This indicative roadmap is provided for indicative purposes only and is subject to change.</b>			

A. Purpose
<p>(A.1) Purpose</p> <p>This evaluation will assess the performance of the European Union's co-operation with Azerbaijan (2007-2016) and will serve as one source of information for the new Single Support Framework (2018-2020).</p> <p>It will also provide information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify key lessons and to produce recommendations in order to improve the current and future European Union's strategies for, and programmes and actions in Azerbaijan.</li> <li>To provide the relevant external co-operation services of the European Union and the wider public with an overall independent assessment of the European Union's past and current co-operation with Azerbaijan.</li> <li>To map present and recent interventions of different development partners and identify the distinctive role of EU support.</li> <li>To provide an assessment of the effectiveness and suitability of EU bilateral and Member States' assistance mechanisms in Azerbaijan.</li> </ul> <p>The evaluation should take into account the current negotiations on a new framework agreement with Azerbaijan<sup>1</sup>, the evaluations launched by the EU Delegation of the European Union in Azerbaijan, notably the Civil Society Support Evaluation of 2016, the Twinning instrument evaluation of 2012, the parallel internal stock-taking on budget support operations and findings that fed into the Mid-Term review of the European Financial Instruments.</p>
<p>(A.2) Justification</p> <p>Following political and economic stabilisation in Azerbaijan, EU assistance has shifted towards the implementation of the 2006 European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan, diversification of the non-oil economy, and capacity building of government structures, although it still maintains a degree of focus on poverty reduction and social sector support.</p> <p>Since 2009, the EU has also supported smaller size Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) projects under Human Rights, Democratisation and Non State Actor budget lines (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and Civil Society Organisations and local authorities (CSO-LA) financing.</p> <p>Since the 2011 Annual Action Programme (Rural Development Support Program), no new budget support commitments have been approved for Azerbaijan. Instead, other modalities for support (grants, twinning, technical assistance) have been used.</p> <p>In 2015, Azerbaijan tabled its own proposal for a (strategic) partnership agreement, offering the possibility of</p>

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016\\_eeas\\_021\\_framework\\_agreement\\_azerbaijan\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016_eeas_021_framework_agreement_azerbaijan_en.pdf)

replacing the existing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (into force since 1999) with a new updated legal basis.

Given the evolution of the relationship with Azerbaijan since 2006, including the recent developments around a possible new agreement, it is considered opportune to carry out this evaluation. The latest evaluation of EC Tacis Country Strategy<sup>2</sup> dated March 2000.

**B. Content and subject of the evaluation**

**(B.1) Subject area**

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was designed in 2003 (Communication 'Wider Europe'<sup>3</sup>) to develop closer relations between the EU and its neighbouring countries. Under the ENP, the Union offers to its neighbours a privileged relationship, building upon a mutual commitment to, and promotion of, the values of democracy and human rights, the rule of law, good governance and the principles of a market economy and sustainable and inclusive development. The ENP was revised in 2011 and most recently in November 2015<sup>4</sup>.

The cooperation between EU and Azerbaijan currently takes place in the framework of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), ratified in 1999 and further enhanced by a joint EU-Azerbaijan ENP Action Plan (ENP AP) adopted in November 2006. In 2004, Azerbaijan became a partner country under the ENP, and in 2009 under the Eastern Partnership. In 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding on Comprehensive Institution-Building was signed between EU and Azerbaijan, meant to support further capacity building actions needed in order for the provisions of different agreements under discussion at that time (e.g. for Visa Liberalisation) to be implemented.

**(B.2) Original objectives of the intervention**

The principle objective of technical and financial cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan is to support the achievement of the commitments and policy objectives jointly agreed within the above political framework.

For the years 2007-2013, the assistance was mainly focused in the following areas:

- Democratisation, rule of law and fundamental freedoms;
- Socio-economic reforms and legal approximation to the EU;
- Energy and transport.

