



ANNEX II

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the Annual Action Programme 2020 for Georgia

Action Document for

“EU Resilience Facility for Georgia: Economy, Environment, Health and Migration Management (“The EU Resilience Facility”)”

ANNUAL PROGRAMME/MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation and action programme/measure in the sense of Articles 2 and 3 of Regulation N° 236/2014.

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	EU Resilience Facility for Georgia: Economy, Environment, Health and Migration Management (“The EU Resilience Facility”) CRIS number: ENI/2020/42545 financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument
2. Zone benefiting from the action/location	Georgia <i>The action shall be carried out at the following location: countrywide</i>
3. Programming document	Single Support Framework for EU support to Georgia (2017-2020) ¹
4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): - SDG 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere - SDG 2 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages - SDG 3 Good health and well-being - SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth,

¹ Commission Implementing Decision C(2017) 8160 of 7.12.2017 adopting a Single Support Framework for European Union support to Georgia for the period 2017-2020.

	<p>full and productive employment and decent work for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SDG 10 Reduced inequalities - SDG 13 Climate action <p>Other significant SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities - SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production - SDG 15 Life on land 			
5. Sector of intervention/ thematic area	<p>Complementary support for capacity development/institution building;</p> <p>Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change</p>	DEV. Assistance: YES		
6. Amounts concerned	<p>Total estimated cost: EUR 12 700 000</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 12 700 000.</p>			
7. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	<p>Project Modality</p> <p>Direct management through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants - Procurement <p>Indirect management with the entrusted entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4.</p>			
8 a) DAC code(s)	<p>12110 – Health policy and administrative management</p> <p>12261 – Health Education</p> <p>15110 – Public Sector Policy and Administrative Management</p> <p>16010 – Social protection</p> <p>41010 – Environmental policy and administrative management</p> <p>41020 – Biosphere protection</p>			
b) Main Delivery Channel	40000 – Multilateral Organisations (International Organisations and/or Member State Donor Agencies)			
9. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
	Gender equality and Women's and Girl's Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagships	Human Development Environment and climate change			

SUMMARY

While Georgia is currently focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on its socio-economic situation and healthcare system, Georgia remains committed to the priorities of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement and to ensuring that the conditions continue to be met for visa free travel to the EU for the citizens of Georgia. The EU in turn has committed substantial means to support Georgia in its COVID-19 response within the Team Europe initiative.

While fighting the global pandemic, improving national healthcare systems and contributing to minimisation of negative impacts to human health is on the top of agenda of every government in the world.

In previous times Georgia achieved high growth rates and urban expansion at the expense of the environment. Today, deteriorating environmental conditions and pollution are having a direct negative impact on the health of Georgian citizens. Environmental protection and its impact on health have become an increasing priority for the Georgian population and the Government. These topics will remain crucial during post COVID-19 recovery.

Therefore, this Action will support socio-economic recovery post COVID-19, with a particular focus on the environmental and healthcare system reform needs of the country, and in line with the implementation of the Association Agreement and Agenda, especially with regards to challenges arising from visa liberalisation.

The following elements are being considered:

- Support to *socio-economic recovery and resilience for the environment and healthcare system* in line with the Association Agreement/DCFTA, focusing on mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in Georgia;
- A consolidated *migration package* will build on current support and will focus on supporting Georgia in their efforts to ensure that visa free travel to the EU continues and will address the challenges to be defined in the upcoming national Migration Strategy 2021-2030.

1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

1.1 Context Description

Georgia is an upper-middle income country with a population of 3.7 million, 57% live in urban areas, and 13% are national minorities. The country has a gross national income per capita of EUR 3,498 (2015) and ranks 70 out of 194 countries/territories in the UN Human Development Index, categorising it as highly developed.

Georgia is set to enter a deep recession this year amid mounting financing needs, its economy is heavily affected by the coronavirus crisis. Recent estimates taking into account the impact of the virus suggest an economic contraction of around 4% in 2020. Due to the cost of measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis, increased healthcare spending and lower revenues, the fiscal deficit in 2020 is expected to increase to some 8% of GDP. Georgia's

balance of payment will also deteriorate due to lower revenues from the export of services (especially from tourism), lower inflows of remittances, likely lower inflow of FDI and an outflow of portfolio capital. The external funding gap is tentatively estimated by the IMF at around USD 1.6 billion in 2020-2021, and Georgia will need assistance from its international partners to cover this gap. On 14 April the authorities concluded with the IMF a staff level agreement providing for an increase of the current (almost fully disbursed) Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme by approx. USD 375 million, of which USD 308 million are to be disbursed in 2020. Negotiations are ongoing with the World Bank, ADB, AFD, KfW and EIB about augmenting their policy-based loans. Georgia has an ongoing MFA programme with the final instalment of EUR 25 million expected to be disbursed in the second quarter of 2020 subject to implementation of the agreed policy conditions (most of them have already been met). Overall, on current information, some USD 900 million of the estimated financing gap for this year remains to be filled. As there are good prospects also for the contributions of other creditors, a new MFA programme of EUR 150 million is warranted.

In 2014, Georgia and the EU signed an Association Agreement (AA), which entered into force in 2016. Overall, the implementation of commitments stemming from the AA including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) has progressed. The revised Association Agenda (2017-2020)² sets jointly agreed priorities towards further implementation of the AA. The Single Support Framework 2017-2020³ indicating priorities for EU financial support contributes to the implementation of the AA and key structural and institutional reforms, in particular in the fields of education and economic and business environment. Collaboration with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) active in Georgia allows for a better support to the reform processes driven by the Government of Georgia.

With the adoption of the EU-Georgia AA, **Georgia undertook numerous commitments in the sector of environment which constitute a very large chapter of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.**

In the early stages of political and economic transition, Georgia achieved **high growth rates and urban expansion often took place at the expense of the environment.** This is all the more unfortunate that Georgia benefits from strong natural assets which are contributing to the success of tourism as a key driver of Georgian economy, and that these assets are being negatively impacted by the relatively poor environmental management and the global phenomenon of climate change.

Pollution is having a direct negative impact on the health of Georgian citizens with a high rate of cancers and other diseases known to be correlated among others to the high level of air pollution in some areas and the poor quality of some of the water available to citizens. In recent years, environmental protection and its impact on health have become an increasing

² https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/annex_ii_-_eu-georgia_association_agenda_text.pdf

³ Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) 2017-2020 – Single Support Framework for EU support to Georgia (2017 - 2020), https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/georgia_2017-2020_ssf_final.pdf

priority for the Georgian population and the Government and a second National Environment and Health Action Plan was approved in 2018.

Georgia is playing its role within the global fight against climate change. In 2015, the country submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the UNFCCC while the Paris Agreement on climate change entered into force for Georgia in 2017. In 2019 Georgia signed the Ministerial Declaration on the Common Maritime Agenda⁴ to support sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea and having as one of its three goals the environmental target of a healthy marine and coastal ecosystems.

In 2017 visa free travel to the EU was granted to Georgian citizens. This agreement benefits the Georgian society in general, but a wave of asylum requests from Georgian citizens in the EU puts the agreement at risk. Despite the commitment and efforts of the Georgian Government and broad political support to ensure that visa free travel to the EU continues, further improvements are needed on the Georgian side as regards border management, legislative measures and awareness raising. Indirect causes related to insufficient healthcare policies, stagnating judiciary reform, crime, and anti-corruption policies need to be looked at and addressed. Furthermore, joint efforts with the EU Member States are also needed on the EU side. A list of operational actions to decrease the irregular migration and crime-related challenges linked to the travel of Georgian citizens to the EU in line with the recommendations of the Visa Suspension Mechanism Report's (further VSMR operational actions) was developed in close collaboration among the European Commission (DG HOME), EU Member States and the Georgian authorities. In this context, migration management in Georgia remains an important cooperation priority of the EU aiming to support effective migration management and safe borders and to support Georgia in their efforts to ensure that visa free travel to the EU continues for Georgian citizens.

2020 will be an important year for Georgia (also in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections) **to continue to demonstrate its reform commitment** and continuous alignment to the EU acquis as well as to European standards in the area of human rights, for further advancing on its European path, along with the COVID-19 crisis recovery management. It is important for Georgia to continue fostering an open dialogue with all political actors and civil society in order to further strengthen democratic institutions, consolidate pluralistic democracy, advance reforms and ensure the full and sustainable implementation of newly adopted legislation. The full implementation of the 8 March 2020 agreement in both letter and spirit including the successful adoption of the constitutional amendments, as well as the election reform legislation is crucial in the interest of free and fair elections in October 2020. Policy Framework (Global, EU)

In response to the health and economic situation in the wake of the **COVID-19 pandemic**, **the EU committed in April 2020, under its Team Europe initiative, to stand by its neighbours** and partners not only to stop the spread of the virus but also to contain the economic consequences and assist the respective economies with a strong and sustainable

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/black-sea-ministers-endorse-common-maritime-agenda_en

economic recovery. The European Commission has mobilised €183.05 million for Georgia to address the immediate health crisis and mitigate the socio-economic consequence.

