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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX VI

to Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan for the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme for 2025 to 2027

Action Document for Support measures for the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme

MULTIANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Support Measures for the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme OPSYS reference: ACT- 62896/ JAD.1605518 (INTPA) and ACT-62931 / JAD.1618689 (NEAR) Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out worldwide
4. Programming document	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	MIP priority 5: “Delivering by working together” and its specific results: 1. Enhanced effectiveness and visibility of EU action and funding for human rights and democracy. Enhanced space for open and constructive dialogue between civil society, partner countries’ national authorities and the EU in the framework of human rights dialogues and consultations with partner countries.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	151 – Government & Civil Society

7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	<p>Main SDG: SDG 16: promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p> <p>Other significant SDGs: - SDG 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls - SDG 10: reduce inequality within and among countries</p>			
8 a) DAC code(s)	<p>15160 - Human rights 15150 – Democratic participation and civil society</p>			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	<p>90000 – Other</p>			
9. Targets	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input 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</p>			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	/

	digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services	<input type="checkbox"/> <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"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity energy transport health education and research	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities1 @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	<p>Budget line 14.02 02 11</p> <p>Total estimated cost: EUR 3 014 839</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 3 014 839</p> <p>The contribution is for an amount of EUR 1 000 570 (EUR 850 570 for INTPA and EUR 150 000 for NEAR) from the general budget of the European Union for 2025, for an amount of EUR 1 012 827 (EUR 862 827 for INTPA and EUR 150 000 for NEAR) from the general budget of the European Union for 2026 and for an amount of EUR 1 001 442 (EUR 851 442 for INTPA and EUR 150 000 for NEAR) from the general budget of the European Union for 2027, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget, or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.</p>			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing²	<p>Direct management through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procurement - Grants 			

1.2 Summary of the Action

This action supports the implementation of the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2027 and in particular the priority area 5 “Working better together” of the MIP for the Thematic Programme on Human Rights and Democracy.

Its main objective is to provide support measures as identified in Article 24(1) of the NDICI Regulation. In particular, it intends to prepare, monitor, evaluate and audit the activities financed by the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the funding. It will also add value,

¹ For more information, please consult: The European Commission inequality marker - Publications Office of the EU (europa.eu) and Inequality Marker – Complementary Guidelines Application of the I-Marker to SSC fiches and Action Documents | Capacity4dev (europa.eu)

² Article 27 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

complementarity and consistency with geographical programmes while enhancing the human rights and democracy thematic programme's synergy with EU's policy priorities.

Furthermore, this Action will enhance the work of civil society actors working on human rights and democracy issues by providing the necessary visibility, opportunity for consultation, access to political dialogue, support to their monitoring activities which will overall enhance their contribution to sustainable development. The mobilisation of civil society actors around these matters will enhance human rights and democracy advocacy efforts at national level. This will in turn increase visibility of EU support and promotion of EU fundamental values in third-country partners.

The end beneficiaries of the action are civil society organisations active in the field of human rights and democracy including women's rights organisations, human rights defenders and more generally communities of third partner countries. Additional networking activities will ensure their long-term involvement around these issues.

1.3 Zone benefitting from the Action

The Action shall be carried out in any country, as established under Article 29.12 of the NDICI Regulation.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

The world is currently experiencing a wave of **autocratisation** characterised by increasing executive power, erosion of democratic norms, and a general constriction of fundamental freedoms.

Recent armed conflicts have rised tensions and challenged the international order. They have disrupted cooperation and dialogue, making it more difficult for civil society to participate in democratic processes.

But these events have also highlighted the importance of human rights and democracy in addressing global crises. The need for transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance has become more apparent, as well as the the role of civil society in decision-making processes and in holding governments accountable and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities.

The EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024³ sets the EU's ambitions for the respect of human rights and democracy globally. It has recently been extended until 2027⁴, ensuring continuity of the objectives for the duration of the current Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27⁵.

The Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme contributes to achieve these objectives through a financial envelope of EUR 1.5 billion, implementing actions at local, regional and global level in over 115 countries. It combines a number of flagship programmes centrally managed and implemented at various levels, with local envelopes responding to the human rights and democracy country strategies. The articulation of all of them allow covering all the topics of the Action Plan, implementing each intervention at the most relevant level while seeking synergies and complementary with the others. The resulting structure conforms the operational set up of the thematic programme.

2.2 Problem analysis

Improving the quality and efficiency of implementation of the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme and ensuring the achievement of its objectives requires an adequate follow-up of interventions through audits, evaluations, expenditures verification, studies and field visits.

