EN

ANNEX VI

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan in favour of the Asia-Pacific Region for 2022-2023

Action Document for Improving Migration Management and Migrant Protection in selected Silk Route countries (PROTECT)

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

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	**Improving Migration Management and Migrant Protection in selected Silk Route countries (PROTECT)** OPSYS number: ACT-61497 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
2. Team Europe Initiative	Throughout its implementation in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asian countries, the Action will contribute to the planned Regional Team Europe Initiative on the Afghan displacement situation
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The Action shall be carried out in Afghanistan[1], Iraq[2], Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
4. Programming document	Regional Multiannual Indicative Programme (RMIP) for Asia and the Pacific 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	Priority Area 3 - Migration, forced displacement and mobility Specific Objective 2 "Contribute to strengthening migration governance and management, to enable orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration (including labour migration) and mobility of people". ER 2.1: Cooperation, policy dialogue and development, engagement at international, national and regional level with private and public stakeholders in the field of migration governance and mobility are enhanced. ER 2.2: Partner countries' capacities to address irregular migration including the prevention of and fight against smuggling of migrants and all forms of trafficking of human beings,

---

[1] In line with Council Conclusions of September 2021, EU and Member State activities in Afghanistan will be guided by the identified benchmarks for engagement and carried out without benefit to or interference from the de facto authorities.

[2] Activities in Iraq will be limited to Component 3 (THB/SOM). Migration management in Iraq will be covered under the draft programme "Sustainable Social and Economic Re-integration, and improved migration governance in Iraq". In the case this programme will not be implemented, activities in Iraq could be extended under the programme "Improving Migration Management and Migrant Protection in selected Silk Route countries (PROTECT)".

	support to migrants in situations of vulnerability, at regional, national, and local level are reinforced.

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	The Action responds to priority area 3 "Migration, forced displacement, and mobility" of the Regional Multi-annual Indicative Programme (RIP) 2021-2027 for Asia and the Pacific. 151 - Government & Civil Society-general
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	• Main SDG (1 only): 10.7.: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: • 5.2.: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation • 8.7.: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms. • 16.2.: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against and torture of children • 17.: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
8 a) DAC code(s)	15130 - Legal and judicial development 15190 - Facilitation of orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	40000 – Multilateral organisation
9. Targets	☒ Migration ☐ Climate ☐ Social inclusion and Human Development ☒ Gender ☐ Biodiversity ☐ Education ☒ Human Rights, Democracy and Governance

10. Markers (from DAC form)	**General policy objective @**	**Not targeted**	**Significant objective**	**Principal objective**
	Participation development/good governance	☐	☐	☒
	Aid to environment @	☒	☐	☐
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	☐	☒	☐
	Trade development	☒	☐	☐
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	☒	☐	☐
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	☒	☐	☐
	Inclusion of persons with	☐	☒	☐

		Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Disabilities @			
	Nutrition @	☒	☐	☐
	RIO Convention markers	**Not targeted**	**Significant objective**	**Principal objective**
	Biological diversity @	☒	☐	☐
	Combat desertification @	☒	☐	☐
	Climate change mitigation @	☒	☐	☐
	Climate change adaptation @	☒	☐	☐
11. Internal markers and Tags:	**Policy objectives**	**Not targeted**	**Significant objective**	**Principal objective**
	Digitalisation @	☒	☐	☐

	YES	NO	
digital connectivity	☐	☒	
digital governance	☐	☒	
digital entrepreneurship	☐	☒	
digital skills/literacy	☒	☐	
digital services	☐	☒	

	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
Connectivity @	☒	☐	☐

	YES	NO	
digital connectivity	☐	☒	
energy	☐	☒	
transport	☐	☒	
health	☐	☒	
education and research	☐	☒	

	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
Migration @ (as per the guidance note on the migration marker)	☐	☐	☒
Reduction of Inequalities @ (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	☐	☒	☐
Covid-19	☒	☐	☐

BUDGET INFORMATION

12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020130 (Middle East and Central Asia), for EUR 8 000 000 14.020131 (South and Southeast Asia), for EUR 1 000 000 Total estimated cost: EUR 9 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 9 000 000

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

13. Type of financing	**Indirect management** with the entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1.

1.2 Summary of the Action

This proposed Action aims at improving migration management covering all phases of emigration and immigration in the target countries, enhancing awareness on the risks of irregular migration and facilitating the protection of migrants. It will support informed migration decision making at the individual, family, and community level, including pre-departure preparation, migration and residence/work abroad, voluntary return and sustainable reintegration.

The Action will support the respective governments in their efforts to regulate labour migration and sustainable return, fight against and prevention of irregular migration, smuggling of migrants (SOM), trafficking in human beings (THB), mitigate the negative consequences of migration and facilitate its positive impact. Depending on the needs and priorities of each target country, this Action will support migrants throughout the migration cycle through the provision of accurate information on legal pathways, the dangers of irregular migration and support programmes in country.

The Action is built on lessons learned and results of the EU-funded programmes "Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes (IMM)" and "Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in human beings and Smuggling of Migrants in Asia and the Middle East (Glo.Act Asia and the Middle East)" (Glo.Act) and will continue selected activities in Afghanistan[3], Iraq[4], Pakistan and Tajikistan while expanding also to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Migration management is a priority area under the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum[5]. This Action will contribute to SDG 10.7 and "Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies". It complements bilateral actions addressing the root causes of migration and/or forced displacement and regional actions addressing the forced displacement crises affecting the region[6]. The Action will also contribute to the implementation of the proposed Regional Team Europe Initiative on Afghan displacement situation, in particular to its priority sector on migration management. Partner countries will be supported through this Action by taking off some of the domestic pressure, caused by protracted crisis, climate change and weak labour markets exacerbated by global inflation and economic downturn.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

The target countries along the Silk Route - Silk Route Countries (SRCs) **-** were heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are facing challenges due to the regional implications of the Afghan displacement situation and the implications of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. As a result of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, a significant number of Central Asian migrants and diaspora members in Russia are returning home, since the weakening Russian economy is affecting the employment and incomes of migrant workers and their ability to send remittances. Emergencies provide fertile ground for traffickers, rendering youth and women most vulnerable to the recruitment and exploitation by criminals that traffic people and smuggle migrants for profit. The deteriorating

---

[3] Online information services about the risks of irregular migration will continue to be provided to Afghan nationals, without benefit to or interference from the de-facto authorities, in line with the Council Conclusions of September 2021 that guide EU and Member State engagement in Afghanistan.
[4] Activities in Iraq will be limited to Component 3 (THB/SOM). Migration management in Iraq will be covered under the draft programme "Sustainable Social and Economic Re-integration, and improved migration governance in Iraq". In the case this programme will not be implemented, activities in Iraq could be extended.
[5] COM(2020) 609 final of 23.09.2020 - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum
[6] Regional actions include response to the Afghan displacement crisis, Syrian displacement crisis and the war in Ukraine.

humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the outbreak of Russia's war in Ukraine led to increased cases of trafficking in human beings in the target countries.

Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan have experienced long periods of internal and regional economic downturn, instability, security challenges, conflict, and natural disasters. Together with demographic growth, these factors impact internal and external displacement of people and put additional strains on the economies and on the social fabric of the region. Iraq and Pakistan are major countries of origin and transit for migrant smuggling. Migrants are routinely smuggled via Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria before finally arriving in Turkey to cross over into Europe. Internal trafficking is present in Iraq and Pakistan but is not consistently recognised. Common forms include trafficking for sexual exploitation, bonded labour in agriculture, brick and carpet making and mining.

Displacement inside and from **Afghanistan** is a significant and continuous trend. According to UNHCR, over 3.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs) due to the conflict alone were estimated in 2022[7] and about 2.6 million refugees from Afghanistan were registered in 2021, out of which some 2.2 million people found protection in Pakistan and Iran. The economic, social, and political situation of Afghans in both countries remains precarious, and it affects onward migration trends. In addition, Afghanistan has found itself on the brink of a starvation crisis, with some 18.9 million people facing acute food insecurity between June and November 2022. According to the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), some 24.4 million people will need lifesaving humanitarian and protection assistance in 2022[8].

In **Pakistan,** the number of jobseekers has been continuously exceeding the existing capacities of the labour market and the country has been actively promoting labour migration as a way to reduce unemployment and poverty. Since 1971, Pakistan has sent approximately 11.3 million workers for employment abroad through formal channels. However, smuggling of migrants (including children) and trafficking in human beings to engage in low-skilled employment remains an ongoing issue[9]. In addition to having become the principal host country for Afghan refugees (1.4 million of only registered Afghan refugees), since the Taliban takeover in August 2021, the number of Afghan refugees entering Pakistan has increased again (by over 0.5 million Afghans). This trend is expected to continue growing, adding to other significant migration drivers such as political instability, raising costs of living, food shortages, environmental factors and human rights violations.

Since the defeat of Da'esh in 2018, **Iraq** has been experiencing a period of relative stability with subsequent reduction of outbound irregular migration and increased number of returns. However, the dire economic situation, unemployment, and lack of personal freedoms push young people to leave Iraq, mostly by irregular means as other possibilities are scarce and/or unknown. As a consequence, people are put at risks of smuggling or instrumentalisation by third countries, as demonstrated by the migratory crisis at the EU external border with Belarus in 2021, when around 60% of detected migrants where Iraqis, mainly from the Kurdistan region. In addition, internal and cross-border displacement[10] also remain relevant drivers of instability. In Iraq, reports indicate that families desperate to find a better future for their children may "sell" them to other families, putting those children at significant risk of trafficking and child labour is common. Several reports suggest that Syrian and Iraqi refugees have become victims of trafficking for organ removal in refugee or internally displaced person camps or during their migration journeys.

In **Central Asia**, since 2020, migration flows have been affected by border closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, instability in Afghanistan, and Russia's war in Ukraine. While Russia has been and still remains a

---

7 https://reporting.unhcr.org/document/2761

8 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/afghanistan-humanitarian-response-plan-response-overview-1-january-1

9 In 2020, Member States ordered around 19,400 Pakistanis to leave , following which 1,969 Pakistani were actually returned to Pakistan. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) registered 208 cases under the Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act 2018, and arrested 705 accused human smugglers. During 2020, Anti Human Trafficking Circles at different FIA Zones registered 13,641 enquiries; 1,946 were converted to cases. The number of cases reported from all Zones during 2020 was 8,370; of which 3,076 were channelled and 1,659 resulted in convictions.

10 Whilst since the defeat of Da'esh the number of IDPs has drastically reduced from 5.8 million in 2018 (16% of the population) to 1.2 million in 2022 (2% of the population), the number of Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan region remains stable at around 255.000 persons since 2015.

traditional destination country, attractiveness of Kazakhstan and other destinations[11] for labour migrants has been increasing. Central Asia is also a transit area for irregular migration and migrant smuggling from South, South-West and East Asia, via Russia and Belarus to Europe.

In **Kyrgyzstan** and **Tajikistan**, remittances represent around 30% of GDP and in **Uzbekistan** around 12% of GDP. Rapid growth of the population[12] adds pressure on already saturated national labour markets. Furthermore, climate change affects agricultural sector: the lack of water resources combined with drier weather conditions increases food insecurity. The Fergana Valley, a densely populated intermountain territory shared by Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, may be particularly affected. As environmental changes are likely to stimulate internal and intra-regional migration, international labour migration from over-populated regions and climate in-migration hotspots will probably increase as well, due to pressure on labour markets and socio-ethnic conflicts.

While **Kazakhstan** becomes a destination country itself, it remains an important transit country for labour migrants. The number of reported illegal migration cases remains very low in Kazakhstan. However, the closure of international borders during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 resulted in a few reported cases of smuggling of migrants into Kazakhstan. While the number of migrants from Kazakhstan remains relatively low, the country is an important regional player in the area of management of migration flows.

The outbreak of Russia's war in Ukraine also raises substantial concerns about human trafficking affecting people feeling the war. In this context, criminal networks operating between Ukraine and countries in Europe and Central Asia may take advantage of people separated from their support networks and with an acute need to identify alternative methods of income generation.

As concerns **Uzbekistan,** according to the Uzbek Government, more than 133,000 persons have arrived since the beginning of Russia's war, and more than 50,000 in March alone including low skilled largely Uzbek workers who could not bear the economic brunt of the fall of the ruble and rise in food prices in Russia, as well as Ukrainians in vulnerable situations and other minorities who fled Ukraine and Russia for fear of repercussions. This on top of the 500,000 who returned during the COVID-19 pandemic for loss of livelihoods in Russia. Likewise, Russia's war has also ebbed the much relied upon flow of remittances from Russia and Ukraine home to Uzbekistan. While data is only available for Uzbekistan, this is understood to be a common scenario across the region.

2.2   Problem Analysis

The initiative will build on the lessons learned (see section 3.4) and results of the IMM[13] and Glo.Act[14] projects.

Main achievements of the IMM programme were the development of migration policies in Iraq[15] and Pakistan[16] and the building of Cooperation mechanisms mobilised to respond to crisis situations. Challenges remain as

---

[11] These include Turkey, which is a relevant partner for trade and work; South Korea, which historically hosted diaspora from Central Asian countries, and a number of Gulf countries. There is also an increased interest to migrate to EU countries, possibly driven by the German historic diaspora in the region, and destinations such as the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom are also being considered.

