



**ANNEX**

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the ENI East Regional Action Programme 2019 Part V

**Action Document for the European School in Georgia**

<b>ANNUAL PROGRAMME</b>	
This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation and action programme in the sense of Articles 2 and 3 of Regulation N° 236/2014.	
<b>1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number</b>	<b>European School in Georgia</b> CRIS number: ENI/2019/042-331 financed under European Neighbourhood Instrument
<b>2. Zone benefiting from the action/location</b>	Countries benefiting from the action: Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine). The action shall be carried out at the following location: Georgia.
<b>3. Programming document</b>	Regional East Strategy Paper (2014-2020) and Multiannual Regional Indicative Programme 2017-2020 for the Neighbourhood East
<b>4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	Main SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning
<b>5. Sector of intervention/ thematic area</b>	Upper secondary education      DEV. Aid: YES <sup>1</sup>
<b>6. Amounts concerned</b>	Total estimated cost: EUR 9 400 000 Total amount of European Union (EU) contribution: EUR 9 400 000.
<b>7. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)</b>	Project Modality Indirect management with entrusted entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 5.3.1.
<b>8 a) DAC code(s)</b>	11322 – Upper secondary education 100%
<b>b) Main Delivery Channel</b>	41000 - United Nations Agency 21000 – International NGO 23 000 – Developing country-based NGO 52000 – Other

<sup>1</sup> Official Development Aid is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

9. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
	Biological diversity	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagship	N/A.			

## SUMMARY

The establishment of the Eastern Partnership European School and Scholarship Programme was part of the "Youth Package for the Eastern Partners" and one of the "Eastern Partnership - 20 Deliverables for 2020" endorsed by the Brussels Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration of November 2017. The vision for a European School in the Eastern Partnership was to offer high quality education to pupils from all six partner countries, thus increasing their employment opportunities, and to promote a better understanding of the EU and its engagement in the region, taking into consideration the activities of EU Member States in the education sector.

The pilot phase "Eastern Partnership European School" project was launched in 2018: the first cohort of 30 students was selected by the New School partner school and enrolled in September 2018 to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme with a focus on European Studies (upper secondary grades 11 and 12).

Building on the results and lessons learned from this pilot, this Action will support the preparations, launch and implementation of a second phase (Phase II) of a wider scope. Phase II aims at the establishment of a European School in Georgia: a full-fledged high school, operating under the aegis of the Government of Georgia and offering the full secondary cycle, through a two-track approach. The European School in Georgia would offer students the choice of obtaining a national diploma or an IB diploma, both of which will have a focus on European studies. As such, Phase II is envisaged as migrating the piloting experience, implemented in partnership with an existing school, to a full-fledged new school.

The key elements of the pilot programme, which have proven successful, will be maintained. These are:

- **Regional scope** of the programme reaching out to students in all Eastern Partnership countries
- **Scholarship programme**, funded by the EU, for students aged 16-17 from all EAP to obtain the International Baccalaureate Diploma with a focus on European Studies.
- Selection of students according to clear predefined **merit-based criteria**.
- **Boarding** facilities for non-resident students.

- **Gradual approach**, small number of students per year programmed to increase by one extra cohort per grade per year combined with a gradual completion of all grades;
- **Regular consultations and coordination with EU Member States**, through their Heads of Mission in Tbilisi, particularly on language teaching and extra-curricular activities.

The **new**, additional elements of the Phase II will be:

- The **integration of teaching content** and concepts based on European Baccalaureat principles and standards with a focus on European subjects into the Georgian national curriculum
- The **dual diploma** option for students
- The **recognition**, by the Ministry of Education of Georgia (MoE), of the curriculum with a focus on European subjects as a new, specific high school curriculum under national legislation.
- **Complementary support** to students' mobility, pre-studies preparation, post-diploma orientation and advisory services.