Moreover, human and democracy thematic interventions require continuous engagement with civil society organisations as main targeted beneficiaries. This should occur across the project lifecycle following the

³ [Council conclusions of 17/11/2020 on the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024.](#)

⁴ [Council conclusions of 27/05/2024 on the Extension of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy.](#)

⁵ [Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027.](#)

human rights-based approach to development methodology⁶ and gender mainstreaming. Additional parallel activities to human rights and democracy interventions in the form of training sessions, conferences, workshops, visibility and communications actions are therefore needed.

Finally, human and democracy thematic interventions take place in sensitive environments or tackle politically sensitive topics which also require raising of the level of awareness of civil society actors and enhance their ability to engage with state actors as well as the EU in its formal human rights dialogues with partner countries.

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

The main stakeholders for this action are the EU staff implementing the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme, who will receive adequate support to implement the programme in the most effective manner, be it at headquarters or EU delegations.

An important role is also played by those involved in the implementation of this support measures, such as external experts, projects' stakeholders, participants to trainings and workshops, etc. Support measures will be key to bring these actors together and ensure that knowledge-sharing can take place.

The end beneficiaries of the action are civil society organisations active in the fields of human rights and democracy, human rights defenders and more generally citizens and communities of the partner countries in which the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme will be implemented. Support measures can mitigate some of the risks where national authorities are not empowering an active civil society in their respective countries.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

Overall Objective / Impact: To increase the protection and multiplication of democratic values and international human rights standards

Specific Objective / Outcome 1: Increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme at operational, strategic and communicational level

- 1) Ensure and strengthen the involvement of civil society organisations (including women's rights organisations, social movements) in the preparation and follow-up of dialogues on human rights taking place between the European Union and third countries.

Specific Objective / Outcome 2: Improved coordination and leverage of human rights policy dialogue between the European Union, third countries and Civil Society Organisations

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

Output 1.1. Improved tools and resources available for monitoring, evaluation and visibility of human rights thematic programme actions and results

Output 1.2. Increased technical capacities and knowledge sharing of CSOs in the implementation of human rights and democracy thematic interventions

Output 1.3. Increased access of EU staff to technical analysis, support activities and other technical assistance measures that contribute to the effective implementation of human rights and democracy thematic interventions

⁶ [54c77670-4179-49f0-9af3-d1b18ff2d41f_en \(europa.eu\)Commission Staff Working Document "Applying the Human Rights Based Approach to international partnerships"](#) of 30/06/2021, SWD(2021) 179.

Output 2.1. Increased opportunities for networking and dialogue between Civil Society Organisations and decision-makers in the EU and third countries on the issues of human rights, democracy and women's rights.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1

- 1.1.1 Research and studies on relevant issues and the dissemination thereof;
- 1.1.2 Audits, evaluations;
- 1.1.3 Information and communication activities, including the development of communication strategies to enhance the visibility of the EU and human rights issues, publications, production of promotional material

Activities related to Output 1.2

- 1.2.1 Organisation of meetings and training: workshops, civil fora, seminars, working groups, etc.;

Activities related to Output 1.3

- 1.3.1 Support for programmes: needs assessments, preparatory activities, studies, exchange of lessons learnt and best practices, and any other administrative or technical assistance expenditure necessary for the management of actions, including interests for late payments;

Activities related to Output 2.1:

- 2.1.1 Preparatory activities, such as small-scale studies, prior consultations and technical meetings with civil society organisations active in human rights and women rights in the third country concerned, both in Brussels and in third countries, to prepare for the formal dialogue;
- 2.1.2 Seminars and meetings with civil society organisations of the third country and of the European Union in order to discuss specific thematic issues in greater depth;
- 2.1.3 Follow-up activities, such as debriefings with civil society organisations on the outcomes.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that contracts funded through this action will help analyse, address and integrate gender equality and women's empowerment from the identification to the evaluation of actions funded under this programme. This programme will contribute to the Gender Action Plan III 2021 – 2025, and ensure that studies, call for proposals and grant proposals contain gender aspects.

Human rights

A human rights-based approach will be ensured in all the phases of the different activities by promoting inclusion and participation, non-discrimination, equality and equity, transparency and accountability.