For years now, the EU has been highlighting environmental protection and fight against climate change as key elements of its relation with partner countries. The AA states that EU-Georgia cooperation in the environment sector shall aim at “*preserving, protecting, improving and rehabilitating the quality of the environment, protecting human health, sustainable utilisation of natural resources and promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or global environmental problems*” as well as with regard to Climate Action, EU-Georgia cooperation shall aim at: “*mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as promoting measures at international level including in the areas of mitigation of climate change; adaptation to climate change; mainstreaming of climate considerations into sector policies...*”. Within the AA, the parties also agreed to develop their cooperation in the field of public health, with a view to raising the level of public health as an essential area for promotion of sustainable development and economic growth.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), environmental factors such as air and water pollution, noise, and chemicals trigger one-quarter of chronic and non-communicable diseases. On the other hand, the positive health impact of a well-managed natural environment has been proven. In recent years, to tackle this issue, the EU has modernised its chemicals legislation and put in place a broad range of environmental legislation, which has resulted in overall reduced air, water and soil pollution.

The EU is a global leader in the fields of environmental protection and fight against climate change. The EU has some of the world’s highest environmental standards, developed over decades. Environmental policy helps the EU’s economy become more environmentally friendly, protects Europe’s natural resources, and safeguards the health and wellbeing of people living in the EU. EU environmental policies and legislation protect natural habitats, keep air and water clean, ensure proper waste disposal, improve knowledge about toxic chemicals and help businesses move toward a sustainable economy.

In December 2019, the European Commission presented a European Green Deal which aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The Green Deal has a global dimension, the EU is committed to lead by example, to using diplomacy, trade and development cooperation to advance climate action, as well as to setting standards for sustainable growth across global value chains. It is the EU’s stated goal to keep pursuing and supporting the transition towards a green economy even in its response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

On climate change, the EU formulates and implements climate policies and strategies, taking a leading role in international negotiations on climate. The EU helped build a broad coalition of countries in favour of high ambition that shaped the successful outcome of the Paris conference in 2015. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change is the first ever universal, legally binding climate deal that set out a plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all

people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Several of these SDGs are directly connected to the sectors of environmental protection and fight against climate change.

Visa-free travel to the EU for Georgian citizens holding a biometric passport entered into force on 28 March 2017, aimed at a substantial enhancement of mobility and people-to-people contacts between the two sides. The last two reports under the Visa Suspension Mechanism, issued by the European Commission in December 2017⁵ and 2018⁶ noted that Georgia fulfilled the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP) benchmarks. However, challenges remain as regards the increased number of asylum seekers for medical reasons and involvement of Georgian nationals in organised crime groups active in the EU Member States. The recommendations of the reports emphasise the urgent need to take action to reduce the number of unfounded asylum requests, in particular through targeted information campaigns, improved border control, and to prevent and fight against organised crime and improved operational cooperation with EU Member States. In this vein, the cooperation with Europol and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency has been stepped up considerably in recent years, as has the fight against crime.

Further steps were taken in 2019, when, at the initiative of the European Commission, a list of operational actions was drawn up to ensure coordinated efforts of Georgian authorities and the EU with its Member States to tackle factors putting visa free travel to the EU for Georgian citizens at risk.

The EU is providing considerable financial assistance in all fields covered by the visa liberalisation benchmarks – e.g. support to migration management and integrated border management, including equipment provision; support to public administration reform which also covers anticorruption policies; support to justice and security sectors which includes fight against organised crime and drugs.

Monitoring of developments as well as further policy dialogue in these fields are carried out through different projects as well as through policy dialogue. This includes justice related indicators defined in the ongoing macro-financial assistance programme. Monitoring and dialogue also take place within the framework of the Association Agreement and the DCFTA and the Visa Suspension Mechanism. Exchanges are also carried out in the framework of the Mobility Partnership as well as at regular EU-Georgia Sub-committees on Justice, Freedom and Security, Public Administration and Human Rights.

⁵ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: First report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism, COM(2017) 815 final

⁶ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Second report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism, COM(2018) 856 final

1.2 Public Policy Analysis of the Partner Country

EU-Georgia Association Agreement

On 27 June 2014, the **EU-Georgia Association Agreement including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area** component was signed. It entered into force on 1 July 2016. The Association Agreement represents the main legal basis for EU-Georgia relations, aiming at Georgia's political association and economic integration with the EU, by gradual approximation of the national legislation with the EU acquis and alignment of the national standards with the EU best practices.

According to **Georgia's EU Integration Roadmap “Roadmap2EU”**⁷, from 2020, a unified annual European Integration Action Plan of Georgia will be prepared instead of the existing annual National Action Plans for the Implementation of the Association Agreement and the Association Agenda. The European Integration Action Plan of Georgia will include measures planned for the implementation of the Association Agreement and the Association Agenda, as well as additional measures incorporated in the Roadmap and activities planned for the achievement of the objectives set in the Eastern Partnership – 20 Deliverables for 2020 document (or any successor document).

The EU-Georgia AA contains very broad chapters on Environment and Climate Action. The AA covers almost all aspects of environmental protection such as implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), environmental governance, air quality protection, marine environment, water quality and water resources management, waste management, nature protection, industrial pollution and industrial hazards, chemicals management, climate action and forestry.

Anti-crisis plan of the Georgian Government to address economic and social challenges triggered by the COVID-19 outbreak

On 24 April, Prime Minister Gakharia presented the Government's anti-crisis plan to address economic and social challenges triggered by the pandemic. The plan includes a social assistance package for vulnerable groups and fiscal stimulus measures for business and agriculture. According to the Prime Minister, the Georgian economy is expected to shrink by 4% this year. The state budget will lose around GEL 1.8 billion in revenues and budget expenses will decrease by GEL 300 million. A total of GEL 3.9 billion will be allocated for the anti-crisis plan which is expected to (1) aid 350, 000 low income citizens, (2) support the private sector, and (3) strengthen the healthcare system⁸:

- (1) The anti-crisis plan includes measures to support economically vulnerable households through a scale-up of targeted social assistance and additional support for families with children and people with disabilities. Furthermore, pensions and unemployment benefits, including for self-employed people and informal workers, are being increased. The Government also plans subsidies for utilities and measures against

⁷ Released in February 2019 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

⁸ For more details on measures of the anti-crisis plan see 1.5 Problem Analysis.

price spikes on specific food groups to avoid economic hardship for vulnerable groups. Companies retaining employees will receive financial support to relieve pressure on them, special measures for tourism businesses are foreseen.

- (2) The Government includes both structural and financial measures to mitigate the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak on the economy. Structural measures focus on continuous pursuit of the Government's reform agenda and include a wide range of actions on energy sector reform and energy efficiency, business legislation and capital market reform, education and infrastructure. In order to make financial means available to the private sector, the Government is planning the introduction of new actions as well as an expansion of existing mechanisms, such as the Produced in Georgia programme. Further measures include VAT exemptions, grants for start-ups, substantial support to farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs to ensure food security.
- (3) In terms of support to the healthcare system, the anti-crisis plan identifies several strategies to ensure access to adequate healthcare. These range from identification of infections and risk groups to strengthening of the health system through procurement of needed equipment and supplies as well as upgrade of medical facilities throughout the country.

Environment and Health

The third **National Environmental Action Programme 2017-2021** (NEAP-3)⁹ which was approved by the Government of Georgia in 2018 is highly influenced by the commitments included within the EU-Georgia Association Agreement but also by the UN SDGs and the obligations stemming from the international treaties Georgia is a party to. The NEAP-3, which was developed with the financial support of the EU, identifies the environmental priorities of Georgia and establishes the strategic long-term goals, targets and activities required to improve the environment over the next five years. The ultimate objective of the environmental policy is to promote a sustainable and balanced development where the quality of the environment is considered at a par with all socio-economic challenges.

The overall strategic objectives of the NEAP-3 aim at improving the environmental situation in Georgia and ensuring the protection of natural resources in order to minimise risks for human health. The plan foresees further approximation with the EU's environmental policies and requirement, capacity building for the Georgian administration and integration of environmental aspects into sectoral policies.

Furthermore, the “**National Environment and Health Action Plan for 2018-2022** (NEHAP-2)”¹⁰ was approved by the Government on 29 December 2018. The main principle of NEHAP is to realise the fundamental right of people to live in a safe environment.

⁹ <https://mepa.gov.ge/En/PublicInformation/66>

¹⁰ <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4441562?publication=0>

Strategic objectives of the Action Plan include actions on water quality, clean environment, air quality, chemical substances and the integration of health issues in climate policy.

International treaties, to which Georgia is a party, play a significant role in the national policy on environment. Georgia is a party to global and regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including 18 conventions, a number of their protocols, amendments and agreements. One of the treaties influencing overall environmental governance at the national level and guiding Georgia towards better environmental democracy is the Convention on Access to Information and the Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention). Safeguarding the environmental rights of the population, the Aarhus Convention provides a strong basis for further improvements in the field of environmental governance.

The **Health System Development Strategy 2020-2030**, which is under development, foresees primary health care reform, improving access to telehealth and to quality services as top priorities. As an immediate response to the COVID-19 outbreak the Government committed GEL 350 million from the State budget for strengthening the healthcare system and fight against the pandemic. In particular those funds are allocated for purchasing Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), medical supplies, diagnostics and treatment of COVID-19 patients, as well as ensuring quarantine measures.

Protection of the environment, fight against climate change and health protection is becoming increasingly important in Georgia. Considering the amount of reforms still needed to lead to concrete positive impact on the environment and people, further efforts need to be made in the implementation of the relevant policies and their monitoring, in the mainstreaming of these priorities in all other national policies as well as in the establishment of relevant fiscal and legal tools to punish infringements.