As per discussions with Member States, at the time of the adoption of the RAP 2017 Action Document 'Eastern Partnership European School', the pilot phase included a **feasibility study** for the transition to Phase II. The outcome of the feasibility study has informed further discussions between the MoE and the EU, on the various pillars of Phase II, and the final agreements on each of those is reflected in this Action Document.

## 1 CONTEXT

### 1.1 Context Description

The idea of having a European School for the Eastern Partnership was listed as one of possible new actions in the European Neighbourhood Policy Review, which states: *"Engagement with young people across the neighbourhood will be stepped up by creating partnerships for youth. These partnerships will promote people-to-people contacts and networks for young people of all ages in the EU and neighbouring countries, to foster mutual respect, understanding and open societies. It should include a substantial increase in exchanges between schools and universities, including the potential for a pilot-project of a European School in the neighbourhood"*<sup>2</sup>.

The establishment of the Eastern Partnership European School and Scholarship Programme is now part of the "Youth Package for the Eastern Partners" and one of the "Eastern Partnership - 20 Deliverables for 2020" endorsed by the Brussels Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration of November 2017. With that, special attention is placed on **youth development, education and employability**.

The vision for this teaching institution was to offer high quality education to pupils from partner countries, to provide concrete opportunities to young generations to find more and better employment, and to learn and grow in a co-operative, multi-cultural and multilingual environment. The EaP European School was envisaged to promote, among students, a better understanding of the EU and of its engagement in the region. In this regard, complementarity with the activities of existing Member States' schools work in promoting EU goals and values was reinforced.

### 1.2 Policy Framework (Global, EU)

The EU's relations with its neighbours are guided by the **Global Strategy**<sup>3</sup> and the revised **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**<sup>4</sup>. Both call on the EU to focus on achieving the overall goal of increasing the **stabilisation** and **resilience** of our neighbours.

<sup>2</sup> Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Page 21.

<sup>3</sup> Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy presented by the High Representative in June 2016.

The **Eastern Partnership (EaP)**<sup>5</sup> was launched in 2009 at a Summit held in Prague, in an effort by the EU and its Eastern European partners to help promote political and economic reforms and assist the countries of the region to move closer to the EU. At its basis lies a shared commitment to international law and fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good governance. The EaP Summit in Brussels in 2017 confirmed the consensus to step up **actions in four key priority areas by focusing on concrete results**. The EEAS – Commission joint staff working document "Eastern Partnership - 20 Deliverables for 2020"<sup>6</sup> was thus adopted identifying specific deliverables in each of the four EaP priority areas i) economic development and market opportunities; ii) strengthening institutions and good governance; iii) connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change; iv) and mobility and people-to-people contacts.

In the framework of the common agenda, the action will contribute to the overall goals of **stabilisation** and resilience. **Education** is the first building block for providing young generations the tools, skills and values to work for a modern, prosperous and peaceful society.

### 1.3 Public Policy Analysis of the partner country/region

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries inherited a relatively well-developed education system, with high levels of adult literacy, but the new realities of transition towards democracy and functional market economy have imposed new requirements and a new role for education in a modern knowledge economy.

The majority of EaP governments are responding to these challenges for modernisation by adopting reform plans and introducing new legislative measures, all recognizing education as a priority sector for intervention. In Armenia, the Government reform focus on increasing access to and inclusiveness of education, and on modernising the curriculum, including introducing the 12<sup>th</sup> year of study. Similarly, in Ukraine, the new framework law on Education adopted in September 2017 is expected to lead to a 12 grades curricula (as opposed to 11) by 2028.

In Azerbaijan, a new regulation on the qualification of lifelong learning was passed in 2018 and a new law on general education (2019) setting the government's priorities to quality, human resources capacity, governance and access to education. In Belarus, where education accounts for about 5% of DP, and literacy rate is close to 100%, funding has been secured specifically for modernising education infrastructure, governance, and quality in the education sector.