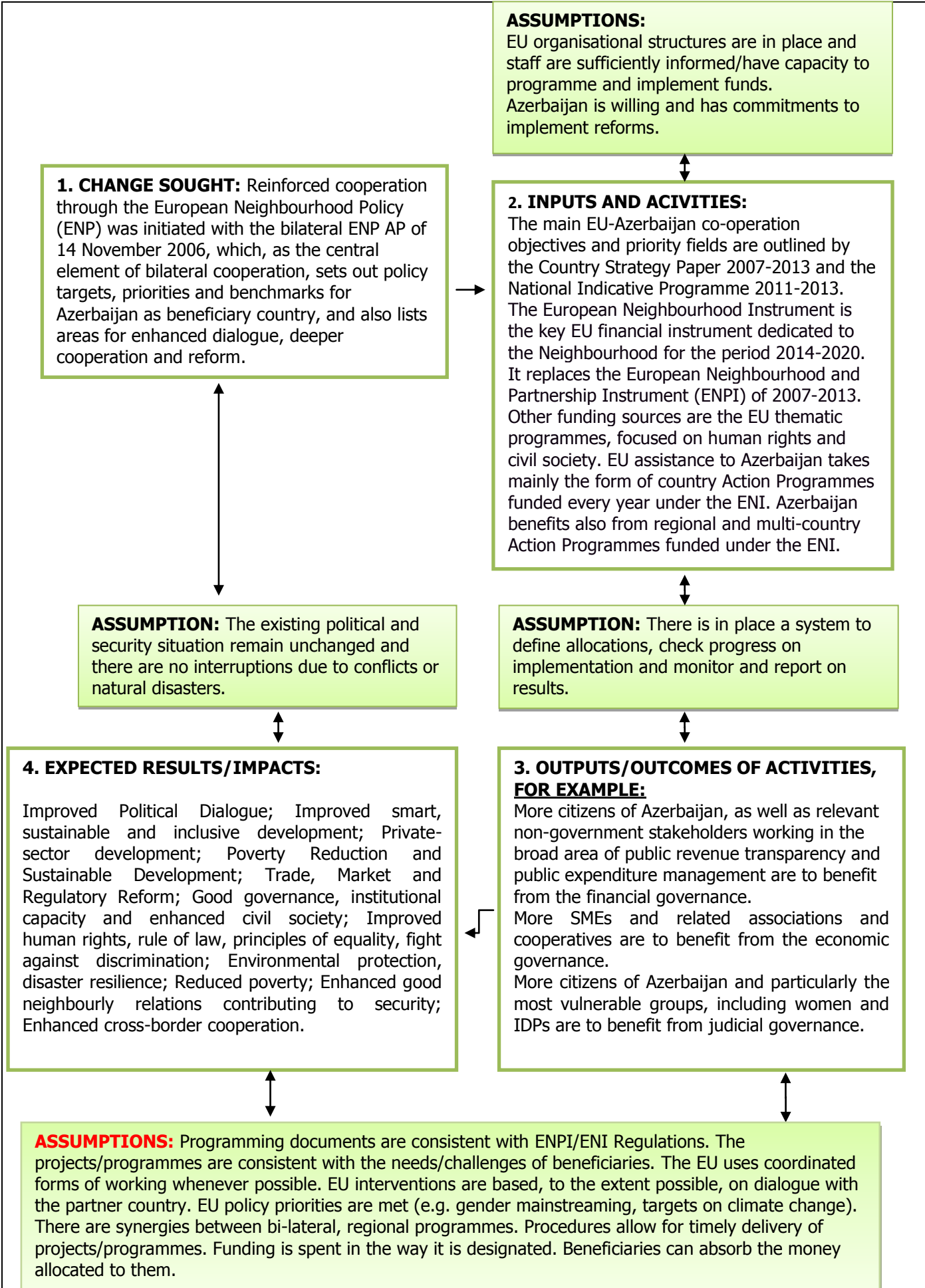
Since 2014, the EU support has contributed to interventions in three priority areas:

- Regional and rural development;
- Education and skills development;
- Institutional capacity building and support to civil society.

**(B.3) How the objectives were to be achieved**

Draft intervention logic:

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation\\_reports/reports/tacis/951538\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/reports/tacis/951538_en.pdf)  
<sup>3</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/com03\\_104\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf)  
<sup>4</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/2015/151118\\_joint-communication\\_review-of-the-enp\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/2015/151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf)



## C. Scope of the evaluation

### (C.1) Topics covered

The evaluation should assess whether and to what extent the various projects and programmes financed by the EU under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)<sup>5</sup>, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)<sup>6</sup>, and the EU thematic programmes, focused on human rights and civil society<sup>7</sup>, are contributing to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the EU Cooperation with Azerbaijan.