<p>Disability As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. Even though people with disabilities are not targeted by this action, the human rights-based approach applied will ensure their inclusion, participation and non-discrimination.</p>
<p>Reduction of inequalities As per Inequality marker, this action is I-1. By improving the quality and efficiency of implementation of the Human rights and Democracy thematic programme and ensuring the participation of CSO in human rights dialogues, the action contributes to the reduction of inequalities.</p>
<p>Democracy This action will ensure the participation of civil society organisations representing traditionally excluded and discriminated individuals and groups, e.g. women, indigenous peoples, representatives of minorities, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, refugees and migrant workers, human rights defenders (including the environment of human rights defenders), trade unionists promoting labour rights, and LGBTI persons.</p>
<p>Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience N/A</p>
<p>Disaster Risk Reduction N/A</p>
<p>Other considerations if relevant N/A</p>

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
External environment	'Shrinking space' limits the participation of independent CSOs and the space for a genuine dialogue on sensitive issues is limited (fear of reprisal by local CSOs)	Low	Low	Selection of CSOs participating in the process to take this risk into account. Consultation of CSO roadmaps of the concerned countries if available. Restricting visibility of the consultations. Recourse to informal human rights dialogue
External & Internal environment	Lack of participation of women's rights organisations due to gender social norms and resistance to gender equality	Medium	Medium	Selection and consultation of women's rights organisation in the process. Training EU staff on the importance of gender mainstreaming in all actions.

Lessons learnt:

Support measures played a key role during the period 2014-2020. They contributed to optimise the implementation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). They were fundamental in the development and dissemination of the human rights-based approach and the gender mainstreaming. They were also instrumental in bringing forward the EU's policy priorities and in the EU human rights guidelines.

The same approach has been kept in the budget period 2021-2027. Support measures accompany and reinforce all the actions carried out in the framework of the HR&D thematic programme, optimising their implementation, increasing their impact and ensuring capitalisation on activities. This action has proven to be key to follow-up on and to measure the implementation of the updated Toolbox on a human rights-based approach to development. Support measures will also be key to follow up on commitments enshrined in the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Dialogues revised in 2021 to better respond to growing attacks on human rights globally. The Guidelines emphasise the key importance of a genuine engagement with CSOs before and after the dialogues.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that by helping prepare, monitor, evaluate and audit the activities financed by the Human Rights and Democracy programme and better communicate about its impact, we assume the results will provide the added value, complementarity and consistency with geographical programmes expected, while enhancing EU capacity to react promptly and substantially when required and to reflect the EU's policy priorities with regard to its internal policies, international obligations and commitments.

By supporting and strengthening civil society organisations in promoting human rights and democratic governance by mobilising their expertise and integrate their inputs, we can enhance the gender mainstreaming, EU human rights toolbox, the human rights dialogues with third countries and the civic and political space in these countries and consequently contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law worldwide.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

Given the nature of this Action a Logical Framework Matrix is not required at Action level.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with a 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 **72 months** from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

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 rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁷.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

Activities foreseen under these special measures may be implemented through grants, such as events co-organised by civil society organisations with a specific mandate or expertise on human rights and democracy.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Potential applicants i.a.: local authorities, public bodies, international organisations, NGOs and economic operators such as SMEs will be selected based on their relevance for the nature and objectives of the action, their operational and financial capacity.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without call for proposals may be used if it is justified under one of the cases referred to in Article 198 of the Financial Regulation. The direct award will be duly substantiated, providing factual justification on the application of the invoked case.

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the criteria defined in section 4.3.3 below.

4.3.2 Direct management (Procurement)

Part of the action (i.e. audits, evaluations, technical assistance) may be implemented through procurement.

4.3.3 Indirect management with an entrusted entity

If deemed necessary by the nature of the outcome to be achieved, a part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entrusted entity, selected based on the following criteria: relevance for the nature of the action, their operational capacity, their added value, their transparency and the absence of conflict of interest.

4.3.4 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

In the event that direct management cannot be pursued due to factors beyond the Commission's control, the implementation of the aforementioned activities in Section 4.3.1 would instead be carried out using the indirect management modality.

Similarly, in the event that indirect management cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the alternative modality for implementation of the activities outlined in 4.3.2 will be carried out through direct management.

⁷ Please note that the sanctions map (www.sanctionsmap.eu) 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.

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) 2025	EU contribution (amount in EUR) 2026	EU contribution (amount in EUR) 2027
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3			
Objectives 1 & 2 composed of			
Procurement – total envelope under section 4.3.2	900 513	911 544	901 298
Grants – total envelope under section 4.3.1	100 057	101 283	100 144
Indirect management with a Member State or an international organisation - cf. section 4.3.3	To be determined		
Totals	1 000 570	1 012 827	1 001 442

4.6 Organisational Set-up and responsibilities

The contracting authority for the action shall be the European Commission. The overall responsibility for the implementation of the action lies with the relevant services of the European Commission at the headquarters level.

In line with its specific objectives, the action will ensure active and meaningful participation of key stakeholders and rights holders such as youth, persons with disabilities, women organizations and organizations representing vulnerable and marginalized groups.

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 indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

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).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components. The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination⁸. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary.

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.

In line with the 2022 Guidance for External Actions “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility](#)”, 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.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

⁸ See some practical examples of [creative communications for evaluation dissemination](#).