[12] According to the World Bank, population of Tajikistan increased by 3.3 mln. people, or by 35%, between 2000 and 2020 (from 6.216 mln. in 2000 to 9.538 mln. in 2020). In Uzbekistan, population increased by 28% between 2000 and 2020, however, in absolute numbers this increase was almost 10 mln. people: from 24.650 mln. to 34.232 mln. Among three Central Asian countries, the lowest increase was registered in Kyrgyzstan, however, even here it was almost 26%: from 4.898 mln. people in 2000 to 6.692 mln. in 2020.

13 The programme Improving Migration Management in the Silk Route Countries was implemented in AFG, PAK, BGD, IR, IQ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, KAZ, UZB and ended in April 2022.

14 The programme Glo.Act II Asia and Middle East addressing TIP/SOM is being implemented in AFG, PAK, BGD, IR, IQ and will end in June 2023.

[15] National migration management policy framework, incl. the National Policy for Engagement with Iraqi's abroad and National Migration Strategy.

[16] The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, with technical assistance from ICMPD through the EU funded project "Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes countries", took the lead to formulate a comprehensive National Emigration and Welfare Policy for Overseas Pakistanis. When adopted, this will be Pakistan's first ever national emigration policy.

regards the sensitive nature of migration which renders coordination difficult, and further capacity building is required for the implementation of the policies. Migrant Resource Centres (MRC) were established within government structures in Afghanistan[17], Iraq, Pakistan, and Tajikistan[18]. Main achievements of the MRC were the increased availability of information and awareness on risks of irregular migration through awareness campaigns, use of social media and community engagement.

Studies and surveys carried out under Glo.Act in Afghanistan will be used to set baselines and support implementation of the Action, without engaging with the de-facto authorities. In Iraq, Glo.Act has conducted a country assessment, including a review of its legal framework and the capacity of the criminal justice system. Based on the assessment, consultative meetings were carried out to create a sustainable three-year work plan. Iraq has played a key role in regional activities and initiatives organized by Glo.Act, through supporting the creation of the Glo.Act Women's Network and taking part in important regional workshops on international cooperation. Glo.Act in Iraq are also working with the Judicial Council to further exchange on reducing the criminalisation of trafficking victims. One of the key topics explored with senior Iraqi officials was the need for Iraq to develop a comprehensive and holistic approach to tackling migrant smuggling. Glo.Act was formally requested to support the Government of Iraq in drafting a comprehensive SOM law, supporting a corresponding policy framework, and to further advance international and regional cooperation on this topic.

In Pakistan, Glo.Act supported the adoption of national laws on THB and SOM, in line with the Trafficking in human beings and the Smuggling of Migrants Protocols, and the development of the National Action Plan to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling, adopted in 2020. Glo.Act has also undertaken a baseline study on a gender and human rights analysis of THB and SOM. The findings complement ongoing initiatives at the regional level, such as the Glo.Act Women's Network. Glo.Act has been also working closely with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Training Academy and has developed a consolidated training manual to standardise the academy's training curricula, in line with international standards that is being reviewed for adoption.

This Action will consolidate existing gains and amplify ongoing EU investment in the areas of migration, mobility, forced displacement and trafficking, including from the perspective of addressing cross-border and illicit financial flows. In the Kyrgyz Republic, Glo.Act builds upon learned experience implementing from 2015-2019 including innovative prevention campaigns involving youth. UNODC is also supporting Central Asian law enforcement, criminal justice practitioners, local authorities and other stakeholders on victim identification, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of trafficking in human beings. The Action will take into consideration additional studies at regional and national level produced by Glo.Act.

1. **Migration policy and governance support**

Notwithstanding the progress the target countries have made, further efforts are needed to implement a comprehensive policy approach towards migration management and labour migration, including return migration and recruitment of potential migrants.

Recognising the significant contribution of migrant workers and the Pakistani diaspora to the country's economic growth, the Government of **Pakistan** prioritises legal migration pathways and labour migration. The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, with technical assistance of the EU-funded project "Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes countries", took the lead to formulate a comprehensive National Emigration and Welfare Policy for Overseas Pakistanis. However, an efficient migration management system is also dependent on the existence and efficiently implemented internal component e.g. addressing challenges related to reintegration of returning migrants and present (Afghan) refugees. The Action will furthermore address challenges related to reintegration measures which have only been put on the top of the government agenda since COVID-19 related returns to the country and the lack of policies, reintegration programmes and support measures for returning labour migrants and their communities. Finally, the Action will

---

[17] After the takeover of the government by the Taliban in August 2021, MRC services were provided virtually.
[18] MRC were also established in Bangladesh, which is not part of the 2nd phase. Follow-up of awareness raising activities will be ensured through the Prottasha II programme.

support national authorities operationalise and implement the National Emigration and Welfare Policy for Overseas Pakistanis, thereby contributing directly to better organised labour migration.

In Iraq the Action will focus on the development of the SOM law[19]. Migrant smuggling should be designated a "crime against the general (public) interest" which will allow greater access to resources and advanced investigative techniques. Efforts will also be made to form a Specialist Anti Migrant Smuggling response within the Iraqi government and train the staff of the specialist unit and to building effective international cooperation networks.

The 2019 EU Strategy on Central Asia[20] opened a new chapter in EU-Central Asian relations, marking a move away from a narrow focus on regional cooperation and security to a broader and more flexible approach, which emphasises the links between three key areas: resilience, prosperity and connectivity. Migration serves as a link between all three areas and should aspire to become the object of a strengthened focus of the European Union as part of its broader engagement in the Central Asia region. The EU-Central Asia strategy created an opportunity for the EU to look at migration and mobility not only through the prism of security and stability but to adopt a more comprehensive and active approach centred on promoting migration opportunities rather than containing migration challenges.

The countries of **Central Asia** are considering introducing effective, coherent and inclusive migration management policies based on evidence, 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-society' approaches and human rights centred principles in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and state-led regional priorities and processes. In recent years, various countries introduced measures to regulate intraregional migration, including bilateral agreements on entry and readmission and cooperation on management of mixed migration flows, border management, return migration, migrants' rights and protection and irregular migration. However, countries generally lack comprehensive migration policies, which results in uncoordinated approaches by various governmental agencies.