Migration

Georgia has started building a comprehensive migration management system since 2010, when an inter-institutional State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) was established with a Secretariat within the Public Service Development Agency under the Ministry of Justice. The operation of the secretariat has been partially supported by the EU and it is expected that Georgian authorities will be able to fully take over its operations from 2024. The SCMI is the main coordinating body of migration policy. *Inter alia*, it covers the issues of migrant integration, migration risk analyses, migration strategy elaboration and implementation, reduction of statelessness and management of the unified migration data analytical system. The current Migration Strategy covers the period from 2016 until 2020. With its implementation action plans it is the key strategic document in this field.

1.3 Stakeholder analysis

The main stakeholders for this programme are the Georgian Government, as the actions planned aim directly at supporting their efforts to recover from the crisis and maintain solid ground for achieving closer approximation to the European Union acquis.

The capacities and needs of the public institutions supported under this programme have been jointly assessed by Government representatives and the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia. A key criterion for selection of intervention areas as well as potential direct

beneficiaries is the presence of a sufficient capacity to receive assistance and contribute to the successful implementation of the programme.

Potential beneficiaries of overall support for the implementation of the programme could include, but are not limited to:

The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MoESD) is the coordinating body for economic development. **Enterprise Georgia** is the governmental SME agency responsible for business support, export promotion and investment. Another key implementing body for business support is **Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA)**. Both are agencies under MoESD.

The **Ministry of Finance** is ensuring financial control over budgetary funds and spending; treasury development, revenue mobilisation, provision of state budget funds management and controlling movement of funds within Georgia.

The **Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI)** has the overall management authority for policies related to regional development as well as support related to the mountainous regions of Georgia. Supporting **digital initiatives** that are particularly linked to tourism and economic activity generation on local level are one of the priority areas for the MRDI.

The **Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)** is the Ministry in charge of development of environmental policy and legislation in the country. The Ministry also plays a major role in environmental administration, issuing and enforcement of permits, implementations of state control, data analysis and management in the field of environmental protection and use of natural resources (except for minerals, oil and gas) through its subordinated structural units as well as state subordinated entities and the Legal Entities of Public Law (LEPLs). The MEPA also coordinates cooperation within the framework of regional and international Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Numerous institutions are operating within the scope of the Ministry, among these: the National Forest Agency, the Agency of Protected Areas, the Agency of Wildlife, the Environmental Information and Education Centre.

The **National Environmental Agency (NEA)** is also a Legal Entity of Public Law under the MEPA. The NEA is mandated to monitor ongoing hydrological, meteorological and geological events; provide short and medium-range forecasts for potential extreme weather conditions; evaluate risks of natural and anthropogenic hazards and plan and implement measures for reducing these hazards; develop early warning systems; prepare state geological maps; and elaborate and publish annual information bulletins on relevant issues. The NEA is responsible for the creation and operation of monitoring systems for measuring the qualitative state of the environment including ambient air, surface and groundwater, sea and soil on the territory of Georgia. The Hydro-meteorological Department, Department of Geology, Department of Environmental Pollution Monitoring and Legal Department are the key structural units existing under the NEA dealing with the above mentioned competencies.

The **Division of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of the Adjara Autonomous Republic (A/R)** manages forests on the territory of the Adjara A/R through its

Forestry Agency except for those having the status of protected areas. In addition, the division participates in all relevant actions aimed at protecting the environment and human health.

Local self-governments are responsible for the management of natural resources of local importance, including water and forest resources and land owned by the respective municipality. Municipal waste collection, street cleaning, parks and other public spaces on the territory of a municipality and greening activities are also the responsibility of municipalities. Local self-governments issue construction permits for certain types of activities.

The **Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoIDPOTLHSA)** is responsible among others for health policy and social security policy. The **National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC&PH)** under this Ministry is the central agency for public health. The mission of the agency is to protect and improve the health of the Georgian population through evidence based prevention, preparedness and timely response to public health threats.

MoIDPOTLHSA LEPL Social Service Agency is in charge of administration of social benefits, State funded healthcare and social programmes for different categories of beneficiaries.

The **Ministry of Justice (MoJ)** is responsible for policy development in e-Government, especially in areas such as the availability of electronic services, e-identification and e-signature. The **Data Exchange Agency (DEA)**, a legal entity under the MoJ is the key player in the sector. The agency's core functions can be split into 3 areas: E-governance; data exchange infrastructure; and information security. Setting ICT standards for public sector entities and elaborating information security policies also fall under the agency's responsibility.

The **Office of the Public Defender (Ombudsman)** oversees the observance of human rights and freedoms in Georgia, which includes the right to a healthy and safe environment. It advises the government on human rights issues. It also analyses the state's laws, policies and practices, in compliance with the international standards, and provides relevant recommendations.

The integration of environmental issues into sectoral policies and actions demands commitment to contribution of resources from other Ministries and the government as a whole. Most crucial in this respect are the Ministries that are either primarily involved in planning the development of the socio-economic sectors that cause major pressure to the environment or play a significant role in preventing/responding to environmental challenges. The **Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Finance with its Customs Department, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the National Statistics Office** are key state institutions in this respect. In order to address complex environmental issues such as the organisation of waste management, reducing air pollution in larger settlements and industrial areas, solving water quality and quantity issues, protecting forest resources and biodiversity and managing coastal zones and the Black Sea, reliable data, close cooperation among the ministries and integration of environmental aspects into other planning documents is needed.

Numerous **Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)** are engaged in the sectors of environment, climate change and health and are relevant partners of the Government and of the International Community in the implementation of reforms.

The following public institutions are relevant stakeholders involved in migration management:

- The Ministry of Justice (including Public Service Development Agency (PSDA)) chairing the State Commission for Migration Initiatives, which has an overall coordinating remit for all migration-related activities in Georgia, hosting the SCMI Secretariat and dealing with e.g. trafficking in human beings, document security, citizenship and residence permits, civil acts;
- Member institutions of the SCMI:
- Ministry of Justice (chair);
- Ministry of Internal Affairs (co-chair), including:
 - o Border Police, which is responsible for securing the Green Borders of Georgia;
 - o Coast Guard, which is responsible for securing the Blue Borders of Georgia, responsible for search and rescue operations; and
 - o Patrol Police, which is responsible for international protection, fight against illegal migration, immigration control at international airports and recognised border crossing points.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- State Security Service;
- Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, including State Employment Service Agency, which among other tasks is responsible for the implementation of labour migration policies;
- Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development;
- Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport;
- Ministry of Finance;
- National Statistics Office.

1.4 Problem Analysis/Priority Areas for Support

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, it is essential that the most critical sectors for ensuring the gradual recovery of the country continue with the reform process intensively and in line with the priorities of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. The following components have been identified as crucial to receive support in the post crisis period:

Component 1: Support to socio-economic crisis recovery, green actions and healthcare system resilience in line with the Association Agreement/DCFTA

Socio-economic recovery and further development of green and circular economy

Impact of COVID-19 crisis on economy and specifically on SMEs, and social protection measures

The Georgian economy will be affected by the crisis on both the supply (e.g. interrupted supply chains, supply of labour) and demand sides (e.g. reduced demand because of lower consumption). SMEs have less resilience and flexibility in dealing with the costs of the crisis

than bigger enterprises. Costs for prevention as well as adaptation costs are relatively higher for SMEs given their smaller size. Furthermore, SMEs may find it harder to access information not only on containment measures to halt the spread of the virus and adapt working conditions, but also on possible business strategies to lighten and finally overcome the crisis. Given limited capacities, SMEs might also have difficulties to access information and apply for governmental/international support initiatives available.

The economic impact of the crisis calls for the adoption of a comprehensive public policy that includes targeted measures on supporting micro, small and medium firms. With the Anti-crisis Economic Plan, the Government has already presented a number of measures tackling the mentioned challenges. Initiatives include subsidies for employers who retain jobs, private sector assistance through VAT reimbursement, improved access to finances through a credit guarantee scheme and co-financing options under the state programme Produced in Georgia.

As a response to COVID-19, on April 24 the Georgian Government presented a plan aimed at providing social-economic support and restarting the economic activity in the country. With this plan GEL 1.35 bn will be spent to help citizens and to ensure their social protection. In order to protect the large part of the population that is vulnerable to economic hardship due to either family circumstances or employment conditions (self-employed, informal workers, lost jobs), the Government plans a range of measures. These include an expansion of the targeted social assistance scheme, an increase of child support and disability benefits as well as raised pensions. The Government also provides waivers for citizens' utility bills for three months (since March).

According to the Government Anti-Crisis Plan presented on 24 April 2020 Social Assistance System (so called 'scoring' and benefits) shall be revised once the epidemic ended. The announced revision shall be transformed into fundamental reform process targeting at further development of social security system in the country.

Initial stage of development of green and circular economy

Georgia is at the initial stage of its transition towards a green economy. It is recognised that the development of the green economy and green growth will result in higher productivity and thus competitiveness on global markets, enhanced environmental quality of life, more resilient ecosystems and economies and new business opportunities.

Modern economic models like the circular economy, individual business schemes like the environmental management system or ecosystem services are being promoted by the Government. Certain potential lies in the development of eco-labelling, which will assist producers to provide credibility to their products or services and provide objective information to the eco-conscious users.

Reuse and recycling of resources is one of the cornerstones of the circular economy. Moving away from waste dumping to recycling and reuse will reduce risks to the environment and human health. Prevention, substitution, reusing and recycling do create new jobs and business opportunities. Georgia is committed to the development of the green economy, and actions supporting circular economy are addressed in the NEAP-3. The MEPA is in charge of leading the process.