The establishment of the European School in Georgia open to pupils from all EaP countries will offer a modern curriculum, focused on multicultural education, language learning and high quality teaching. The School could serve as a pilot for other European schools in the region. The school could serve as a pilot for other European schools in the region. A number of partner countries have already voiced their interest to follow this model.

### 1.4 Stakeholder analysis

The Government of Georgia, via the Ministry of Education, as principal stakeholder of this action, has been working together with European Commission services to define the main elements of the action. The Government is committed to the establishment of the European School in Georgia and to the objective of giving it a distinctive European profile in the teaching approach, and of building a regional educational hub for pupils from around the Eastern Neighbourhood.

The project is also aligned with the education reform priorities of the Government of Georgia to upgrade teaching quality standards and modernise the national curriculum for secondary studies. The Government of Georgia has identified and confirmed the location of the school that will be

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<sup>4</sup> Joint Communication JOIN(2015)50 on the Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, 18.11.2015.

<sup>5</sup> The Eastern Partnership (EaP) is a joint initiative involving the EU, its Member States and six eastern European partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

<sup>6</sup> <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10262-2017-INIT/en/pdf>.

built in the Lisi Lake area of Tbilisi on Government owned land. The Government will lead the infrastructure investment to establish the school premises. The Ministry of Education, on its side, will coordinate the overall management, operation and maintenance of the school and will identify, recruit and train teaching staff (with support from the EU). The Ministry of Education will carry forward the fundamental legal procedure to ensure recognition of this new special curriculum, and to initiate the request for accreditation to the IB Office for the IB Diploma section. The EU will cooperate with the Ministry of Education in facilitating and supporting relations with the IB Regional Office.

The other five EaP countries have confirmed their interest and support for the action, following the successful outcome of the pilot phase first year of enrolment, in which students from all countries were able to enrol. The first student cohort as well as the responsible teaching institution (the New School in Georgia) reported very positive experiences and results. The Governments are also expected to cooperate with the European Commission in promoting the European School in Georgia in their territory, without prejudice to the activities of existing educational facilities provided by EU Member States, and in close coordination with them. Their cooperation will help identify the demand among students, and facilitate the mobility of their student citizens that will attend the School in Tbilisi.

The International Baccalaureate Organisation will ensure that the framework for cooperation on curriculum development, students' admission and engagement, and governance and management of the educational programme, is according to IB standards as regards the Diploma Programme proposal. The IB will be in charge of analysing and assessing the request of the Government of Georgia for accreditation of the new high school.

An additional, indirect stakeholder, the European Schools General Secretariat (EURSC), will be consulted by the Commission Services to discuss how the EURSC can support the action as regards the development of the specific European teaching content of the proposed curriculum, and coordination of a comprehensive teachers' training programme, which will be part of this Action.

### **1.5 Priority areas for support/problem analysis**

Following the field pre-feasibility study and a series of meetings with the Government of Georgia and other concerned stakeholders, the critical elements for the implementation of the action were defined.

#### *a) Venue and facilities*

With the target of 2023, a new green-field investment for the building of a new boarding school will be developed at the Lisi Lake area, a Government owned land plot. The School facility will include recreational areas as well as a dormitory for non-resident students.

#### *b) Educational model, Size of the new school, and accreditation*

Based on the experience of the pilot phase, the enrolment of pupils will be gradual, starting in 2023 with 4 cohorts in the lower grade (7-8 of the Georgian national track with a focus on European Subjects) and one cohort in the penultimate year (Grade 11 IB Diploma track). As enrolled students move onto the next grades, new cohorts (one or two) will be enrolled each year. The school is expected to reach full capacity – i.e. about 500 students – within a period of 5 years following the first enrolment. From grade 7 to grade 10, the EURSC will be consulted to discuss how the elective subjects of the Georgian national curriculum (about 20-25% of total courses) could be aligned to the equivalent subjects of the European Study system so that they will integrate as much content from it as is compatible with the overall national objectives. During grades 7 and 8, students will be given also intensive English language courses. Starting from grade 9 some of the taught subjects will be taught in English, while a second foreign (EU) language will be introduced as compulsory.