Since September 2021, **Kazakhstan** has been working on a comprehensive migration policy, which would establish an interdepartmental coordination mechanism of migration-related issues and address such challenges as growing labour migration to Kazakhstan and illegal migration. In 2021, the government of the **Kyrgyz Republic** approved the Concept of Migration Policy for 2021–2030. The Strategy sets out a long-term vision for migration management. The document, among other issues, discusses the protection of the rights of labour migrants, and emphasizes the importance of facilitated return and sustainable reintegration assistance for returning migrants, especially women and children. Despite being the region's largest exporter of migrant labour. **Uzbekistan** has only recently identified migration as a key policy area with a particular focus on diversifying labour migration flows and incorporating migration into broader development planning. Since 2016, Uzbekistan has been making noticeable attempts to manage outward labour migration by providing testing and training for future labour migrants, establishing a government fund dedicated specifically to protecting the rights and interests of Uzbeks working abroad, and joining International Organisation for Migration in 2018. In **Tajikistan,** the last strategy on migration and two programmes on labour migration of nationals abroad date back to early 2000s and the latest expired in 2015. In 2021, the country established a working group on the revision and improvement of the National Strategy on Migration for the period until 2030. An additional working group was established to review and develop the draft Law on Labour Migration.

All countries of implementation are affected at different levels by migrant smuggling, and most are also transit countries. Since migrant smuggling is a cross-border crime, successful prevention, investigations and prosecutions require cooperation between the relevant authorities of countries involved. Yet, despite some initiatives, there is a limited bilateral and international operational cooperation for effective and qualitative THB and SOM investigations and prosecutions among partner countries. This Action will therefore focus on the strengthening of bilateral and regional cooperation to enhance trans-national migration management and migrant protection.

---

[19] Activities focusing in development of SOM law will be based on the UN Protocol on Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air

[20] JOIN(2019) 9 final of 15.5.2019 - Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council - The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership

2. Access to information and services along the migration cycle

A high number of persons from the target countries are willing to migrate due to push factors such as insecurity, instability, deteriorating economic conditions, and the lack of job opportunities. Despite massive information campaigns, word of mouth and social, informal networks remain major information sources of information louring potential migrants, informing them about opportunities and providing operational information about travel, lodging, and documents. These sources of information are vulnerable to and are oftentimes exploited by criminals.

MRCs proved to be instrumental to help people make informed decisions when they are considering to migrate. These centres provide outgoing, potential and returning migrants with information on a broad range of migration-related challenges and opportunities. They do so through awareness raising and information campaign strategies, community engagement, pre-departure and post-arrival information sessions, counselling, skills training and referral. They help individuals to make an informed decision about their migration trajectory and alternatives to stay through the provision of comprehensive, timely and accurate information, including the dangers and consequences of irregular migration, illegal recruitment, trafficking of human beings and smuggling of migrants. In addition, MRCs support governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, who are directly or indirectly involved in the facilitation or communication of migration.

The Action will address the information need of potential and outgoing **Pakistani** migrants with concrete guidance on legal pathways as well as counter narratives of irregular pathways being cheaper, faster and more accessible – specifically in certain provinces in Punjab, such as Gujarat, Gujranwala and Jelhum. The Action will also address information needs for Afghans in Pakistan – specifically for communities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with high rates of newly arriving Afghans.

Following the August 2021 takeover of **Afghanistan** by the Taliban it became challenging to continue supporting the MCR in Kabul, which has been established with the help of the EU funding. At the same time, it is necessary to continue providing trustworthy information to Afghani citizens (possibly, increasingly, via social networks), which will be done through a virtual MRC. There are many relocation, resettlement and humanitarian aid programmes in place to support Afghans in need of protection – information that is, however, only available to a small segment of society. Addressing this information need through this action will be crucial to support the protection of Afghans in the country and on the move. Due to the absence of EU Member States diplomatic presence on the ground the project will also represent one of the few sources of reliable data and information concerning migration pressure and migration flows in and through the country.

In **Tajikistan**, the absence of an updated national migration strategy and inadequate human, technical, and financial resources are the main challenges in efficiently addressing irregular migration and forced displacement. There is a need to enhance the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of migration policies and programmes on the rights of migrant workers and members of their families. Furthermore, there is need to strengthen coordination between the various agencies involved. The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Population in Tajikistan has 4 pre-departure orientation centres in regions across the country which aim to prepare potential and intending migrants from Tajikistan for migration. However, these centres are in urgent need for innovation and development to function better in terms of provision of services for potential migrants.

Trying to improve its management of outward labour migration, **Uzbekistan** expanded organised forms of labour recruitment designed to send Uzbek citizens to work abroad e.g., by opening of representations of the Agency for Foreign Labour Migration Affairs in destination countries and the accreditation of foreign companies for the recruitment of Uzbek migrant workers. However, this does not seem to suffice to ensure that the rights of labour migrants are adequately protected and that they do not end up in situations of exploitation or underpaid employment. While the creation of a dedicated fund for the protection of migrant workers by the Uzbek government is a welcome step, additional efforts are needed to strengthen the support Uzbek government institutions abroad can provide to Uzbek migrants. Uzbek migrant workers should be confident that their concerns can be adequately addressed by Uzbek diplomatic representations and officials from the Agency for Foreign Labour Migration Affairs.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, there are still a number of issues that would need clarification: responsibility of migration is still scattered between various ministries and institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Parliament, Presidential administration and local authorities (who would like to play a more prominent role, particularly for the MRCs). Focus is still strongly on work migration to Russia, while new markets were opening (pre-COVID-19). Linkages with education (and Technical - Vocational Education and Training (TVET)) systems need to be spelled out and enhanced to make Kyrgyz migrant workers attractive for foreign job markets.

All MRC activities are conducted in a gender-sensitive manner and with focus on groups living in vulnerable situations. Sustainability is ensured through the embedding of MRC in existing government structure (with the exception of the Afghanistan MRC) and the provision of capacity building to relevant stakeholders such as government, Civil Society Organisations and private sector.

3. Adequate operational capacities to prevent and combat THB and SOM

Despite efforts that target countries invested into strengthening their capacities to manage migration more efficiently, and counter THB and SOM, significant challenges remain. In the border regions between **Afghanistan** and **Pakistan**, smugglers often have strong ethno-linguistic ties with local communities and originate from the border regions. Different individuals and groups form flexible chains, where members can be easily replaced with little or no disruption to the network's activities. Individuals involved in migrant smuggling generally do so casually, temporarily or on an ad hoc basis, when the opportunity arises, in order to supplement other sources of income. This interchangeability of minor actors has significant implications for targeting of law enforcement efforts against SOM and THB.

Iraq's attempts to combat THB and SOM are complicated by the lack of resources, porous 3,800 km of land borders, corruption, political insecurity, and geopolitical tensions. Iraq is both an origin and destination country for women and children subjected to sex trafficking and men, women, and children subjected to forced labour. Over the last years, thousands of victims, including from the Yazidi community, have suffered sexual and other violent crimes under ISIL/Daesh[21]. Recruitment of child soldiers is another significant pattern.