The further improvement of waste management in the country will contribute to transforming the Georgian economy to make it more sustainable and circular. It is a key component to reinforce the economic competitiveness of the country

When it comes to waste management, approximately 900,000 tons of municipal waste are generated annually in Georgia. Georgia has 60 registered (official) municipal waste landfills and uncontrolled dumpsites in or nearby almost all villages. None of the current landfills can be considered conform with EU standards. Currently, waste collection services are not yet offered in most rural areas and waste disposal and recycling systems are still limited in Georgia. Waste management today is not a self-sustained system and is subsidized by the state or local budget.

The lack of waste separation activities and the absence of incentives, limits the re-use, recycling and waste recovery opportunities in Georgia, which are among the main pillars in waste management. The absence of a tariff policy and effective cost recovery mechanism for received waste management services (for both citizens and companies), as well as low tariffs and insufficient fee collection, are another set of challenges.

A Strategy on Biodegradable Waste is to be developed by the end of 2020, whereas the requirements related to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) are gradually being introduced in Georgia stream by stream (batteries, packaging, electronic waste etc.).

Healthcare system resilience

Public health situation

Since the second half of the 1990s, life expectancy at birth has significantly improved and reached 74 years in 2018. There is significant progress in terms of reducing maternal and child mortality: the mortality rate of children under the age of five was 24.9 per one thousand live births in 2000 and 19.8 in 2018 while the maternal mortality rate was 49.2 per one thousand live births in 2000 and 27.4 in 2018.

Despite a significant increase in health expenditures in recent years, existing data shows that Georgia still scores badly in terms health care expenditure among the countries of the wider European region: 36% state healthcare expenditure in total healthcare expenditures, 3% of the GDP in 2018).

Significant steps still have to be taken to increase the efficiency of the healthcare system as well as the accessibility of a full range of health services and improve the quality of medical services. Particular focus has to be put in the area of improving the primary healthcare system, access to telehealth and improved quality of services which are weak today.

The early experience in countries with COVID-19 outbreak shows that it requires extraordinary mobilisation of health systems. As of today, Georgia has been a successful case in COVID-19 response across the WHO European Region. However, with far fewer resources than high-income countries, Georgia requires support in order to maintain the current success and avoid devastating consequences COVID-19 or potential future major epidemics may have on the national health system.

Green actions with an impact on health

Improving management of chemicals

The use of natural and artificial chemical substances in industry, agriculture and households is an integral part of modern life. However, chemicals may pose serious risks to human health and the environment if not handled adequately. Therefore, sound management of chemicals is significant in order to reduce environmental pollution at the source and decrease risks to humans and ecosystems.

The management of chemicals in Georgia is being implemented in accordance with the requirements of the national legislation and commitments undertaken by the country through a number of international treaties. The EU-Georgia AA commits Georgia to improving management of chemicals. Specifically, according to the AA, Georgia has to align the national legislation with the relevant EU regulations: Import and Export of Chemicals, and on Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Chemical Substances and Mixtures (CLP Regulation). It should also be mentioned that along with the CLP Regulation, the EU's REACH regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals) is one of the cornerstones of the EU's policy on chemicals and is to be paid due attention in Georgia.

There is an important gap in legislation on management of chemicals, and for the time being, there is no corresponding framework law in Georgia. The Law on Hazardous Chemical Substances (1998) was abolished in 2010; no new law has been developed yet. Development of legislation on management of chemicals (except for the legislation related to pesticides and agrochemicals management) poses a major challenge in Georgia and is one of the prerequisites for sound management of chemicals.

The existing system for management of chemicals in Georgia is rather weak. An incomplete legal basis (except for the legislation related to pesticides and agrochemicals) and lack of data are among the major challenges hindering the introduction of EU-standard management of chemicals in Georgia. For the implementation of the EU-Georgia AA and the National CBRN Threat Reduction Action Plan, the relevant legislation in the field of chemicals management has to be further developed and approved. Since the EU has implemented the UN Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), GHS-conform amendments have to be made to national legislation.

Air quality

Ambient air pollution is one of Georgia's most acute environmental challenges, one with a significant impact on human health. Currently, the concentration of major air pollutants - particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) – is more than double the recommended average annual concentration in Georgian urban and rural areas, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The 2017 WHO report "Monitoring Health for the Sustainable Development goals" underlines that Georgia is in third place in Europe in terms of the mortality attributed to indoor and outdoor air pollution (per 100 000 people).

Several alarming studies also highlight the impact of air pollution on the Georgian economy. The 2018 Georgian State Audit report found that 120 million GEL were spent from the state budget in 2016 for the treatment of diseases related to air pollution.

According to the National Report on the State of the Environment of Georgia, at least 75% of air pollution by NO_x, sulphur oxides, O₃ are caused by the transport sector. The increased emissions from the transportation sector, namely from vehicles, are caused by the age of vehicles (91% of cars are above 10 years old and only 3% below 6 years), the lack of public transport and problems with fuel quality. Although a new technical safety regulation requires all vehicles to pass safety testing by 1 January 2020, this will not totally solve the situation. Fuel quality remains another issue of concern despite fuel standards having been increased these recent years. The industrial sector is the second key area where air pollution originates from. Indicative monitoring carried out by the National Environmental Agency showed that Rustavi, Kaspi, Zestaphoni, Chiatura and Tkibuli are exposed to heavy air pollution from the industrial sector.

The EU-Georgia AA is a major tool for improving air quality and decreasing the risks of air-borne diseases, as it requires Georgia to approximate legislation with six major EU directives on air pollution by the end of 2023. Currently, Georgia's existing air quality management system does not comply yet with EC directives 2008/50 and 2004/107 in terms of management, network design and operational standards, sampling and analysis. Despite the number of newly-installed automatic stations all over the country, there is still room for improvement for the National Environmental Agency, the body responsible for monitoring, to provide a full-scale and easily-understandable picture of air pollution in Georgia.

Important support to air quality is required, several activities are needed on the short-term in order to prepare the ground for a wider package of support in the year(s) to come.

Climate change

In 2018, CO₂ emissions per capita for Georgia was 2.79 metric tons.¹¹ A significant reduction in emissions had been caused by the collapse of the centrally planned economy in the early 1990s. But for numerous years now emissions have been growing, coupled with the economic growth of the country. Their level was at 2.416 metric tons per capita in 2014.¹²

The global phenomenon of climate change is already having a strong impact on Georgia's environment. The negative consequences of climate change in Georgia include a rise in temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, reduction in water availability, rise of the Black Sea Water level, an increase in the frequency and intensity of floods, flash floods, landslides and mudflows, the decrease of rainfall and the extension of evaporation, among others. Climate Change also affects various economic sectors, particularly the agricultural sector which plays a key role in the country's economy. Tourism is another dominant economic sector of Georgia suffering from climate change.

The Paris Agreement on climate change entered into force for Georgia in 2017. In 2015, prior to the adoption of the Paris Agreement, Georgia submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the UNFCCC. According to the INDC, Georgia plans to

¹¹ <https://knoema.com/atlas/Georgia/CO2-emissions-per-capita>

¹² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.CO2E.PC?locations=AZ-AM-GE>

unconditionally reduce its GHG emissions by 15% below the Business as Usual (BAU) scenario by 2030. This implies a 34% reduction in emission intensity per unit of GDP from 2013 to 2030. In order to fulfil its obligations under the Paris Agreement, the MEPA is currently working on the development of a 'Climate Action Plan' (CAP) which should be ready by 2021 and which should be implemented in the following years. As one of the first steps, Georgia is about to update its NDC, most probably using the 1990 base year instead of the business as usual scenario.

Public awareness in environmental protection, health and climate change

If the level of environmental and climate consciousness is relatively low in Georgia compared to EU standards, it has been growing these last years. The population has become more and more sensitive about the negative impacts of pollution and bad environmental conditions on health. This issue has therefore become an increasing priority for the Government.

Behavioural change within the population is actively needed to better protect the environment and contribute to fighting climate change. For these reasons, facilitating environmental education, ensuring access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making are among the priorities of the MEPA and its subsidiary institution the Environmental Information and Education Centre. The Centre is conducting trainings, courses and seminars for development of qualification under the competence of Ministry, implementing certification required by Georgian legislation. Also, the Centre is preparing and conducting numerous informational campaigns and awareness raising activities.

To support raising the level of environmental literacy in the country, a national strategy "Education for Sustainable Development" 2020-2024" is being developed which features large-scale and small-scale activities to be implemented by the Environmental Information and Education Centre in order to cover all levels of education. The concept of Education for Sustainable Development implies empowering community and organisations to support sustainable development of the country through quality education. Environmental protection and climate change should also be further introduced in educational programs.

NGOs and Civil Society organisations are also playing a key role in the promotion of new behaviours aimed at better protecting the environment and contributing to the global fight against climate change.

Support to both public institutions and civil society is still required in order to extend the coverage of current actions and initiatives and increase awareness of the public regarding environmental protection and its impact on health.

Component 2: Enhanced Migration Management

The Georgian population has decreased by 1.7 million in the last three decades mainly due to emigration¹³. Lack of employment opportunities, low remuneration, and unstable jobs in Georgia are considered major push factors for Georgians leaving their home country. The top five destination countries for Georgian migrants include Russia, Italy, Greece, US and Israel, followed by Turkey, Spain, Germany, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and France¹⁴. 55% of Georgian migrants are women with the gender ratio varying by country of destination.