Starting from grade 11 to grade 12 the school programme will offer a two-course track: one track will offer the national high school diploma with a focus on European Studies, while the second track will be based on the IB diploma programme also with a focus on European Studies

(transposing a similar model as adopted for the pilot phase). Pupils enrolled in the national track from the lower years, and that reach grade 11, will have the choice to remain with the national diploma programme or move to the IB track (provided they have the marks that qualify for IB admission). Those students from EaP countries (including Georgia) applying for the EU Scholarship will instead attend the IB Diploma Programme with a focus on European Studies (starting at grade 11)

The MoE will take the legislative steps required to have a special recognition of this new Georgian curriculum (integrating ES content) as well as to initiate the process for accreditation of a new IB diploma school.

*c) Co-Funding*

There will be three main sources of funding for the school: EU financial support, funding from the budget of the Government of Georgia, and tuition fees from students. The Government of Georgia will also investigate the possibility of shared funding from the private sector for the infrastructure investment once the design and costing estimates of the project are confirmed.

EU financial support will continue funding the merit-based scholarship programme for 11th and 12th IB grade students, launched during the pilot phase, thus covering all costs associated with students' tuition fees, boarding costs and related expenditure (health insurance, school material, home trips) for 30 students per years, over the first 4 years. In fact, the scholarships will be the main instrument used to ensure the participation of particularly students from other EaP countries, and to retain the fundamental regional scope of the educational offer.

In addition to the scholarships, the EU will support the Government of Georgia through the design, procurement, implementation, supervision or other functions linked to the infrastructure development. The EU will further fund a comprehensive, specialised training of teachers programme, to raise the capacity of Georgian teachers in line with European teaching standards.

Students which are not part of the EU scholarship programme will be subject to moderate tuition fees to ensure the sustainability of the school.

**2. Risks and Assumptions**

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Risk level (H/M/L)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambitious, large scale project</li>   <li>• Risks linked to the integration and social dynamics among children, particularly in the first couple of years of operations when there will be less students.</li>   <li>• The recognition of IB diplomas for national students is, in some countries, hindered by national regulations.</li> </ul>	<p>M</p> <p>L</p> <p>M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission and the Government agreed to postpone the initially envisaged launch date of 2021 to 2023 to ensure that there is enough lead time to design and prepare this large scale project.</li>   <li>• The enrolment scheme discussed and agreed with the advice of the feasibility experts is designed to ensure that there will be enough children of each age category from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of enrolment (4 classes at early age, 2 classes at diploma level) to prevent or mitigate possible feelings of isolation among a too small group.</li>   <li>• The Commission will engage in dialogue with relevant EaP national authorities to ensure the national recognition of the diploma issued by the School.</li> </ul>

## Assumptions

- The Government of Georgia will make available land, put in place the necessary legal and financial instruments for the establishment of the European School in Georgia, as well as the required human resources needed for its adequate and sustainable functioning.
- Demand from pupils around EaP countries will remain high and meet the educational offer of the school.
- The Government of Georgia will facilitate visa, mobility and security procedures for boarding pupils and their visiting families.
- The School will be a high quality institution recognisable in the EaP region and provide its pupils with important opportunities for further development.
- The Government of Georgia will ensure the national recognition of the diploma issued by the European School in Georgia.

### 3. LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

#### 3.1 Lessons learnt

One year after the successful launch of the Eastern European School in Tbilisi (pilot phase) some critical elements for success has been identified.

The first determining factor is linked to the hosting Government's level of engagement, in both political and financial terms, and the willingness to upgrade the national curriculum along European teaching standards.

