



EN

**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX IV**

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan part I in favour of the Americas and the Caribbean for 2022

**Action Document for the International Urban and Regional Cooperation -North America (IURC NA) Phase III**

**ANNUAL**

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

## 1 SYNOPSIS

### 1.1 Action Summary Table

<b>1. Title</b> <b>OPSYS business reference</b> <b>Basic Act</b>	International Urban and Regional Cooperation -North America (IURC NA) Phase III OPSYS number: ACT-60964 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument ( <u>NDICI-Global Europe</u> )
<b>2. Team Europe Initiative</b>	No
<b>3. Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in Canada, the United States of America (US)
<b>4. Programming document</b>	MIP for the Americas and the Caribbean 2021-2027 <sup>1</sup>
<b>5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results</b>	Cooperation with US and Canada. Support to people to people cooperation (at Urban and Regional Level), promoting the UN and EU Urban Agenda and the EU Green Deal.
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>6. Priority Area(s), sectors</b>	Sustainable urban and regional cooperation
<b>7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	<b>Main SDG:</b> 11 - Sustainable cities and communities <b>Other significant SDGs:</b> 7 - Affordable and clean energy 8 - Decent work and economic growth 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure 12 - Responsible production and consumption 13 - Climate Action
<b>8 a) DAC code(s)</b>	43030 - Urban development and management

<sup>1</sup> Pan America window: [...] This window will include support to those countries without a specific MIP in Latin America, namely Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela. It will also contribute to the EU's engagement with the US and Canada, including public diplomacy, people-to-people contacts and policy outreach.

<b>8 b) Main Delivery Channel</b>	Private Sector Institution- 61000			
<b>9. Involvement of multilateral partners</b>	No			
<b>10. Targets</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
<b>11. Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective @</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>12. Internal markers and Tags:</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Digitalisation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital skills/literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Connectivity @ transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
13. Amounts concerned	Budget line: 14 02 01 40 Total estimated cost: EUR 1 400 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 1 400 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
14. Type of financing	Direct management through: Procurement			

## 1.2 Summary of the Action

This action proposes to provide additional funds to the ongoing International Urban and Regional Cooperation Action in North America (IURC NA) and to extend for two years the duration of the current project. IURC NA (EUR 1.45M) is implemented since January 2021 for a period of three years and has demonstrated to be a useful tool to support city to city cooperation and to bring green, digital, inclusive development plans and discussions to a prominent place in the urban agendas.

IURC NA is part of a wider programme also including cities from Latin America and the Caribbean and Australasia. The top up will allow the North America component to respond to demands from US and Canadian cities to participate in the current programme which could not be satisfied due to limited amount of funds allocated.

Starting from the principles and priorities underlying the EU model of territorial development – including the Urban Agenda for the EU where sectoral initiatives are combined under an integrated, strategic vision - the Action will continue to promote initiatives that deepen the understanding of the EU model through decentralised cooperation between cities on sustainable urban development and between decentralised authorities on regional (sub-national) innovation. Ultimately this action aims at fostering EU and third country actors to develop and implement mutually beneficial solutions to common challenges or challenges of global concern.

Therefore this action will continue promoting city-to-city cooperation in the field of sustainable and inclusive urban development, both one-to-one and, primarily, in thematic clusters with a focus on particular urban development themes based on the UN New Urban Agenda and the Urban Agenda for the EU. The clustering will be open allowing cities that wish to develop a more intensive cooperation with a partner city to do so in a one-to-one pairing involving an EU city.

## 2 RATIONALE

### 2.1 Context

The urbanisation process constitutes a clear global trend. More than 50% of the global population (75% in Europe) live in urban areas and 60% of the global GDP is generated by 600 urban centres.

The economic growth is occurring in tandem with rapid urbanisation and there is a large demand for European expertise in urban policy and practice, which represents a market for European producers.

EU cities have made great strides in the development of a model where sectoral and transversal challenges (including governance issues) are tackled together in an integrated manner. The role-model recognition gained by many European cities refers to this integrated approach, and not only to the excellence of the technological/sectoral solutions applied.