Pakistan is also a country of origin, transit, and destination for THB/SOM. Observed patterns for Pakistani trafficking victims have included migration to Gulf States and Europe for low-skilled employment, such as domestic service, driving, and construction work. Pakistan, however, is a destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labour – particularly from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Women and girls from Afghanistan, China, Russia, Nepal, Iran, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan are reportedly subject to trafficking for sexual exploitation in Pakistan. Internal trafficking is also present in Pakistan, particularly involving children in contents of manual labour, prostitution and forced begging.

Extensive economic migration exposes **Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Tajikistani** men, women, and children to the risk of THB/SOM. Men and women are usually employed in agriculture and construction in Russia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kazakhstan, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. Women and children run the risk of being sexually exploited, mostly in Turkey, UAE, Russia, and Saudi Arabia. Border closures during the COVID-19 pandemic left hundreds of migrants stranded in **Kazakhstan**. Reportedly, THB/SOM increased during this time in Kazakhstan when those Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Tajikistani labour migrants, who succeeded to return from Russia and unable to find a job in their home countries, were desperate to seek a job abroad at all costs.

Institutional awareness and capacity to fight irregular migration and THB needs to be further strengthened, including through cooperation and exchange among law enforcement agencies and practitioners from the focus countries and Europe.

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

Rights holders of this Action are:

---

[21] Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant

- Migrants and their families and communities with particular attention to groups living in vulnerable situations.

Duty-bearers of this Action are:
- Ministries and state agencies responsible for migration management (including labour migration, return and reintegration, prevention of irregular migration, THB and other cross-border crimes), labour market regulation, social protection, education and vocational training, issues related to the regulation of situation of women, families and youth.

Other key stakeholders are:
- Non-governmental and civil society sector (representing the rights of the rights-holders);
- EU Member States' institutions dealing with migration management;
- Private sector representatives, including employment agencies, and media representatives.

In Iraq, key stakeholders for addressing THB and SOM are the members of the Central Committee on Combatting Human Trafficking. The Committee includes representatives from 14 different government entities as well as provincial authorities, the main relevant ones at central level are the Higher Judicial Council, the Ministry of Interior and the Iraqi Police and the anti-THB Unit, Women's Empowerment Office, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, and the Independent Human Rights Commission. Exchanges among relevant authorities from the central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government will be ensured and cooperation with specialized civil society organizations promoted.

In Pakistan, the FIA and the Ministry of Interior, are the lead entities on THB and SOM with a particular focus on transnational THB, while the local police have responsibility for combating internal THB. As well as being responsible for investigation and prosecution, the FIA has responsibility for referring victims of trafficking to the assigned shelters and child protection cells established by the concerned Social Welfare Department. The FIA also helps in seeking legal aid for victims of trafficking. Provincial Police Departments and the Frontier Corps, Ministry of Defence, which covers the western border with Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, also have roles in identifying and intercepting THB and SOM cases. The Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education establishes and develops welfare activities and shelter homes for homeless women and children. The Ministry is also responsible for the welfare of children and has formulated the national child protection policy and legislation. Other relevant Ministries as regards migration governance are the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development; Department of Labour Punjab, Ministry of States and Frontier Regions in relation to Afghan refugees.

In Tajikistan, key stakeholders for addressing THB and SOM are the members of the Inter-Ministerial Commission, together with local and regional administrative authorities involved in the implementation of the National Action Plan and the National Referral Mechanism.

Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

The implementing partner(s) will establish regional and national working plans taking into account the experience acquired by them/other implementing partners and/or donors in the target countries and will ensure complementarity with ongoing/planned regional and bilateral programmes, financed by the European Union (e.g. BOMCA[22], DATA[23], REMIT[24], initiatives on skills development and vocational education under the MIPs) and other donors. Close coordination with initiatives under the Budapest process[25] will be ensured.

---

[22] Border Management Programme in Central Asia
[23] Displacement Tracking and Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy in Asia (DATA)
[24] Remittances, Investment and Migrants' Entrepreneurship in Central Asia (PRIME REMIT Central Asia)
25 The Budapest Process is an interregional dialogue on migration stretching from Europe to the Silk Routes Region - also covering Europe's Eastern neighbours, the Western Balkans and Central Asia. The dialogue provides a platform for dialogue and operational cooperation for over 50 governments and 10 international organisations and aims to strengthen regional

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this Action is to: Contribute to migrant protection in the target countries covering all phases of (in and out) migration, including countering and preventing irregular migration, Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants.

The **Specific Objectives** (Outcomes) of the Action are to:

Specific Objective (SO) 1: Enhance a gender-sensitive and rights-based comprehensive migration governance in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Specific Objective (SO) 2: Enhance informed decision making and resilience of migrants at the personal, family and community level in Afghanistan[26], Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan covering the full migration cycle and in respect of gender and human rights considerations.

Specific Objective (SO) 3: Increase the effectiveness of responses to THB and SOM in target countries, with a particular focus on criminal justice elements, in line with international law and with full respect for human rights.

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

- Output 1.1: National authorities are capacitated to operate effective governance mechanisms for development and implementation of national migration policies, encompassing migrant protection, reintegration, and employment, with focus on groups in vulnerable situations, women and youth affected by migration.
- Output 1.2: Key stakeholders from CSO, public and private sector (such as consular staff/welfare attaches, recruitment agents,) in sending and selected receiving countries have sufficient capacities and awareness to effectively support the implementation of the target countries' migration policies.
- Output 1.3: Cooperation and exchange networks on national, regional and international level in the area of migration governance and migrant protection are enhanced and supported.

- Output 2.1: Existing Migrant Resource Centres[27] in Pakistan and Tajikistan and virtual MRC in the case of Afghanistan continues to provide services.
- Output 2.2: New Migrant Resources Centres in Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan are established and supported within competent government institutions.
- Output 2.3: MRCs provide information, counselling and referral to outgoing/potential migrants and returnees.
- Output 2.4: Skills and competencies of potential/outgoing migrants and returnees are enhanced.

---

dialogue and cooperation on migration and mobility. Furthermore, the dialogue partners are committed to promoting safe, orderly and regular migration along the migration routes, as highlighted in the most recent joint political declaration.

[26] In line with Council Conclusions of September 2021, EU and Member State activities in Afghanistan will be guided by the identified benchmarks for engagement and carried out without benefit to or interference from the de facto authorities. Virtual MRC Afghanistan: The MRC Afghanistan will continue to provide people with advice on relocation and humanitarian aid programmes and access to protection as well as dangers, risks and consequences of irregular migration following the government take-over by the Taliban in August 2021.

[27] Efforts will be made to embed MRCs within competent government institutions for increased ownerships and to ensure sustainability of the activities.