The outward migration flows have further increased following visa liberalisation with the EU, which has been granting Georgian citizens visa free entry into the Schengen Zone as of March 2017. The number of asylum claims lodged by Georgians in the EU exceeded 19,000 in 2018 and 21,000 in 2019, with France, Germany, Spain, Cyprus and Greece, as the top five receiving EU countries in 2019. Intense emigration affects all regions of Georgia, especially Tbilisi, Imereti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti.

The EU has been supporting a comprehensive approach to migration (including migration management) and integrated border management in Georgia since 2011 and currently is contributing to its strengthening by providing equipment and administrative capacity building in the framework of bilateral assistance. The EU and Georgia have also signed a Mobility Partnership in 2009 and financial assistance was provided in the past under the Mobility Partnership Facility, while new opportunities for Georgia to apply are being made available.

The EU is supporting an effective migration management and migration governance system in Georgia through providing direct grant support to the SCMI secretariat until the end of 2023. Further support, which is currently provided by the IOM and ICMPD (contracted by the EU), in terms of expertise and capacity building to the state institutions and other players will be needed to support the implementation of the upcoming Migration Strategy beyond 2020 and address the challenges to fulfil the visa liberalisation benchmarks

In addition to the cooperation under the Mobility Partnership and with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency the EU has been supporting Georgia and neighbouring countries in the area of border management by providing necessary infrastructure, by supplying equipment of newest technologies with substantial funds having been allocated in 2019. However, there are still important weaknesses and gaps, in particular as regards border controls, due to insufficient means for detecting and responding to cases of illegal border crossing and breach of border crossing rules.

Besides border controls the overall EU support to migration management in Georgia has been increasing also in the context of visa free travel for Georgian citizens to the EU. The visa

¹³ Population decline between two census surveys conducted in 1989 and 2014 by the National Statistics Office of Georgia attributed to migration; The decrease in population (up to 800,000 persons) between the 2002 and 2014 census attributed to emigration;

Over 900,000 Georgian nationals are living in different (high and less developed) countries of the world according to the international migrants stocks estimates for 2017 by the Population Division, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs(UNDESA), Trends in international migrants stock
<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.shtml>

¹⁴ National Bank of Georgia, Statistics on Money transfers by countries; <https://www.nbg.gov.ge/index.php?m=304>

suspension mechanism reports identified the constant increase of asylum applications as a phenomenon to be addressed by immediate action and Georgia continued to pro-actively address this challenge. In view of this, a set of operational measures to decrease the irregular migration challenges and crime-related challenges has been drawn up. The EU, including the JHA agencies, are supporting Georgia in this task.

Furthermore, in April 2020 during the COVID-19 crisis, IOM carried out a survey of third country nationals in Georgia, which according to initial findings confirms that third country nationals find themselves in vulnerable situation due to loss of income, problems with housing, lacking access to information and services as well as experiencing legal issues (e.g. visa related).

Another area which requires support and which emerged more strongly during the COVID-19 crisis, is assistance to returning migrants of Georgian nationality, which need timely information and means to financial self-sustainability in the longer run. By now the Government of Georgia has facilitated the return of nearly 8,000 Georgian citizens¹⁵ and this number is expected to grow, according to IOM. A large proportion of Georgia's population has traditionally relied on income facilitated by mobility. Remittances sent by family members working abroad and income from circular or seasonal migration frequently form a livelihood strategy of Georgian households. This income has now been severely diminished or interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving returnees and their households without a means for livelihood, at risk of acute poverty, in the context of a global and local market downfall. It is critical to rapidly mitigate the immediate socio-economic impacts on local mobility-dependent population.

In short the main migration challenges facing Georgia are:

- High outward migration motivated by the lack of economic opportunities at home;
- Development of the country's migration management system;
- Reintegration of returnees;
- Challenges to capture the scale and scope of remittance flows sent by labour migrants;
- Fostering links between migration and development;
- Continued engagement on the issue of trafficking in persons;
- Internal displacement issues and integration of immigrants; and
- Effective management of international borders and prevention of irregular migration.

The key challenges that the EU will target under this programme are:

- Effective implementation of the national Migration Strategy 2021-2030 and the further building of institutional capacities to address evolving migration challenges as well as specific targeted assistance to migration management such as work with the diaspora, economic migration, labour and circular migration, etc.

¹⁵ Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the data provided covers the period from mid-March until 27/04/2020 and it is daily updated and available under this link <https://mfa.gov.ge/MainNav/CoVID-19-sakitkhebi/CoVID-19-mfa-stats.aspx>,

- Effective implementation of the visa liberalisation benchmarks by Georgian authorities and tackling irregular migration challenges of Georgian nationals to the EU in line with the visa suspension mechanism recommendations and VSMR operational actions.
- Ensuring secure and effective control of international borders of Georgia, including capacities and competence of the staff of responsible agencies and improved cooperation with relevant EU agencies.
- Further awareness raising among the citizens related to migration management, rights and obligations under visa free travel.

Policy orientations may be further refined and fine-tuned in the framework of the visa free arrangements between Georgia and the EU and relevant monitoring mechanisms described in section 1.2.

The following aspects as regards gender and human rights, will be taken into account when defining specific activities under this programme:

- There is a lack of sex-disaggregated data available on migration, therefore, Georgian institutions would be supported in its collection, analyses and use for decision making purposes. Sex-disaggregated data will be used for defining detailed activities under this programme, e.g. by better targeting awareness raising and irregular migration prevention activities.
- Similar numbers of women and men migrate from Georgia, however, they are employed in different sectors and target different countries (e.g. most Georgian emigrants to Greece are women working in the households and social care, while most Georgian emigrants to Turkey are men working in the construction sector). This will be taken into account when defining activities with the diaspora and when planning illegal migration prevention as well as legal regular migration promotion.
- Returnees require different kind of support also depending on their welfare, gender and specific situation. Upon availability of such data the available support and reintegration mechanisms will be assessed and better adjusted or created to answer the needs of these returnees (from legal advice on basic rights, provision of shelter, to entrepreneurship skills).
- As more women and children are victims of sex trafficking (including transit) and more men are victims of forced labour, this will be taken into account when defining measures to fight against trafficking in human beings.

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
External political tensions, COVID-19 impact on social and economic conditions in Georgia or a further downturn in the global economy	M	Continued policy dialogue with the Georgian authorities; support to the implementation of EU-Georgia Association Agreement; support to

divert the Government's attention and resources away from the reform agenda		Georgia's efforts to mitigate impact of COVID-19 outbreak within Team Europe initiative.
Weakening of Government's commitment to reforms related to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement	L	Continued political and policy dialogue with the authorities; information campaigns targeting the institutions and the general public.
Conflicting priorities between environmental, health and climate agenda and economic development/growth agenda	M	Strong engagement of the different Ministries including MoESD in the Action, focus on green economic development and strong communication on transversal benefits of the Action.
Overlap of ongoing activities in the environmental sector and lack of coordination on the side of responsible state institutions	M	Flexible approach to implementation. Active parallel coordination of activities among donors and international partners.
High turnover of staff in public institutions and associated loss of institutional memory	M	Continuous policy dialogue with the government; efforts aimed at sustainable institution building rather than exclusive training measures for individuals.
Limited capacity of Government to effectively perform functions of policy coordination, policy analysis and impact assessments, inter-ministerial coordination and public consultations, strategic budgeting	M	Policy dialogue and assistance to ensure effective implementation of the strategic framework on PAR, including strengthening of policy coordination function, improving inclusive and evidence-based policy and legislative development and improving monitoring and reporting on implementation of laws and policies; follow-up to SIGMA baseline assessment in the area of policy development and coordination against the Principles of Public Administration.
Visa free travel for Georgian citizens to the EU is suspended	M	Joint efforts of the EU, its Member States and Georgia are taken and coordinated to mitigate the risks by implementing operational actions, VLAP benchmarks and other indirect measures having impact on this.
Assumptions		
The Government of Georgia remains committed to the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law and human rights. Georgia continues to support and pursue actions for political,		

economic and trade integration with the EU. Also, the Government pursues public administration reform in line with international and EU good practice.

The EU and the Government maintain their high level of cooperation and continue to communicate and coordinate reform efforts.

The beneficiary institutions are willing and able to implement and benefit from the proposed actions. The institutions' capacity in maintaining staff, planning and coordination is sufficient for sustainable implementation of the actions.

Partner organisations and beneficiary institutions will have the necessary capacities and compliant procedures to procure the equipment foreseen in the Action.

3 LESSONS LEARNT AND COMPLEMENTARITY

3.1 Lessons learnt

In terms of technical support to the **implementation of the Association Agreement and the Association Agenda**, this programme was designed based on the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Comprehensive Institution Building (CIB) programme as well as its predecessors, the Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF) I, TCF II and TCF III. Furthermore, recommendations of the evaluation of the European Union's cooperation with Georgia (2007-2013) as well as the evaluation of the Twinning projects in Georgia (2007-2014) were considered.

One of the main lessons learnt from previous EU support programmes, as highlighted in both evaluations, is the need to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the programme. This is reinforced by the European Neighbourhood Policy Review 2015, which states that *"flexibility must be sought to enable the EU and its partners to respond to changing needs and circumstances"*. Under this programme, the specific amounts for individual actions will be adjusted in view of the latest developments and updated needs assessments. A needs-based approach making use of various tools, such as technical assistance, Twinning and direct grants, has proven to be successful in the past and will be applied in the design of this programme. The same approach has been applied in TCF III.