Urbanisation is an area of large economic and investment potential. Urban renovation aiming to achieve low-carbon city models includes the sectors of new and refurbished buildings, local transport, local energy-related infrastructures, nature-based solutions, and urban planning. Those sectors are, in all evidence, the most investment intensive sectors for the near future.

The EU has much to offer in terms of urban policy and practice, with a diversity of urban situations and urbanisation models. EU urban policy has led to the creation of many networks of European cities offering a variety of experience in policy and practice. The multi-stakeholder approach, which characterises the EU approach to urban development, means that the European business sector is in a state of readiness benefit from new cooperation opportunities in non-EU countries which this action may offer.

In some areas of urban policy and practice European cities can gain much from the experiences of cities in North America. The project actively promotes two-way exchange, bringing benefits to all participating entities.

As stated in the European Commission reflection paper “Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030”: “to be most successful in the green and inclusive economic transition, we have to get our global partners on board and make the case that a global sustainable development model, based on our core values and principles, is the best way to achieve shared prosperity and a sustainable world. The EU’s internal work on the SDGs and its external projection are therefore two sides of the same coin. It is in the EU’s interest to play a leading role in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda also globally through its external action”.

The same paper also states that all levels of government have to be fully involved in the implementation of SDGs. It should be noted that around 65% of the 169 targets of Agenda 2030 need local and regional engagement in order to be achieved. There is a strong interest in localising SDGs by a very large number of cities and regions.

With an urbanisation rate exceeding 80% Canada has, in recent years, positioned itself as a champion of urban resilience pursuing a green urban economy. According to a Grosvenor research report, out of the 50 ‘most important cities’ in this domain, Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary are the top three resilient cities in the world. According to this report, Canadian cities have a strong combination of low vulnerability and high adaptive capacity. There is a high level of resource availability, and Canadian cities are well governed and well planned.

Urban centres across the United States are growing and modernizing to meet the needs and demands of citizens for smarter and more environmentally sustainable cities as well as for greater social inclusion. There is a sustained interest and high demand for city-to-city and people-to-people exchanges. Even with significant growth, US city administrations tend to have limited human and financial resources and benefit from innovative solutions and best practices resulting from the exchanges. The action would be fully in line with the latest priorities for transatlantic relations expressed in the EU-US summit statement: “Towards a renewed Transatlantic partnership” of 15 June 2021, including working on green deal-related objectives, creating lasting people-to-people and city networks.

The MIP for the Americas and the Caribbean 2021-2027 includes a specific chapter to support cooperation with US and Canada and more specifically to support policy dialogue and people to people cooperation on EU priorities such as the Green Deal and the Digital Agenda. Therefore the current Action is fully in line with the programming documents of NDICI.

## 2.2 Problem Analysis

The EU is committed to attaining the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals and implementing the UN New Urban Agenda (NUA). In order to do so there is a need to work at the subnational level promoting cooperation, knowledge exchange and capitalisation between EU and North America cities on specific EU and mutual priorities, by:

- pooling international policy experience for the benefit of policy makers, including from regions and cities on both sides
- providing networking opportunities to engage in broader cooperation

- projecting the EU model of regional and urban development as conceived in the Urban Agenda
- leading multi-stakeholder innovation processes.
- increasing awareness and engagement on these partnerships areas and processes and building joint responses to global challenges.

The key stakeholders are:

- EU and non-EU cities, associations of cities and city networks, national and sub-national authorities.
- Research institutes, universities, technology transfer agencies, chambers of commerce, financing institutions, investors, government departments, individual firms as well as company networks and industry clusters.

## 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

### 3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective** (Impact) of this action is to lead and develop a form of decentralised international urban and regional cooperation, supporting the external dimension of the European Commission priorities, notably the Green Deal and the Digitalisation agenda.

The **Specific(s) Objective(s) (Outcomes)** of this action are to

1. **SO1** To develop cooperation between EU and non-EU participating cities to improve the cities' practices on sustainable urban development
2. **SO2** To promote the role of innovation drivers in urban development (e.g. private sector, universities, research entities, development corporations)

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

**O1** contributing to Outcome 1

Implementation of city pairings between EU and North American Cities developing joint Urban Cooperation Action Plans (U-CAPs)

**O2** contributing to Outcome 1 and 2

Multi-stakeholders thematic networking events in person and online with EU and North American cities on relevant topics are organised (e.g. mobility, innovation, skills and development, circular economy or green recovery)

**O3** contributing to Outcome 1 and 2

Synergies in terms of private sector participation are created in the context of the urban cooperation

**O4** contributing to Outcome 1 and 2

Updated information on the evolution and “state of the art” contents and results of the cooperation is available and regularly disseminated.