Critical operational and technical lessons learned have been:

- high level political backing from EU and other stakeholders helps overcoming bottlenecks and resistance to change;
- a sufficiently long preliminary phase is essential to bring together the various components in a cohesive and timely manner (infrastructure, training, recruitment ..);
- clear and strong commitment from all partners is required;
- Member States' experience in education is a precious source for structuring and developing alternative curricula and their involvement should be ensured from the outset;
- the International Baccalaureate Organisation is an important guide in curriculum revision and adaptation.

The pilot phase also showed that a gradual approach is indeed the best way to approach such an ambitious and large-scale programme.

This Action will build on the lessons learned from the pilot phase and on the precious experience gained in the implementation of what has been a unique approach to traditional external cooperation instruments. The Action will also rely on the continuation of formal and informal partnerships and implementation arrangements with key stakeholders.

#### 3.2 Complementarity and synergy

As a Commission flagship project in the Neighbourhood, the school project will rely on positive and engaged cooperation with a number of Commission services, in particular with DG Education and Culture, DG Human Resources and Security and concerned directorates within DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, as well as with the European External Action Service (EEAS). Complementarity will be ensured with DG Education and Culture E-twinning action for the provision of additional online training when and if needed.

As regards other assistance, the EU and Georgia are already cooperating, at the bilateral level, on a large programme on human capital development linking vocational education and training to the needs of the labour market. As this ongoing Programme “Skills Matching and Development for Labour Market Needs” does not cover secondary education, it is fully complementary with the Eastern Partnership European School project. Similar EU and other donor funded large programmes are ongoing in other EaP countries.

The Eastern Partnership European School project is also fully complementary to EU cooperation in Ukraine, which focuses, inter alia, on: decentralisation of public services including education through "ULEAD", skills development, through the "EU4Skills" programme, and support to linguistic minorities through the "Leaning Together" project.

The bilateral EU "Education Sector Support Programme in Azerbaijan" aims to improve the learning opportunities and qualifications for students, modernise teaching and research methods and increase international mobility of students, teachers and researchers. The project is part of Azerbaijan’s policy objective of approximating its education and training system to those of the EU. In this sense, the European School project creates synergy with the ongoing bilateral programmes in Azerbaijan.

In Armenia, the "EU4Innovation STEM<sup>7</sup> Pilot Activities" project supports the MoES in revising and redeveloping the curricula of STEM subjects through grades 5-12, upgrading teaching methods and training teachers in pilot regions. The project also provides capacity building to the National Institute of Education in the formulation and management of key education policies.

#### **4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION**

The School is to become a high quality institution recognisable in the EaP region and providing its pupils with important opportunities for further professional development, and to be embedded in the objectives and aspirations of the Government’s plans for better secondary education. The school is also expected to promote a better understanding of the European Union and its relationship with the region, creating successful synergies with existing EU Member States’ schools in EaP region.

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

The **general objective** of the action is to promote high quality international education in the Eastern Neighbourhood.

The **specific objectives** of the action are to

- Establish a School in Tbilisi, Georgia, to provide secondary level (high school) education to pupils from all six EU Eastern neighbours (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine),
- Offer a European-focused learning programme that promotes European values of multiculturalism and multilingualism, and
- Create opportunities for students’ mobility within the EaP region and between EaP and EU countries, and support their preparation for the programme as well as future academic development.

The main **expected results** of the action include the satisfactory completion, by a growing number of students each year, of an IB Diploma Programme with a focus on European Studies and the delivery of a new Georgian secondary school diploma also with a focus on European studies, for students from grade 7 to grade 12 (full cycle).

##### **Main activities**

Given the nature of the action, the main activities relate to the practical implementation of the priority elements identified above, as constituting the core of this action. Accordingly:

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<sup>7</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

### *Activity 1: Design and supervision of the infrastructure investment for construction of the school*

With the target of 2023, a new green-field investment for the building of a new boarding school will be developed at the Lisi Lake area, a government owned land plot. The School facility will include recreational areas as well as a dormitory for non-resident students. The EU will support the Government of Georgia in the design, procurement, implementation – including compliance with international standards - supervision or other functions linked to the delivery of the school infrastructure by the Government of Georgia and/or their partners.