Another lesson learnt from the implementation of CIB and the first two phases of TCF was the need for an inclusive approach. Rather than focusing support on a limited number of institutions, which are holders of Institutional Reform Plans, it is essential to cooperate with other public institutions in the same or related policy areas. This inclusive approach was already applied under TCF II and TCF III and has proven effective in extending the outreach to actors on the regional and local level. Assistance under the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument of the European Commission (TAIEX) has proven effective; however, this cooperation needs to be boosted by longer-term strategic cooperation under, for example, Twinning projects.

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor co-ordination

The programme is complementary to existing and foreseen EU assistance under the four priority sectors of the SSF 2017-2020 and EU action in support of COVID-19 crisis

management globally, in the region and on a bilateral level. EU support within these priority sectors shall also help Georgia to fulfil its commitments in specific sectors under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

The programme will build up on the results and achievements of EU-funded and other donor-funded projects, more specifically the following programmes/projects:

- The Economic and Business Development in Georgia programme (AAP 2017): This programme contributes to foster smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and resilience in Georgia. The Action is structured in three interrelated components: (1) Fairer and faster litigations in commercial matters (2) Modernised financial infrastructure, (3) Greater business sophistication. In all three components actions have been redirected to support urgent response measures to the crisis caused by COVID-19. For example, an online dispute resolution platform will be set up. Small and medium enterprises will receive support to digitalise their businesses and can receive financial and legal advice on dealing with the crisis situation.
- European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development in Georgia (ENPARD III & IV) and specifically its activities supporting climate-change mitigation: Under ENPARD, local initiatives and action groups have organised a number of urgent response actions to the COVID-19 crisis at local level, including training and equipment for medical and health workers, charity initiatives in order to support the elderly and people with disabilities by providing food and other primary consumption products, production of face masks. In addition, FAO and UNDP have, and will continue to, fast-track(ed) grant calls to support agriculture sector resilience and support the local response to the COVID-19 crisis in rural areas.
- Twinning on strengthening the administrative capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia for approximation and implementation of the EU environmental acquis in the fields of industrial pollution and industrial hazards (2018-2019)
- Twinning on strengthening sustainable management of forests in Georgia (2017-2018).
- Twinning on institutional strengthening of the environmental health system of Georgia (2017-2019)
- Technical assistance providing support to the implementation of the environmental provisions of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (2019-2020)
- Support to reform in the waste management sector (2019-2020)
- EU Water Initiative Plus for the Eastern Partnership Countries (2016-2020)
- EMBLAS (Environmental Monitoring in the Black Sea) project
- SEIS (Shared Environmental Information System) projects
- PCB-free electricity distribution in Georgia (2018-2021, GEF)
- Capacity building for sound management of chemicals (2018-2021, CzDA)
- Common Maritime Agenda to support sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea

Particular coordination will be promoted with ongoing EU regional actions in the Eastern Partnership such as EU4Environment and EU4Climate as well as the new regional programmes to address the COVID-19 crisis.

Coordination will be ensured with actions of other donors in the field of environment, climate change and health.

A thematic Group on Sustainable Use of Natural Resources is effective in Georgia within the framework of Joint Programming and the overall cooperation between the EU Delegation and the EU Member States. A coordinating structure among donors of this sector also exists under the leadership of the MEPA. The projects planned within this Action will be coordinated with other donors and beneficiaries within both these frameworks.

In the field of migration bi-annual donor coordination meetings organised by the IOM in the framework of the EU funded project *Sustaining Border Management and Migration Governance in Georgia (SBMMG)* discuss cooperation issues with Georgia in the field of migration and border management and links with other policies. Active participants in these fora are US, Germany, UNOPS, Austria, Greece, Switzerland and representatives of some major donor funded projects.

On the Georgian side, donor coordination is led by the Division within the Department for Political Analysis, Strategic Planning and Coordination of the Administration of Government, which has overall responsibility for the coordination of external assistance. The coordination of EU assistance remains with the EU Assistance Coordination and Sectorial Integration Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia.

In addition, the Delegation ensures coordination with EU Member States through regular meetings, also inviting Georgian authorities to participate. The Delegation also coordinates and chairs sectoral Donor Coordination Groups in a variety of sectors, such as Governance, Human Capital Development, Rule of Law and Justice.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Overall objective, specific objective(s), expected outputs and indicative activities

The **overall objective** of the Action is to support Georgia to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and to ensure the continuous implementation of EU related commitments, notably the Association Agreement/DCFTA, with a particular focus on environmental protection and reform of the healthcare system, and the VLAP requirements.

Expected outputs and activities per specific objective are the following:

Component 1: Support to socio-economic recovery, green actions and healthcare system resilience in line with the EU-Georgia Association Agreement/DCFTA.

SO 1.1 Support to socio economic recovery and further development of circular economy

Expected outputs:

1. Resilience of SMEs strengthened
2. Increased capacity for crisis recovery actions including green recovery in private and public sector
3. Increased efficiency of the social protection system and methodology, in line with the priorities of the Crisis Plan of the Government and other donors' engagement

4. Increased capacities for the implementation of Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) and improvement of waste management practices to reinforce circular economy potential of the country

Expected activities:

- Advisory services to SMEs including on green recovery
- Technical assistance to support and improve recovery actions defined by the Government of Georgia taking into account environmental considerations
- Technical assistance to adapt the existing social protection system (including ICT tools) to post the COVID-19 environment
- Advise on relevant policy and regulatory framework and sharing best practices including on green recovery
- Promotion of separated collection of waste and promotion of separate EPR waste streams and improvement of waste management practices to reinforce circular economy potential of the country
- Support to implementation of municipal waste management plans/strategies

SO 1.2 Equitable access to quality healthcare

Expected outputs:

1. Telehealth solutions contributing to the minimisation of the impact of and effective response to Covid-19 or similar epidemics;
2. Increased availability of basic equipment.

Indicative activities:

- Procurement of basic equipment and furniture for up to 300 village ambulatories, recently refurbished/built by the government
- Procurement of telemedicine equipment for up to 50 remote sites
- Developing policies, regulations, guidelines and protocols related to telemedicine
- Development and implementation of capacity building actions, online training/communication platform for health care providers
- Building information system for effective COVID-19 surveillance.

SO 1.3: Implementing environmental, climate and public health provisions of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

Expected outputs:

1. Environmental, climate and linked to the public health provisions of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement further transposed
2. Cross-cutting environmental issues such as permitting systems, environmental, social and health impact assessments, and strategic environmental and health assessments mainstreamed and implemented in practise
3. Reduction of industrial emissions
4. Enhanced capacity to implement and enforce legislation in the fields of air quality
5. Population more aware of the necessity to protect the environment of Georgia and contribute to the global fight against climate change

6. Better control and management of chemicals

Indicative activities:

- Support in legal drafting, monitoring and reporting
- Capacity-building supporting the implementation of relevant EU acquis including at local level
- Identification and support to the implementation of some of the priority actions of NDC and Climate Action Plan
- Support to implementation of the Industrial Emissions Law
- Design of a surveillance system to identify and analyse emerging risks and to promote the use of evidence-based meteorological and climatic early warning systems by forecasting health impacts and risks
- Strengthening and drafting of a national Strategy on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) complemented by a national action plan taking into account disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures
- Support to the development of air quality plans for some of the most important municipalities
- Legal analysis, development of relevant legislation and capacity building on management of chemicals.
- Development of Air quality modelling systems for cities where such system is missing
- Support in establishment of the national air quality reference laboratory
- Establishment of appropriate enforcement measures to implement EU vehicle emission standards in Georgia
- Educational and other outreach actions (which could include documentary preparation) on environment and climate, include actions with a focus on children and students
- Development of online modules on sustainable development issues, including on environment and health topics, which will be used by teachers and students
- Development of a training module and course about the Georgian Law on Industrial Emissions and Law of Environmental Liability, which will support the establishment of a new system in the country and will contribute to the implementation of relevant EU directives.

Component 2: Enhanced Migration Management

SO 2.1 Support to further enhancement of the Migration Management system of Georgia

Expected outputs:

1. Effective implementation of the national Migration Strategy 2021-2030
2. Measures are implemented and capacities enhanced to keep visa free travel to the EU
3. Secure and effective international borders of Georgia
4. Enacted labour and circular migration schemes

Indicative activities:

- The National Migration Strategy 2021-2030 is implemented and regular progress reports are available

- Georgia continues its implementation of the visa liberalisation benchmarks and VSMR operational actions
- Enhanced capacity and support is provided to Georgian authorities and the population to tackle the irregular migrations risks of Georgian nationals to the EU and promote regular migration
- Border management is improved by addressing the gaps as regards detection and response capacities and more effective border management
- Targeted assistance to migration management and labour migration management is delivered to relevant state authorities, and targeted work is undertaken with diaspora, potential and actual migrants.

Under this component, support will be targeted to the member institutions of the SCMI and to its Secretariat. The Secretariat will mainly benefit from support to improve the national migration management system, to coordinate implementation of the new Migration Strategy and to provide quality reports.

The Border Police together with other institutions responsible for effective border management will benefit from the supply component as well as technical assistance aiming to further strengthen border surveillance as well as response and rescue putting a priority on the current gaps, the so-called “blind zones”. Further support will also be provided to improve the functioning of these institutions from an operational point of view with limited resources as well as further sustainable capacity building also in relation to the needs to support Georgia in their efforts to ensure that visa free travel to the EU continues.