More specifically, the evaluation will assess:

- The relevance and coherence of European Union's co-operation strategy and programmes in the period 2007-2016; This assessment should be done based on a dynamic approach looking for example at issues such as the extent to which the EU support has been responsive to the changes in the context of Azerbaijan.
- The implementation of the European Union's co-operation, focusing on impact, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency for the period 2007 – 2016. The evaluation should take into account the new programming for the period 2014 – 2020. Findings that fed into the Mid-Term review of the European Financial Instruments should be taken into account by this evaluation.
- The consistency between programming and implementation.
- The value added of the European Union's interventions (at both strategic and implementation levels).
- The coordination and complementarity of the European Union's interventions with other donors' interventions (focusing on EU Member States) and coherence between the European Union's interventions and policies that are likely to affect the partner country/region. The latter should include an assessment of the extent the programmes, financed by the EU, are coherent with the objectives set in agreement with Azerbaijan. The evaluation should also assess the comparative advantages of the EU working in various areas, with a view to feed into the discussion on a possible joint programming.
- The coordination and coherence of the various types of cooperation (Bilateral, Regional and Thematic) and corresponding instruments. This should include an assessment of the "fitness for purpose" of the instruments relative to the context of Azerbaijan, in particular in terms of relevance of the objectives of the instruments and efficiency of the procedures used.

The overall engagement with Azerbaijan should be taken into consideration in the analysis, including agreements, the co-operation framework and any other official commitments. To the extent possible, the evaluation should distinguish the results obtained through the various instruments used in Azerbaijan. Interventions funded by the World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Investment Bank (EIB), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe (CoE) and other donors at the sector level cannot be part of the evaluation scope. However, the coherence and complementarity between these interventions and the EU cooperation strategy evaluated must be examined.

### (C.2) Issues to be examined

Evaluation issues and questions to be further developed at inception stage are:

- Effectiveness:
  - To what extent, and how, has the EU assistance to judicial governance/access to justice sectors contributed to strengthening the rule of law in Azerbaijan?
  - To what extent, and how, has the EU support contributed to improving the ability of the Public Finance Management (PFM) systems in Azerbaijan to deliver on country's long term fiscal sustainability, comprehensiveness and transparency of the budget, predictability and control of budget execution?
  - To what extent has the EU assistance to regional and rural development contributed to improving

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/european-neighbourhood-and-partnership-instrument-enpi\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/european-neighbourhood-and-partnership-instrument-enpi_en)  
[https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/country/enpi\\_csp\\_azerbaijan\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/country/enpi_csp_azerbaijan_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EU) No 232/2014, 11.3.2014 <http://eur-ex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0027:0043:EN:PDF>

<sup>7</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/eu\\_azerbaijan/civil\\_society\\_dialogue/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/eu_azerbaijan/civil_society_dialogue/index_en.htm)

living standards?

- To what extent has the EU assistance to agricultural development ensured a competitive country's agricultural sector?
  - To what extent, and how, has EU assistance to Civil Society built stronger democratic processes and accountability systems?
  - To what extent, and how, has EU assistance modernised the country's vocational and educational system?
  - To what extent, and how, has EU assistance diversified country's energy mix and increased energy efficiency?
  - To which extent have the institution-building instruments (mainly TAIEX, Twinning and SIGMA) contributed to capacity building and institutional strengthening?
- Efficiency:
    - To what extent have interventions been cost/time effective?
    - To what extent has the EU assistance contributed to more coordinated forms of working, such as joint programming and pool funding?
  - EU added value:
    - What is the added value of an EU level intervention compared to interventions by Member States or other donors, including the private sector, on their own?
  - Coherence and complementarity:
    - To what extent was the mix of aid modalities and instruments used by the EU appropriate in the Azerbaijan's context?
    - To what extent does the scope of the EU support to Azerbaijan align with/complement other interventions of other donors?
    - To what extent did EU support lead to strengthened national coordination of aid and contribute to donor complementarity and synergies?
  - Relevance:
    - To what extent was EU assistance strategy and implementation aligned with Government priorities and responded flexibly to changing needs over the evaluation period?
    - Is it still meeting the needs of the beneficiaries in a changing international context, within the ENI region, and in changing relationship with Azerbaijan?
    - Do its objectives and design still serve EU priorities in terms of external affairs with Azerbaijan?
  - Sustainability:
    - To what extent has the EU assistance contributed to the Union's priorities for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth?
  - Impact:
    - What has happened as a result of the EU assistance?
    - What are key factors influencing the achievements of results?
    - To which extent political and operational outputs and immediate results are the consequence of EU interventions and policy dialogue?

#### (C.3) Other tasks

The evaluation that will be commissioned will also include an assessment of the intervention logic as well as lessons learned and recommendations.

## D. Evidence base

### (D.1) Evidence from monitoring

Data will be collected from different sources, including in particular:

- Programming documents, budget documents (e.g. programme statements), action documents, the EU results framework, annual reports, Results Orientated Monitoring and available evaluations.
- International sources of information concerning democracy, human rights, judiciary, justice and security,

corruption, trade flows, gender equality internal economic disparities and employment levels include reports from ENI partner statistical services, the statistical office of the European Union EUROSTAT, the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other international organisations/foundations (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Economic Forum, Transparency International, and the like).