### *Activity 2: Support the Government of Georgia in the implementation of the enrolment scheme for students*

Based on the experience of the pilot phase, the enrolment of pupils will be gradual, starting in 2023 with 4 cohorts in the lower grades (i.e. grades 7 and 8 of the Georgian national track with a focus on European Studies) and one cohort in the penultimate year (i.e. grade 11 IB Diploma track). As enrolled students move onto the next grades, new cohorts (one or two) will be added each academic year. The school is expected to reach full capacity – i.e. about 500 students – within a period of 5 years following the first enrolment.

### *Activity 3: Support to the Government of Georgia in implementing the educational approach and ensure its relevance for students from the whole Eastern Partnership region*

From grades 7 to 10, The EURSC will be consulted to discuss how the elective subjects of the Georgian national curriculum (about 20-25% of total courses) will be aligned to the equivalent subjects of the European Study system and how to integrate as much content from it as is compatible with the overall national objectives.

During grades 7 and 8, students will be given also intensive English language courses. Starting from grade 9, some of the taught subjects will be taught in English, while a second foreign (EU) language will be introduced as compulsory.

Starting from grade 11 to grade 12, the school programme will offer a two-course track: one track will offer the national high school diploma with a focus on European Studies, while the second track will be based on the IB diploma programme also with a focus on European Studies (transposing a similar model as adopted for the pilot phase).

Pupils enrolled in the national track from the lower years, and that reach grade 11, will have the choice to remain with the national diploma programme or move to the IB track (provided they have the marks that qualify for IB admission).

Those students from EaP countries (including Georgia) applying for the EU Scholarship will instead attend the IB Diploma Programme with a Focus on European Studies (starting at grade 11).

The Ministry of Education will take the legislative steps required to have a special recognition of this new Georgian curriculum (integrating “European Studies” content) as well as to initiate the process for accreditation of a new IB school.

### *Activity 4: Manage the Scholarship Programme for Diploma Students*

The Commission envisages continuing the scholarship scheme to sponsor the enrolment of a fixed number of pupils from all six EaP countries in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme with a focus on European Studies. Considering that the future school will host a larger number of students, it is expected that tuition fees as well as boarding costs will decrease in terms of per capita cost. This will allowing the EU to fund a larger number of scholarships per year. The scholarship programme will seek to maintain a balance in the geographical origin of students so that students from all EaP countries' may benefit.

### *Activity 5: Teachers training and recruitment*

Based on a detailed assessment of the availability of teachers for the delivery of both the IB/ curriculum with a focus on European studies (Grades 11-12) and the national curriculum with a

focus on European studies (Grades 7-10 and 11-12), the Commission will entrust implementing partners with the tasks of adequately selecting, training, and enrolling teachers as required.

#### *Activity 6: Complementary activities in support of students' mobility and academic development*

These activities will be implemented starting 2021/2022 in support of students already enrolled in the IB Diploma with a focus on European Studies as part of Phase I of this project and will continue to support the new student cohort at the Eastern Partnership European School in Georgia as of 2023. By collaborating with educational institutions across the EaP region and the EU, the action will set up a mobility and exchange scheme for students as well as an academic-career advisory programme to assist graduating students continuing into higher education. For those leaving the European School, an alumni network will be set-up to provide longer-term support and monitor students' post-high school performance and educational development.

### **4.2 Intervention logic**

The action will be implemented through a gradual approach to enrolment and construction outlined above. The experience of the partnership with New School in the pilot phase has shown the great interest among EaP pupils for innovative education opportunities.