### 3.2 Indicative Activities

The indicative project activities- implemented on issues that are relevant for the dialogues and cooperation activities and in close partnership with Member States- will include:

Activities related to Output 1:

- Establishment of indicatively eight City pairings through a call for expression of interest
- Provision of Technical assistance to cities to develop Joint Urban Cooperation Action Plans
- Study visits in the context of the city pairings

Activities related to Output 2:

- Creation of thematic clusters on priority topics (indicatively could include some of the following, green deal, nature-based solutions, mobility, energy efficiency, innovation, skills and development, public health, migration gender budgeting, green recovery or circular economy)
- Organisation of thematic networks events around the topics selected in the clusters

Activities related to Output 3:

- Identification of stakeholders from the private sector, including municipal corporations and non-state actors at municipal level that can actively participate in pairings and networking activities.
- Establishment of synergies with other EU projects in Canada and the EU promoting business cooperation

Activities related to Output 4:

- Development of joint Urban Cooperation Action Plans -UCAPs
- Development of Webinars on relevant topics
- Design and Implementation of a Knowledge management system which can be transferred to participant cities, once the project is over.
- Design and development of knowledge materials,
- Design and development of Communication material, contents and campaigns, which may include the maintenance of the North America component of current web site (iurc.eu) in coordination with relevant Commission services.

### 3.3 Mainstreaming

#### **Environmental Protection & Climate Change**

Fighting climate change, energy efficiency and circular economy are part of the thematic priorities of IURC

#### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that equal gender participation will be promoted in all activities.

#### **Human Rights**

Social Inclusion will mainstreamed in the thematic networks as it is a priority topic for US and Canada cities

#### **Disability**

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. It is not expected to support disability related activities although the topic of disabilities and social inclusion may be indirectly touched on some events.

#### **Democracy**

Because of the nature of the project it will support and promote good governance through the exchanges of best practices among participant cities.

#### **Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience**

N/A

#### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

N/A

Through the support and promotion of good governance, as well as the emphasis put on sustainable urban development, this project will also contribute to more resilient cities, and thereby to improved disaster risk reduction

**Other considerations if relevant**

The project will contribute to project the EU model of regional and urban development based on key principles such as: working with the market (competition rules, public procurement); equal opportunities; sustainable development, including fostering decent work; participative democracy.

Through IURC, the EU will further share its experience in promoting innovation at the regional level. In addition, IUC aim to build resilience through developing more innovative capacity in sub-national, regional economies.

**3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt**

<b>Category<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Likelihood (High / Medium / Low)</b>	<b>Impact (High / Medium / Low)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
1	COVID 19 pandemic	Medium	Medium	The Action has already demonstrated that it can effectively perform on virtual mode. But at the same time Study Tours are especially important for this project. If the COVID pandemic persist the Action will develop innovative solution to replace in-person visits.
2	Changes with the selected local governments or within the national government partners in terms of personnel or political priorities	Medium	Medium	Flexibility in reaction and finding appropriate and individual solutions. Try to engage technical staff in the activities to ensure continuity beyond changes at political level
3	Unwillingness or poor collaboration of regional and local stakeholders	Low	Low	Appropriate selection process and intensification of efforts to support the regions and cities during implementation
4	Lack of funding for drafting action plans and for the investments needed for their implementation.	Medium	Low	Cities must be able to raise funds from different sources or to get in close co-operation with financial institutions; the project will make maximum use of pre-identified financial instruments.
5	Low EU visibility	Low	Medium	Ensuring EU's visibility in all actions, including visibility conditions with the contractor, logo and visual identity for the action to be used at all occasions, ensure EU institutional presence when possible
<b>Lessons Learnt:</b> <p>The findings of an evaluation on the IUC programme were integrated in this action. The results of possible future evaluations will continue feeding the action during the implementation phase.</p>				

<sup>2</sup> The risk (category) can be related 1-to the external environment; 2-to planning, processes and systems; 3-to people and the organisation; 4-to legality and regularity aspects; 5-to communication and information.