#### **General documentation**

- Communications of the European Union; and
- Partnership and Cooperation agreement<sup>8</sup>
- ENP Action Plan with EU<sup>9</sup>
- EU's Black Sea Synergy initiative<sup>10</sup>
- EU's Eastern Partnership initiative<sup>11</sup>.

#### **Country/Region**

- The Common External Relations Information System CRIS (information on the projects), Results Oriented Monitoring ROM and other databases concerning the financed projects, engagements, payments, etc.;
- EU Cooperation strategies;
- Key government planning and policy documents;
- Project/ programme evaluation reports;
- Relevant documentation provided by the local authorities and other local partners, etc.;
- Other donors and OECD/DAC documentation.

#### **(D.2) Previous evaluations and other reports**

##### **Non-exhaustive list**

Evaluations launched by the Delegation of the European Union to Azerbaijan:

- Evaluation of EU Support to Civil Society in Azerbaijan in 2007 – 2013, Letter of Contract N°2014/352705, June 2016
- Country evaluation of Twinning Instrument in Azerbaijan (2007-2012), Specific Contract N° 2012/299032, 19 December 2012

#### **(D.3) Evidence from assessing the implementation and application of legislation (complaints, infringement procedures)**

Not applicable

#### **(D.4) Consultation**

The stakeholders for this evaluation include (this list of stakeholders will further defined at a later stage):

National stakeholders include (non-exhaustive list):

- Government of Azerbaijan
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of finance
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs
- State Audit Office
- National coordinating Unit
- Central banks, the financial institutions and the National Statistical Offices
- Sector regulators, Competition and State aid authorities.
- Private sector representative institutions and think tanks
- Trade Promotion Agencies
- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

<sup>8</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/documents/eu\\_azerbaijan/eu-az\\_pca\\_full\\_text.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/documents/eu_azerbaijan/eu-az_pca_full_text.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/action\\_plans/azerbaijan\\_enp\\_ap\\_final\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/action_plans/azerbaijan_enp_ap_final_en.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/com07\\_160\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/com07_160_en.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/index_en.htm) ; [https://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/docs/eu-azerbaijan\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/docs/eu-azerbaijan_en.pdf)

International Stakeholders (non-exhaustive list):

- The World Bank
- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- International Finance Corporation (IFC)
- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- The United Nation Development Programme (UNDP)
- The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
- The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)
- The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
- The Council of Europe (CoE)
- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

During the process of the evaluation, an outline strategy is as follows:

- Inception and desk phase - Documentation is reviewed and hypotheses are developed  
During the Inception and Desk phases, the national stakeholders will be consulted via phone/email/face to face discussions. Use of interviews, surveys, questionnaires and other tools will be considered and decided upon during the inception phase. Comments/views will be taken on board from these stakeholders before the finalisation of the Inception and the Desk phase reports.
- Field phase - The evaluation team will consult key players in the region  
During the Field phase the evaluators will meet Azerbaijan's beneficiaries/stakeholders.
- Final report - The report should address the evaluation specific objectives, provide a judgment of the performance of the EU assistance and offer recommendations for policy creation.  
A stakeholders' workshop/s will be held towards the end of the field phase before the elaboration of the Draft Final report to discuss the findings and preliminary recommendations;  
The Draft Final report will be sent for comments to the stakeholders before its finalisation.
- Dissemination - Key stakeholders and wider audience  
Dissemination seminars/conferences will be held in Brussels/Baku once the evaluation will be completed.

This outline will be further developed with the evaluation team in the early stages of the evaluation.

(D.5) Further evidence to be gathered

Further evidence may be obtained through field trip visits, surveys, desk interviews.

## E. Other relevant information/ remarks

Given that this country level evaluation will feed other major evaluations and that findings that fed into the Mid-Term review of the European Financial Instruments, like the one on the mid-term review of the European Neighbourhood Instrument<sup>12</sup>, should be taken on board, the better regulation guidelines will not fully apply to this evaluation. In particular:

- instead of a 12-week open public consultation, there will be targeted consultations as outlined in section D above.
- there will be an Action Plan validated by the management and a short summary of the final evaluation, instead of a Staff Working Document. References on the evaluation findings will be reported in the Annual Activity report and in the Annual Report of Financial Cooperation.

<sup>12</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2017\\_near\\_002\\_evaluation\\_eni\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2017_near_002_evaluation_eni_en.pdf)