EU will fund the merit-based scholarship programme launched during the pilot phase. The scholarships will be the principal instrument to ensure the participation of students from other EaP countries, and to retain the regional scope of the European School in Georgia. The parallel support to training and coaching of national and international teachers, selected by the Ministry of Education of Georgia, will allow this action to provide a contribution to the modernisation and internationalisation of the standard Georgian national curriculum for high school studies, in line with the priorities of the Government's reform plan for the education sector.

The EU support to the design and supervision of the infrastructure investment and procurement will help ensure that premises of the school will be fully compliant with the latest international standards.

The EU support, structured along these lines, together with the contribution of the Government of Georgia, will ensure the feasibility and sustainability of the project.

### **4.3 Mainstreaming**

Gender equality, as well as equal access to education for less privileged pupils have been guiding principles in the selection of pupils since the launch of the first scholarship call, and will remain so throughout this Action. The 30 students finally selected for the academic year 2018/19, by the evaluation board, represented all 6 EaP countries. Among these 30 students, 10 were boys and 20 girls, and 12 students came from remote regions, including the occupied territory of Ukraine. The vast majority of them (27) had previously studied in public national schools. For the academic year 2019/20, around one third of the students will again be from remote areas, and two thirds of them will be girls.

Human rights, gender equality, minority rights and environmental issues will form integral part of the curriculum, thus mainstreaming these issues in the education programme supported by this Action.

### **4.4 Contribution to SDGs**

This programme is relevant for Agenda 2030. It contributes primarily to the progressive achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 - Inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities and to SDG 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls – particularly with regards to girls' access to education.

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **5.1 Financing agreement**

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries.

### **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 96 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financial Decision.

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 EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures.<sup>8</sup>

#### *5.3.1 Indirect management with entrusted entities*

This action may be implemented in indirect management with entrusted entities, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

The entity has an internationally recognised role and experience in the support, design, supervision and procurement of large infrastructure projects as well as in the provision of project supplies and delivery of services such as training, organisation of students' and teachers mobilities, capacity building, organisational and logistical services, communication and outreach capacity, and also monitoring experience.

The entity has a clear mandate for the implementation of international cooperation activities and is guided by international standards in project procurement and implementation, and has a network of technical experts deployed worldwide.

The entity has demonstrated transparency, impartiality, and the absence of conflict of interest, in other cooperation programmes with the EU.

The implementation by this entity entails meeting the specific objective of the action to establish a school in Tbilisi, Georgia, to provide secondary level (high school) education to pupils from all six EU Eastern neighbours (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) and offer a European-focused learning programme that promotes European values of multiculturalism and multilingualism.

#### *5.3.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode due to exceptional circumstances*

Due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the alternative preferred implementation modality to indirect management, indicated in paragraph 5.3.1 will be the procurement of technical assistance as described below:

*Purpose of the service procurement(s):* Procurement of technical assistance to assist the Government of Georgia in implementing the necessary procedures for the launch and management of the scholarship programme, the design and supervision of infrastructure procurement and works and the training of the teachers; carrying out the agreed complementary activities.

The above option is to address the risk that the indirect management contracts cannot be signed.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

#### 5.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

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

#### 5.5 Indicative budget

	<b>EU contribution (in EUR)</b>
<b>5.3.1 - Indirect management</b> The budget will include scholarships, support to the design, implementation, supervision or other functions linked to infrastructure development, training and complementary support services to students before, during and beyond their IB studies.	9 400 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 400 000</b>

#### 5.6 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The School project will rely on positive and engaged cooperation amongst all stakeholders.

DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations will ensure the overall coordination of activities under this project and monitor, in particular, the implementation of all components of the action related to its regional scope and outreach.

The Government of Georgia, via the Ministry of Education as principal stakeholder of this action, plays a key role in providing the facilities and governance structures for the project as well as in facilitating recognition and accreditation procedures, and ensuring the proper management of the school, including of its staff and faculty.