- Output 3.1: Capacities of assisted governments are strengthened to implement evidence-based policies/strategies/action plans to prevent and address THB and SOM following a human rights-based and gender equal approach.
- Output 3.2: Gaps and inconsistencies in national laws and procedures on THB and SOM[28] are identified, with clear recommendations for improvement through law changes, judicial decree or other means as appropriate.
- Output 3.3: Governments and civil society partners in target countries have the skills and mechanisms to identify, screen and refer for assistance, and support (adult and child) victims of trafficking, victims of aggravated migrant smuggling and smuggled migrants in vulnerable situations following a human rights-based and gender equal approach.
- Output 3.4: International police and judicial cooperation among partner countries is supported following a human rights-based, gender equal and child friendly approach, focused on breaking the human trafficking business model.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Indicative activities relating to Output 1.1 - National authorities are capacitated to operate effective governance mechanisms for development and implementation of national migration policies, encompassing migrant protection, reintegration, and employment, with focus on groups in vulnerable situations, women and youth affected by migration.
- Training of national authorities based on specific needs of the beneficiary countries.
- Technical assistance for governments in piloting / implementation of selected national migration policy measures.

Indicative activities relating to Output 1.2 – Key stakeholders from public and private sector (such as consular staff/welfare attaches, recruitment agents) in sending and selected receiving countries have sufficient capacities and awareness to effectively support the implementation of the target countries' migration policies.
- Training of key government regulatory bodies for labour migration to improve monitoring of the recruitment process.
- Training of consular staff/welfare attaches in selected receiving countries and recruitment agents on protection measures for migrants.

Indicative activities relating to Output 1.3 - Cooperation and exchange networks on national, regional and international level in the area of migration governance and migrant protection are enhanced and supported.
- Organise meetings and conferences to facilitate informal exchange between countries across project activities to enhance cross-programme and inter-country sharing of best practices and promote greater levels of cooperation and coherence across context as well as contribute to greater trust building between the selected Silk Routes and Central Asian countries at regional level and with EU Member States.
- Organise meetings to discuss/negotiate agreements on labour and social security arrangements between target countries and major migrant destinations countries.

Indicative activities relating to Output 2.1 - Existing Migrant Resource Centres in Pakistan and Tajikistan are embedded within competent government institutions and virtual MRC in the case of Afghanistan[29] continues to provide services:
- Technical assistance to existing MRCs (financial, structural, public information strategies, counselling, referral) within the competent government institutions.
- Development of sustainability approach for the continuation of MRCs within relevant ministries after the project ends.

Indicative activities relating to Output 2.2 - New Migrant Resources Centres in Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan are established and supported within competent government institutions:

---

[28] Development of SOM law will be based on the UN Protocol on Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

- Development of the MRCs within the structure of the competent central or local government structure in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, including MRC structure, number of employees, budget allocation, renovation of the centres' premises, equipment, recruitment of MRC staff, training of recruited staff and continued support[30].
- Technical assistance to existing MRCs (financial, structural, public information strategies, counselling, referral) within the competent government institutions.
- Development of sustainability approach for the continuation of MRCs within relevant ministries after the project ends.

Indicative activities relating to Output 2.3 - MRCs provide information, counselling and referral to outgoing/potential migrants and returnees. Social media outreach and campaign organisation, including sharing of posts and videos that provide guidance on migration issues and reintegration services.
- Targeted mass media campaigns tailored to each country and local context with migration messages and linking to the MRC counselling service in order to increase awareness on migration / reintegration / THB / SOM and personal counselling services. Continued research, design and implementation of awareness raising methods and tools most efficient in the specific country context.
- Community outreach and awareness raising on the whole migration cycle, including potential 'stigma' of returnees, as well as risks for women, THB through the MRC teams and in cooperation with local civil society partners to create sustainable government-civil society network for awareness raising through community leaders, as trusted source of information.
- Outreach to educational institutions, youth centres, etc. to create sustainable networks with respective administrations for educational activities on migration issues as well as opportunities in country.
- Technical assistance for the integration of safe, regular and orderly migration as a thematic area in the regular technical and vocational curricula in selected target countries
- Training of civil society organisations to conduct awareness raising sessions in migration prone regions of the project countries, with a focus on women groups.
- Training of journalists, including editors in chief, and other public communicators to provide an in-depth, contextualized and balanced information on migration issues in countries' media outlets.
- Monitoring and evaluation of MRCs awareness efforts, including specific awareness raising methods and tools.
- Pre-departure and post-arrival information sessions as well as development of information material for migrants and returnees to raise awareness on their rights and obligations, protection schemes and available government or CSO services.
- Personal counselling services: Counselling of people (potential and outgoing migrants, friends/family members, returnees, victims of THB/SOM etc.) in the project countries and abroad on migration and reintegration issues, employment in country and abroad, updated information on current migration and reintegration schemes, information on entry, work and residence rules in potential destination countries, as well as labour market needs in those countries.
- Further activities to improve referral mechanism of the MRCs through continued mapping and connecting with related development and government programmes as well as the private sector for potential and outgoing migrants, diaspora and returnees in the country as well as in key destination countries.

Indicative activities relating to Output 2.4 - Skills and competencies of potential/outgoing migrants and returnees are enhanced.
- Enhancement of soft- and technical skills training modules for potential/departing migrants and returnees in selected target countries in partnership with recruitment and hiring agencies and technical and vocational training institutes.
- In cooperation with vocational institutions development of information materials focused on skills development (re-skilling, recognition of prior learning, etc.) and distribution of information through job fairs and social media campaigns.

---

[30] As a risk mitigation measure, the establishment of new MRCs process will be closely monitored. In case of significant delays of negotiations procedure with the respective governments, the funds allocated for these centres may be relocated to already functioning MRCs to support their efficiency or expansion.

Indicative activities relating to Output 3.1 - Capacities of assisted governments are strengthened to implement evidence-based policies/strategies/action plans to prevent and address THB and SOM following a human rights- and gender – based approach.

- Develop/update rights-based gaps and needs analysis of institutional responses to THB and SOM in the partner countries, including relevant actors, data and information analysis (e.g. trends/routes, linkages with other crimes, etc.) following Glo.Act's approach to human rights and gender.
- Develop crime prevention guidance materials, awareness raising materials, tools or case analysis together with new or innovative partners, including human rights, gender equality and children's rights experts.
- Expand the illicit financial flows study conducted by Glo.Act in Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, as a second phase of the research focusing on the route to Europe via Central Asia and Eastern Europe, with a focus on money service business and the digitalisation of migrant smuggling.
- Provide technical assistance for developing or strengthening data management and national monitoring and reporting systems.
- Develop or update national capacity building curriculum and strategy/ies for the various criminal justice actors following a rights-based, gender equal and child sensitive approach.
- Provide training and mentorship on the use of special investigative techniques, judicial and law enforcement cooperation, to promote increased evidence gathering potential for officials leading on THB and SOM investigations.
- Provide training on internet-based trafficking, including provision of software and mentorship to detect and combat it at operational level.
- Roll out and implement, possibly with WHO, the new Glo.Act Toolkit for the Investigation and Prosecution of THB for Organ Removal.
- Develop child-sensitive guidance materials on THB and SOM available for capacity building work, in cooperation with UNICEF, e.g. support child-friendly court proceedings, strengthen child commission's THB knowledge, etc.