After the implementation of IUC (first phase) for over 4 years and the implementation of IURC for almost one year and a half, including during the period of COVID 19 pandemic, the following lessons have been learnt:

1. The open call for the selection and matching of North American and EU cities showed a strong appetite for this second phase of the programme. While several US and Canadian cities were unfortunately left without an EU partner due to the small number of pairings available, the region of North America remained the preferred destination of participating EU cities.
2. Due to COVID travel restrictions, IURC kicked off in 2021 with virtual meetings and events focusing on sustainable urban development. The technical calls between city pairings have allowed city representatives to share their challenges and experiences, from general project overviews to specific technical details that may be replicated in different contexts.
3. Through webinars, delegates from different cities have started to meet each other, learn about new initiatives and discover opportunities for cooperation. By creating thematic clusters (renovation wave and energy efficiency, education and skills, mobility and transport and waste management), IURC-NA has attracted an extensive number of municipalities outside the pairings, interested in joining the IURC network and to participate in virtual activities.
4. As predicted from the previous IUC experience, the most robust feature of this programme remains the in-person learning study visits and networking events.
5. These study visits yield the most results by allowing delegates to experience the innovative solutions, discover new projects and programs that would not be obvious in a virtual setting, and strengthen the foundation for cooperation that will last beyond the life of the program.
6. Participating cities have praised IURC for the impact that has already had in pushing their green agenda.

### 3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that it will support urban cooperation on green, digital and inclusive development topics through city to city cooperation between EU and US and Canadian Cities.

Based on the methodology used by the Commission in different international programmes for years, the Action will continue to promote city pairings to work together on common challenges at the same time that will create knowledge, promote exchanges of best practices through thematic networking events and will ensure proper dissemination and communication of the outcomes.



### 3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
<b>Impact</b>	To develop cooperation between EU and non-EU participating cities to improve the cities' practices on sustainable urban development	1 Number of EU bilateral, regional, inter-regional and multi-lateral cooperation partnership strategies which have been enhanced 2 Number of collective approaches and/or practices to challenges of global and/or mutual concern which have been developed/adopted/implemented			Policies represented by Thematic networks and cross cutting challenges influenced by the implementation of actions included in UCAPs. Project Progress Reports	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	To develop cooperation between EU and non-EU participating cities to improve the cities' practices on sustainable urban development	1 Number of processes related to non-state level partnerships / agreements which have been influenced 2 Number of processes related to partner country			Num. of UCAPs elaborated by EU and North American cities after signing Partnership	Cities maintain the interest in the project even if there are political changes during

		<p>approaches to challenges of global concern which have been influenced</p> <p>3 Number of processes related to partner country practices on challenges of global concern which have been influenced</p> <p>4 Number of articles published in print and/or digital media about an event</p>			<p>Agreements to jointly develop collective approaches to common challenges. Project Progress reports Project Surveys Press and media Knowledge Products</p>	<p>the implementation UCAPs will be developed by pairing or cluster. In the case of a cluster, several actions will be included where more than one city/region will participate. Classification will be established for UCAPs based on the level of development of the actions defined.</p>
<b>Outcome 2</b>	To promote the role of innovation drivers in urban development (e.g. private sector, universities, research entities, development corporations)	<p>2.1 Number of processes related to non-state level partnerships / agreements which have been influenced</p> <p>2.2 Percentage of EU companies' which acknowledge a positive change in their perceptions of the business, trade and investment climate in partner countries</p>				
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 1</b>	<p>Contributing to Outcome 1</p> <p>Implementation of city pairings between EU and North American Cities developing joint Urban Cooperation Action Plans (U-CAPs)</p>	<p>1.1 Number of city or region pairings/partnerships agreed or signed (joint statements)</p> <p>1.2 Number of knowledge-based products developed, funded by FPI (reports, surveys, analysis, implementation plans, etc.)</p>			<p>Partnerships agreements Press, media Knowledge products Project progress reports</p>	<p>Signatory cities remain interested to pursue cooperation on agreed topics.</p>
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 2</b>	<p>Contributing to Outcome 1 and 2</p> <p>Multi-stakeholders thematic networking events in person and online with EU and North American cities on relevant topics are organised (e.g. mobility, innovation, skills and development, circular economy or green recovery)</p>	<p>2.1 Number of participants in the events organised/supported</p> <p>2.2 Percentage of participants who report having benefitted from an event</p> <p>2.3 Number of knowledge-based products developed, funded by FPI (reports, surveys, analysis, implementation plans, etc.)</p>			<p>Event registration lists Project surveys Knowledge products Project Progress Reports</p>	<p>Improvement of Covid Pandemic situation allows for in person events Cities are interested to participate in the online and</p>