The EU Delegation will play an important role as a facilitator of relations between EU Commission Headquarters and the Government, and by also including the Member States in this process, bearing in mind their activities on the ground.

Commission services, in particular DG Education and Culture, and other concerned directorates within DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, as well as the EEAS can provide expertise and advice on issues of secondary education, mobility of pupils and teachers and scholarship schemes.

The existing steering mechanism will be maintained to discuss and advise on any strategic and operational issues identified by the stakeholders. Its members include Commission services and representatives from the EU Delegation to Georgia, Government representatives, and technical key experts from the implementing partner(s). Other stakeholders may be invited as observers.

#### 5.7 Performance monitoring and reporting

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

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).

### **5.8 Evaluation**

Having regard to the nature of the action, a mid-term evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components through a joint mission, contracted by the Commission.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner(s) at least 30 days in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner(s) 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(s) and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

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

### **5.9 Audit**

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

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

### **5.10 Communication and visibility**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the action. The implementation of the communication activities shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the action has received funding from the EU. Publicity will be in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan, to be elaborated at the start of the implementation of the action. EU-supported communication and visibility activities 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.

It is the responsibility of the implementing organisation(s) to keep the EU Delegations and, where relevant, DG NEAR, fully informed of the planning and implementation of the appropriate milestones specific visibility and communication activities.

The implementing organisation(s) shall report on its visibility and communication actions, as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.

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 organisation(s) 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 relevant EU Delegation's communication strategy under the "EU4Country" umbrella initiative.

## **6. Preconditions**

The implementation of this Action will be conditional on the full cooperation of the Government of Georgia and their financing of those expenditures not covered by the EU which are necessary for the establishment, functioning and sustainability of the European School in Georgia.

2 APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX]

	<b>Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10)</b>	<b>Indicators (at least one indicator per expected result)</b>	<b>Sources of data</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Impact (Overall Objective)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a School in Tbilisi, Georgia, to provide secondary level (high school) education to pupils from all six EU Eastern neighbours (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine),</li> <li>- Offer a European-focused learning programme that promotes European values of multiculturalism and multilingualism.</li> <li>- Create opportunities for students’ mobility within the EaP region and between EaP and EU countries, to prepare for the IB studies, assistance to continue into higher education and longer-term support and monitor students’ post-high school performance and educational development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opening of the School in 2023 and recognition of the new diploma by the Ministry of Education.</li> <li>- Mobility, exchange and alumni scheme in place for students before, during and beyond their studies, to support their preparation for the programme as well as future academic development.</li> </ul>	Scholarships Programme records and enrolment data	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome(s) (Specific Objective(s))</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Satisfactory completion, by a growing number of students each year, of an IB Diploma Programme with a focus on European Studies and the delivery of a new Georgian secondary school diploma also with a focus on European studies, for students from grade 7 to grade 12 (full cycle)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of graduating students from national/European focused track each year</li> <li>- Number of graduating students from the IB/European focused track each year <i>Baseline: Enrolments in 2023</i></li> <li>- Number of students profiting from studies and post studies support</li> <li>- Number of graduates successfully entering university. <i>Baseline: 2021</i></li> </ul>	Government of Georgia – MoE – legislative act	
<b>Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a School in Tbilisi, Georgia, to provide secondary level (high school) education to pupils from all six EU Eastern neighbours (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine),</li> <li>- Offer a European-focused learning programme that promotes European values of multiculturalism and multilingualism.</li> <li>- Create opportunities for students’ mobility within the EaP region and between EaP and EU countries, to prepare for the IB studies, assistance to continue into higher education and longer-term support and monitor students’ post-high school performance and educational development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opening of the School in 2023 and recognition of the new diploma by the Ministry of Education</li> <li>Mobility, exchange and alumni scheme in place for students before, during and beyond their studies, to support their preparation for the programme as well as future academic development.</li> </ul>	School and MoE official yearly data  Scholarship and IB official yearly data	