All relevant sectoral ministries and the Georgian Statistics Office (Geostat) will benefit from further support for improvement of migration data collection, including sex-disaggregated data, its analyses and use for decision making and policy planning as well as its implementation.

The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs and other relevant institutions will be supported in developing labour migration and circular migration schemes for Georgian citizens in the EU, ensuring that return policies are also put in place and reintegration is supported along with investment guidance and business development assistance.

This component will be implemented by the selected international organisations or Member States organisations, however, part of the funds will be channelled through civil society organisations (CSOs), which are better placed to deliver services, in particular, to people in vulnerable situations. CSOs would also be expected to address the gaps where Georgian authorities do not have an influence or capacities, e.g. work with reintegration of some groups of returnees, survivors of trafficking in human beings.

4.2 Intervention Logic

Thanks to specific support in the targeted areas, the Georgian authorities and society will be better equipped to recover from the COVID-19 crisis. At the same time the implementation of the AA continues, contributing to better environmental, health and living conditions and a well-functioning migration management system, provided continued commitment by Georgia to the AA/DCTFA and to the rule of law.

The intervention logic for this Action is based on the context and problem analysis described in Section 1 of this document. Georgia and the EU enjoy a close relationship and are both committed to further deepening and strengthening their partnership as it is seen in the EU crisis response to support Georgia in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic within the Team Europe initiative. The recovery phase opens further opportunities for Georgia to orientate towards a more sustainable and circular economic model that could boost its growth potential. This programme foresees interventions under two components, both contributing to the overall goals of better living conditions for citizens and deepening the relations between the EU and Georgia.

Component 1: Support to socio-economic recovery, green actions and healthcare system resilience in line with the Association Agreement/DCFTA

Output: Based on actual needs, comprehensive capacity building measures coupled with specific support will be conducted for state institutions and target groups.

Outcome: Capacities for sustainable socio-economic recovery and environment and healthcare improvement, in line with the Association Agreement are strengthened for better response to COVID-19 crisis or potential other major epidemic.

Impact: Stronger resilience of the country to deal with socio-economic, environment and health situation having a positive impact for citizens, in line with the commitments set out in the Association Agreement.

Component 2: Enhanced Migration Management

Output: The national Migration Strategy 2021-2030 is adopted and implemented.

Outcome: Measures are implemented and capacities enhanced to keep visa free travel to the EU, to secure international borders of Georgia and to manage migration schemes.

Impact: The migration management system of Georgia is efficiently operating.

4.3 Mainstreaming

All activities under this programme will be designed and implemented in accordance with principles of good governance and human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

Good governance and human rights

All efforts to further public administration reform in Georgia will be based on the principles of good governance and human rights, equality and the inclusion of socially or economically deprived groups. The capacity building aspect of this programme will focus on supporting and strengthening the commitment of the Georgian Government to the principles of public administration developed by the European Commission in close cooperation with the OECD/SIGMA¹⁶.

Gender equality

¹⁶ http://sigmaweb.org/publications/Principles-of-Public-Administration_Edition-2017_ENG.pdf

Gender and diversity issues will be mainstreamed into the design of reforms undertaken under this programme. The inclusion of women in decision-making processes will be one of the principles in the capacity building aspect; however, since it is designed as a demand-driven Action, inclusion of gender equality related issues will be defined at a later stage, before contracting. Efforts will be made to ensure the participation of women in politics. Aiming to ensure a comprehensive approach in enhancing the gender dimension at the national level across the sectors, a separate service contract could be envisaged.

Support in the area of statistics will aim to contribute towards making sex disaggregated data available in Georgia.

Environmental sustainability

Jobs and poverty reduction will be targeted by the programme. The improvement of the environmental conditions of the country and the decrease of pollution will directly contribute to making Georgia a more attractive location for tourism as well as contribute to making Georgian products safer and more attractive for the EU markets (DCFTA potential).

Improvement of environmental and health conditions will directly contribute to improving the human rights of the population including of those most in need.

Particular efforts will be put in order to promote actions in the regions of Georgia, including in the EU focal regions. The Action will contribute to regional development through improvement of environmental conditions and therefore of economic opportunities and quality of life at the regional level.

4.4 Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This intervention is relevant for the 2030 Agenda. It contributes primarily to the progressive achievement of SDG 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere; SDG 2 “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”; SDG3 “Good health and well-being”, SDG 8 “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”; SDG 10 “Reducing inequalities”, in particular as regards its target 10.7 "facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies", and SDG 13 “Climate action” while also contributing to SDG 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”, SDG 12 “Responsible consumption and production” and SDG 15 “Life on land”.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this Action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with Georgia.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this Action, during which the activities described in section 4 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 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 Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

5.3 Implementation modalities

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate rules and procedures of the EU for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the Action with EU restrictive measures¹⁷.

5.3.1 Grant (*direct management*)

(a) Purpose of the grant

A twinning project will contribute to specific objective 1.3 (section 4.1), delivery of output 2 on a health impact assessment system, including setting up of a regulatory framework and legislation approximation with relevant EU *acquis*, public awareness, setting up of surveillance system to identify and analyse emerging risks and to promote the use of evidence-based meteorological and climatic early warning systems in order to forecast health impacts and risks.

Please see section 4.1 for more details.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

In line with Article 4(10)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014, participation in Twinning calls for proposals is limited to public administrations of the EU Member States, being understood as central or regional authorities of a Member State as well as their bodies and administrative structures and private law bodies entrusted with a public service mission under their control provided they act for the account and under the responsibility of that Member State.

5.3.2 Procurement (*direct management*)

The procurement will contribute to achieving the following Specific Objectives under Component 1:

SO 1.1: Support to socio-economic recovery and further development of circular economy

¹⁷www.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.

SO 1.3: Implementing environmental, climate and public health provisions of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement

Please see section 4.1 for more details.

5.3.3 Indirect management with entrusted entity(ies) – Public health

A part of this Action may be implemented in indirect management with one or more entities, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

1. Expertise and experience in the field.
2. In-depth understanding of the situation in Georgia in the healthcare field and telehealth and its strengths and weaknesses, including the capacity to mobilise sufficient expertise in short time and presence in the country.
3. Added value as well as innovative approaches proposed by the organisation to effectively reach sustainable results.
4. Adherence to EU values and principles such as transparency, absence of conflict of interests and attention to cross-cutting issues, in particular as regards gender and human rights.
5. Co-financing of the Action would be considered as an asset.
6. Necessary organisational, human and management capacity.

The implementation by this entity(ies) entails implementation of the Specific Objective 1.2: Equitable access to quality healthcare, as described in section 4.1.

If selection and/or negotiations with the above-mentioned entity fail, that part of this Action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section 5.4 below.

5.3.4 Indirect management with entrusted entity(ies) – Migration management

A part of this Action may be implemented in indirect management with one or more entities which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

1. Expertise and experience in the field of migration and in specific areas related to migration management, such as border management, including its safety and security also using advanced technologies; labour migration and other aspects related to the migration component.
2. In-depth understanding of the situation in Georgia in the field of migration and border management, and its strengths and weaknesses, including the capacity to mobilise sufficient expertise in a short time and presence in the country.
3. Added value as well as innovative approaches proposed by the organisation to effectively reach sustainable results.
4. Adherence to EU values and principles such as transparency, absence of conflict of interests and attention to cross-cutting issues, in particular as regards gender and human rights.
5. Co-financing of the Action would be considered as an asset.
6. Necessary organisational, human and management capacity.

The implementation by this entity(ies) entails the implementation of the Specific Objective 2.1: Support to further enhancement of the migration management system in Georgia, as described in section 4.

If selection and/or negotiations with the above-mentioned entity fail, that part of this Action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section 5.4 below.

5.4 Changes from indirect to direct management mode due to exceptional circumstances

The alternative option for implementing the actions described in 5.3.3 (Specific Objective 1.2) and 5.3.4 (Specific Objective 2.1) is procurement (direct management), if the preferred modality (indirect management) cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control.

5.5 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 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.

5.6 Indicative budget

	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified (EUR)
Grant: call for proposal for a twinning project (direct management) – total envelope under section 5.3.1 (SO 1.3, part of output 2 on Health Impact Assessment)	1 400 000	
Procurement (direct management) – total envelope under section 5.3.2 (SOs 1.1, 1.3)	5 000 000	
Indirect management with entrusted entity(ies) – cf. section 5.3.3 (SO 1.2)	2 200 000	
Indirect management with entrusted entity(ies) – cf.	4 000 000	

section 5.3.4 (SO 2.1)		
Evaluation (cf. section 5.8)	100 000	
Audit/ Expenditure verification (cf. section 5.9)		
Total	12 700 000	0

5.7 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The Delegation of the European Union to Georgia will be responsible for the management of the programme and will monitor its overall implementation. It will also be the focal point for any communication with the contractors or the beneficiary institutions. The Commission and the partner country will regularly review progress made in the overall implementation of the Action through a Programme Steering Council (PSC) which meets once a year. Apart from steering the overall process the PSC also aggregates information about progress in implementation which will be made available to relevant stakeholders.

5.8 Performance and results monitoring and reporting

At the level of the individual projects funded under this Action, specific Steering Committees (SCs) will be convened by the beneficiary institutions involving the EU Delegation and other relevant stakeholders. These SCs will meet regularly to review progress on the basis of periodic reports.

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 results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

SDGs indicators and, if applicable, any jointly agreed indicators as for instance per the Joint Programming document should be taken into account.