						in person events
<b>Output 3 related to Outcome 1 and 2</b>	Contributing to Outcome 1 and 2 Synergies in terms of private sector participation are created in the context of the urban cooperation	3.1 Number of EU companies that participated in an event 3.2 Percentage of participating EU companies which report having benefitted from an event 3.3 Number of knowledge-based products developed, funded by FPI (reports, surveys, analysis, implementation plans, etc.)			Project Progress Reports Event registration lists Project Surveys	EU and Canada companies and non-state institutions are interested in the opportunities that the project offer to contribute to urban development
<b>Output 4 Related to Outcome 1 and 2</b>	Contributing to Outcome 1 and 2 Updated information on the evolution and “state of the art” contents and results of the cooperation is available and regularly disseminated.	4.1 Number of knowledge-based products developed, funded by FPI (reports, surveys, analysis, implementation plans, etc.) 4.2 Number of communication products developed			Communication campaigns Communication and social media material Knowledge products Project Progress reports Project webpage	The project produces the communication and knowledge products with the information provided by the project team, participant cities, experts and EU services

## 4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country

### 4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision which includes a period of 3 months for extension of current contract or (N+1), an indicative 36 months of action implementation and 21 months until the FDI.

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

### 4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>3</sup>.

#### 4.3.1 Direct Management (Procurement)

This action will be implemented in its totality through Direct Management (Procurement)

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

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

### 4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
<b>Implementation modalities</b> – cf. section 4	
<b>Procurement</b> – total envelope under section 4.3.1	1 400 000
<b>Total</b>	1 400 000

### 4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The basic structure of the project will consist of

- The project manager appointed by the Contracting Authority, responsible for ensuring the good performance of the Action.
- A Steering Committee co-chaired by FPI and DG REGIO, which will provide strategic guidance to the project, and will ensure its regular monitoring and appraise the results achieved; this steering committee should be composed of representatives from relevant Commission Services and EU

<sup>3</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.

Delegations. Member States may be invited to participate as observers. This steering committee shall meet virtually twice per year

- Regular meetings (virtual or in person) with EU Delegation to US and Canada
- Member States will be informed about the implementation of the Action through the existing coordination groups, chaired by the Delegations or by the EEAS.

#### 4.7 Pre-conditions

N/A

## 5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

### 5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports.

Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding PIMS indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality).

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).

Based on this monitoring, the Delegation to Canada and to US will report when relevant to the Member States

The implementing partner is the main responsible for data collection analysis and monitoring and will need to put in place appropriate coordination mechanisms with stakeholders to receive the relevant information during implementation of the activities to be used for monitoring and reporting.

### 5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a mid-term or final evaluation(s) may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

The Evaluation (especially if a mid-term) will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to the intention to launch a second phase of the action.

In the case of a final evaluation, 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 15 days in advance of the dates envisaged 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 may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

### 5.3 Audit and Verifications

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

## 6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

## Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention<sup>4</sup> (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

The present Action identifies as;

Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	<b>Procurement</b> – total envelope under section 4.3.1

---

<sup>4</sup> [Ares\(2021\)4450449](#) - For the purpose of consistency between terms in OPSYS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI have harmonised 5 key terms, including ‘action’ and ‘Intervention’ where an ‘action’ is the content (or part of the content) of a Commission Financing Decision and ‘Intervention’ is a coherent set of activities and results which constitutes an effective level for the operational follow-up by the EC of its operations on the ground. See more on the [concept of intervention](#).