Indicative activities relating to Output 3.2. - Gaps and inconsistencies in national laws and procedures on THB and SOM are identified, with clear recommendations for improvement through law changes, judicial decree or other means as appropriate.

- Develop/update legal assessments of THB and SOM legislation including recommendations for improvement, as well as analysis of wider legislation and procedures relating to THB and SOM (such as immigration laws, child protection laws and criminal procedures) with view to identifying and addressing gaps and potential conflicts.
- Provide technical assistance to support the development/amendment of draft laws and procedures (such as through facilitation of inter-departmental working groups and support for legal drafting workshops), with a focus on gaps in the protection of children on the move.
- Organise meetings to support the ratification/accession to the UN THB and SOM Protocols and partner countries' participation in normative and standard setting intergovernmental discussions.
- Develop or adapt training tools and models of legislation to support the legal drafting process.
- Advocate for the adoption of draft legislation or procedures, as well as for the creation of a THB district bench or the designation of dedicated specialised judges in key hotspots.

Indicative activities relating to Output 3.3. - Governments and civil society partners in assisted partner countries have the skills and mechanisms to identify, screen and refer for assistance, and support (adult and child) victims of trafficking, victims of aggravated migrant smuggling and smuggled migrants in vulnerable situations following a human rights-based and gender equal approach.

- Provide technical assistance, including capacity building and training activities for government authorities and civil society organizations on the human rights of migrants, as well as the identification, referral, and protection of trafficked victims, smuggled migrants, and other migrants in vulnerable situations (i.e. potential victims of trafficking who require special protection needs, migrants who are vulnerable to or have been subjected to abuse, asylum seekers and refugees, children).
- Provide targeted capacity building to existing victims centres providing assistance and protection to women and children.
- Disburse funding to civil society organizations (e.g. pro-bono lawyers organizations) in selected partner countries for the direct provision of assistance services to trafficking victims, smuggled migrants and other

migrants in vulnerable situations, with a view to complementing the assistance provided to those countries under other specific objectives of the Action, and as part of a comprehensive approach to advance national frameworks to prevent and address THB and SOM.
- Invest in civil society to address the gap in victim support and develop a Central Asian network of victim support organisations.

Indicative activities relating to Output 3.4. - International police and judicial cooperation among partner countries supported following a human rights-based, gender equal and child friendly approach, focused on breaking the business model.

- Support bilateral and international exchanges and operations to build policy and operational cooperation to respond to THB and SOM (protocols for intelligence sharing, joint investigation teams, joint trainings/workshops).
- Provide training on mutual legal assistance (MLA) among partner countries and relevant countries of origin, transit or destination, including supporting central authorities for MLA matters.
- Organise meetings for the creation of informal cooperation networks to share information and to exchange good examples relating to investigation and prosecuting cases (e.g. through regional peer-to-peer exchange seminars).
- Liaise and organise meetings with officials from origin/transit countries co-located with judicial authorities in destination countries to promote the creation of a liaison magistrate programme, and to assist with cross-regional THB or SOM matters.
- Continue the work of the Glo.Act Women's Network as per the agreed roadmap to action and in particular with the expansion of the Network at national and regional level, and the mentorship programme to mentor female criminal justice professionals in operational or decision-making roles in investigations/prosecutions/judiciary to increase women's participation at this level.

The commitment of the EU's contribution to the Team Europe Initiatives foreseen under this annual action plan will be complemented by other contributions from Team Europe partners. It is subject to the formal confirmation of each respective partners' meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the event that the TEIs and/or these contributions do not materialise the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Climate change-induced migration and displacement is a reality in the countries of implementation and is set to grow. It threatens livelihoods and enterprises, particularly in agriculture, and challenge water and food security and public health in rural communities. This Action contributes to the protection of affected individuals and communities.

Considering that women and children are more exposed to risks related to irregular migration, the Action will put a strong focus on gender-transformative approaches and ensure the provision of needs-based and tailor-made gender and child-sensitive interventions.

Similarly, conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm approaches will be considered, including in relation to gender, traditional justice systems and criminal justice systems that are gender-biased, as well as impacts of conflict and violence in targeted countries.

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the SEA screening
The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that no further action was required.
Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening
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

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

Gender infuses all aspects of human trafficking and migrant smuggling: from (1) the factors that contribute to risky migration decisions, including inequitable access to resources and gender based violence, to (2) conceptualisations of the problem, often reflecting stereotypes based on gender, race, culture, religion or a combination of these factors, to (3) the nature of laws and policies developed to deal with the phenomenon, and (4) the protection and support offered to victims of trafficking, smuggled migrants and other migrants in vulnerable situations. In responding to these crimes, criminal justice systems face internal challenges and discrimination related to gender. These include: poor representation of women in professional criminal justice roles; sex segregation of jobs and roles; tolerance and perpetuation of negative gender stereotypes in the workplace; different working conditions and benefits for men and women; gender discrimination in the access that men and women have to professional development opportunities; and work place harassment.

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that the intervention will develop and implement a gendered approach to prevention and response to human trafficking and migrant smuggling, which will be mainstreamed using UNODC's Toolkit for mainstreaming human rights and gender equality into criminal justice interventions to address THB and SOM[31]. This will help to ensure that approaches to promote and support human rights and gender quality are mutually reinforcing and to facilitate a nuanced response to vulnerability, in which gender in considered along with a range of other inter-connected factors including: economic disparity; conflict and displacement; environmental factors; poverty; natural and manmade disasters; disability; and discrimination based on factors such as sex, age, ethnicity and social grouping.

The project will strive to incorporate gender-analysis research into training programs for policy makers, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges; advocate for raising awareness of the strong operational advantages that increased inclusion of women brings to criminal justice teams; support services that address the intersectional needs of different groups in vulnerable situations, including those that are particularly vulnerable as a result of age, ethnicity and/or gender discrimination; and confront stigmatisation of those who have faced sexual and other forms of exploitation.