Reports 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).

5.9 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the Action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this Action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission. It will be

carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision).

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month 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 country 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.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.10 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.

It is foreseen that audit services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.11 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU. This obligation will be covered by the service contract included in the Decision - ENI/2018/041-415, "Support for the Implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement", under Component 1 (*Communication Support for the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia*). The contractor will ensure effective and correct communication based on the Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Actions (or any succeeding document). These requirements shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations. Additional Visibility Guidelines developed by the Commission (European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) and the Delegation to Georgia will be strictly adhered to.

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. It is the responsibility of the implementing organisations to keep the EU Delegations and, where relevant, the Commission (DG NEAR), fully informed of the planning and implementation of the appropriate milestones specific visibility and communication activities. The implementing partners shall grant an irrevocable licence to the EU to use communication material produced by them in the context of initiatives funded under the action document.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country (for instance, concerning the reforms

supported through budget support), 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.

With regards to the Neighbourhood East, all EU-supported actions shall be aimed at increasing the awareness level of the target audiences on the connections, the outcome, and the final practical benefits for citizens of EU assistance provided in the framework of this Action. Visibility actions should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Outreaching/awareness raising activities will play a crucial part in the implementation of the Action, in the case of budget support the national government shall ensure that the visibility of the EU contribution is given appropriate media coverage. The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the implementing organisations, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

Where relevant, the provisions of the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement concluded between the European Union and the selected international organisations shall apply.

This Action will be communicated externally as part of a wider context of EU support to the country, and where relevant to the Eastern Partnership region in order to enhance the effectiveness of communication activities and to reduce fragmentation in the area of EU communication.

The implementing organisations shall coordinate all communication activities with EU Delegations as well as regional communication initiatives funded by the European Commission to the extent possible. All communication strategies developed as part of this Action shall ensure they are in line with the priorities and objectives of regional communication initiatives supported by the European Commission and in line with the EU Delegation's communication strategy under the "EU4Georgia" umbrella initiative.

APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX

	Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (incl. reference year)	Targets (incl. reference year)	Sources of data	Assump- tions
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Impact (Overall Objective)	The overall objective of the Action is to support Georgia to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and to ensure the continuous implementation of EU related commitments, notably the Association Agreement/DCFTA – with a particular focus on environmental protection and reform of the healthcare system – and the VLAP requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress in implementation of Association Agenda expressed in percentage of achievement and DCFTA Action Plan¹⁸ - State of fulfilment of National Environmental Action Programme (NEAP) and National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP) - Number of diseases linked to environmental conditions 	<p>Association Agenda: State of 2021 (0% in 2021 on the basis of the newly negotiated Agenda for 2021-2027)</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Association Agenda: 80% by 2027</p> <p>2026 – timely implementation of actions</p> <p>2026 – capacity to monitor + clear trend of decrease</p>	<p>Association Council (Government, EU reports);</p> <p>Association Committee and relevant Sub-Committees (Government, EU reports);</p> <p>Commission reports</p>	
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¹⁸ For the moment of the Action formulation Association Agreement implementation and the state of play of legal approximation is reflected only in narrative reports without general quantitative references (except for specific sectoral reports). The government of Georgia is currently working on the development of electronic tools development which shall allow for defining more precise data for baselines and respective targets, therefore, upon availability of the tool in late 2021 the log-frame of the Action might be respectively updated. Upcoming electronic tools of the Georgian Government are: (1) **GOVERNMENT-WIDE POLICY PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION ELECTRONIC SYSTEM (PDCems)** that will unite all policy documents (national and sectoral level) of the Government of Georgia in a single space. The system will have 3 separate modules on planning, monitoring and evaluation. It will also include a database of indicators bank and will display a detailed information on the implementation rate of particular policies. The business analysis process of the platform is mostly finalised and the development stage will commence soon. The system is supposed to become operational by the end of 2020 **AND (2) ELECTRONIC TOOL FOR TRACKING AND MONITORING OF THE LEGAL APPROXIMATION PROCESS** which is planned with the support of an EU funded project (AA Facility II) and which will develop a special electronic tool for tracking and monitoring the legal approximation process that will show a precise, detailed and comprehensive picture of the legal approximation progress country-wide as well as in each state agency/line ministry. The platform should incorporate a register of tables of concordance and should reveal the gaps and unfulfilled obligations related to the approximation process. The platform should also display the level of progress and degree of alignment with the respective EU *acquis*.

Outcome(s) (Specific Objective(s))	<p>Component 1: Support to socio-economic recovery, green actions and healthcare system resilience in line with the Association Agreement/DCFTA</p> <p><i>SO 1.1 Support to socio economic recovery and further development of circular economy</i></p> <p><i>SO 1.2 Equitable access to quality healthcare</i></p> <p><i>SO 1.3: Implementing environmental, climate and public health provisions of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.</i></p>	<p>Number of measures implemented under AA/DCFTA</p> <p>Number of actions implemented for socio-economic recovery and environment and healthcare improvement, in line with the Association Agreement for better response to COVID-19 crisis</p>	<p>1. Quantitative references used in Monitoring Reports on AA and DCFTA and Reports of relevant Sub-Committees under the AA</p> <p>2. State of reforms in relevant priority areas</p>	<p>Progress in implementation of EU-Georgia Association Agreement and level of legal approximation to the EU acquis</p>	<p>Minutes of Council and (Sub-) Committee meetings, etc.;</p> <p>AA and DCFTA implementation monitoring reports by the EU and shadow reports;</p> <p>Final reports by institutions</p>	<p>The Government of Georgia remains committed to the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law and human rights. Georgia continues to support and pursue actions for</p>
	<p>Component 2: Enhanced Migration Management</p> <p><i>SO2.1: Support to further enhancement of the Migration Management system of Georgia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective implementation of the national Migration Strategy 2021-2030 - Measures are implemented and capacities enhanced to support Georgia in their efforts to ensure that visa free travel to the EU continues - Secure and effective international borders of Georgia; 	<p>Implementation of National Migration Strategy 2021-2030, VSMR recommendations and operational actions.</p>	<p>The national Migration Strategy 2021-2030 is under preparation during year 2020</p> <p>VSMR operational actions to address the irregular migration challenges has been agreed between the</p>	<p>Implementation and regular reporting on the implementation of the national Migration Strategy 2021-2030 and its respective action plans</p> <p>Implementation of the</p>	<p>Visa Suspension Mechanism reports, other EU reports and assessments, including shadow reports;</p> <p>Reports on implementation of the national Migration Strategy 2020-2030</p>	<p>political, economic and trade integration with the EU. Also, the Government pursues its public administration reform in line with international and</p>

	<p>- Enacted labour and circular migration schemes.</p>		<p>EU and Georgia in 2019; VLAP benchmarks and recommendations as published.</p>	<p>VSMR operational actions falling under the responsibility of the Georgian authorities and VLAP benchmarks and recommendations within agreed time.</p>		<p>EU good practice. The EU and the Government maintain their high level of cooperation and continue to communicate and coordinate reform efforts.</p>
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Output s	<i>Component 1: Support to socio-economic recovery, green actions and healthcare system resilience in line with the EU-Georgia Association Agreement/DCFTA.</i>					
	Based on actual needs, comprehensive capacity building measures coupled with specific support for state institutions and target groups for socio-economic crisis recovery and improvement of environmental conditions and healthcare system resilience.	<p>Number of projects supported for socio-economic recovery and environment and healthcare improvement, in line with the Association Agreement for better response to COVID-19 crisis</p> <p>Number of draft laws (including amendments) adopted envisaged under Association Agenda 2021-2027 number of reform initiatives/strategy papers planned and implemented (also under Association Agenda 2021-2027)</p>	<p>The Association agenda 2021-2027 has not been drafted yet;</p> <p>COVID-19 crisis impact to be assessed in specific fields of recovery actions</p>	<p>80% planned legislative changed and reform documents are adopted/approved</p> <p>COVID-19 crisis mitigated in fields covered by the Action</p>	<p>AA and DCFTA implementation monitoring reports by the EU and Georgian Government, and shadow reports;</p> <p>Country progress reports on socio-economic development, environmental and healthcare systems development;</p>	<p>The Government shows progress in implementing reforms in the programme priority areas. The beneficiary institutions are willing and able to implement and benefit from the proposed actions. The institutions' capacity in maintaining staff, planning and coordination is</p>
	<i>Component 2: Enhanced Migration Management</i>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National Migration Strategy 2021-2030 approved and implemented</i> • <i>Targeted assistance to migration management delivered including work with diaspora, labour migration and other;</i> • <i>Visa liberalisation benchmarks and recommendations as well as VSMR operational actions are successfully implemented;</i> • <i>Actions for ensuring secure and effective border management in Georgia undertaken.</i> 	<p>Equipment delivered to support border and migration management in Georgia</p> <p>Number of persons/institutions who received training, advice, support in framework of this programme</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>100% of equipment delivered based on the needs identified and committed in the framework of specific projects.</p> <p>At least 500 persons and all key</p>	<p>Project progress reports for projects planned under this Decision and any external reports, where relevant.</p> <p>Project progress reports and donation/transfer of assets documents</p>	<p>The Government shows progress in implementing reforms in the programme priority areas. The beneficiary institutions are willing and able to implement and benefit from the proposed actions. The institutions' capacity in maintaining staff, planning and coordination is</p>

				institutions responsible for migration and border management in Georgia		sufficient for a sustainable implementation of the actions.
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