Building upon the work done in the framework of Glo.Act to establish and operationalise the Women's Network[32], the Network could widen its geographical reach to the assisted partner countries, facilitating cooperation and synergies amongst female practitioners. The Network will also build on its capacity development and advocacy work to ensure institutional reform in favour of the advancement of women by expanding the Women Can[33] awareness-raising campaign.

Human Rights

The project will pursue a victim and migrant centred, human rights-based approach (HRBA) in line with the UNODC guidance note on the promotion of human rights. The HRBA underpins all aspects of the project's work and it is reinforced by the use of tools to assist staff in undertaking human rights and gender assessments. This approach is also in line with the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025)[34] to address trafficking in human beings and the EU's renewed Action Plan against migrant smuggling[35] which ensures the human rights of migrants. Law enforcement officials are often the first point of contact for trafficked persons and smuggled migrants, and it is essential that they have the knowledge, skills and motivation to treat them in an

---

[31] https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/glo-act2/gender-and-human-rights-toolkit.html

[32] https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/glo-act5/index2.html

[33] https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/glo-act5/women_can.html

[34] COM(2021) 171 final of 14.4.2021 - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings 2021- 2025

[35] COM(2021) 591 final of 29.9.2021 - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - A renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling (2021-2025)

appropriate, humane and gender-sensitive manner, taking into account their vulnerable situations at all stages of the criminal justice process. Officials also need to be able to refer them to the correct services. This will involve close collaboration with other, noncriminal justice actors. Further, it is essential that victims and witnesses be provided with protection and support in accessing justice, including through remedy and reparation. Specific modules for the protection of victims' and migrants' rights will be included in all capacity building and awareness-raising activities provided in the framework of the project. Additionally, the project will seek to strengthen the protection of the rights of those subject to these criminal activities, in accordance with the THB and SOM Protocols, including, where appropriate and feasible, by supporting the establishment and capacity building of specialised victim support units, and by promoting a legal framework compliant with the Protocols with respect to protection, assistance and non-criminalisation of victims of human trafficking. Regarding children, the project will work to ensure that the classification or non-classification of a child as a victim of trafficking is not used to deny to any child the rights to which they are entitled simply by being children. This includes all rights under human right instruments, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which all EU and programme partner States are a party. Considering the (pockets of) fragility and conflict in the targeted countries the programme will mainstream protection to ensure that access to programme activities/services is provided on a safe, equal and fair basis and to prevent, reduce/mitigate and respond to the risks and consequences of violence, coercion, deliberate deprivation and abuse, in line with the European Commission guidelines on protection in humanitarian crises. Additionally, the Action will apply the working principles of the HRBA: applying all human rights for all, meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making, non-discrimination and equality, accountability and rule of law for all, and transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1.

There is an increased likelihood of abuse experienced by people with disability. Traffickers deliberately target victims they think they will be able to isolate and control. As a result of pervasive stigma and stereotypes surrounding individuals with disabilities, traffickers focus on individuals with disabilities as targets in this crime. Some risk factors that traffickers try to exploit may include gaps in education, societal isolation, and inadequate access to services and support. As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as [D1]. This implies that the project will seek to ensure access to justice for people with disabilities and that barriers to legal action and protection are overcome.

Democracy

Both international migration and democratic development are important contemporary public and policy concerns. Migrants are able to strongly influence democratic participation in their homelands e.g. through the remittance of money and newfound ideas about democracy from afar or through return.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The Action is undertaken with the aim to mitigate the impact in Central Asia of the post-COVID19 pandemic and current war of aggression by Russia against Ukraine.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The Action is intended to address challenges migrants face in accessing information, resources and services make them particularly vulnerable to the impacts of natural and man-made hazards. However, migrants are also exceptionally resourceful individuals, whose resourcefulness and capabilities are key for the resilience of their host communities. The Action addresses the call made by the 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction to include migrants in disaster risk reduction policies and practices of their host countries and communities.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Risks	Likelihood (High/	Impact (High/	Mitigating measures

	Medium/ Low)	Medium/ Low)	
Improvement of migration governance discontinue to be on the respective Governments agenda, therefore there is reduced commitment to the project implementation	Low	High	Continued dialogue and coordination of project objectives and expected results with high-level governmental representatives to sustain governments' interest and commitment.
Despite general commitment to the project, respective governments do not demonstrate ownership and responsibility for the operations of the established systems for informed migration-related decision making	Medium	High	Application of the participatory approach in all stages of project implementation, including joint design of the capacity building and MRC activities in order to increase ownership of the project results, and raise institutional awareness on links between efficient migration governance and country's development.
There is limited access to migration-related data for analysis, limited or no capacities within the respective institutions to analyse collected data	Medium	Medium	Implementing partners apply holistic approach to migration governance, therefore, has expert capacity for independent information collection, as well as for building capacities for information gathering, analysis and use. In this regard, the project stakeholders will be strongly supported by the Implementing partners, including MRCs staff.
There is little interest of cooperation partners on national, regional and international level	Low	High	Continued outreach and dialogue with cooperation partners on all involved levels, informing about project activities and benefits of cooperation for all involved
There is little or no Government support in continuation of existing MRCs and/or establishment of new MRCs	Low	High	There is already now a strong commitment of the Governments in supporting MRCs structures; however, the project implementation team will closely monitor the level of support, in particular, with regard to implementation of the negotiations for new MRCs establishment, in order to adjust project resources in case of risk escalation and relocate them for more efficient implementation of the project activities. Particular attention will be paid to increase ownership and sustainability of the MRCs.
Security and political stability in the partner countries, notably with respect to the risk of politisation of migration	High	High	The Implementing Partners have strong partnerships with target countries and will maintain regular communication with key counterparts to allow for the identification of corrective measures, if needed, to ensure a smooth implementation of the project.
Efforts to strengthen the response to human trafficking and migrant smuggling are undermined	High	Medium	The Implementing Partner will work closely with its anticorruption specialist staff to ensure that the development of programme activities considers (1) the likelihood of complicity, (2) its potential impact

by corruption/complicity of government officials			and (3) opportunities to mitigate the complicity and/or its impact.
Low level of attention dedicated to, and low prioritisation of, addressing human trafficking and migrant smuggling issues by the concerned national authorities, given the number of competing priorities in the partner countries	Medium	High	The Implementing Partner will work to ensure that the activities supported are in line with countries' priority needs. For example, while ensuring that programme focus is maintained. Glo.Act will consider training requests that equip criminal justice practitioners with skills that are transferrable to other international crime types. This will also mitigate the potential impact of staff turnover.
Socio-cultural barriers to advance on gender equality and human rights	Medium	Medium	Widespread awareness-raising and training for staff and partner institutions
Frequent turnover of officials limits the effectiveness of capacity building activities	High	High	The Implementing Partner will pursue a three-pronged strategy to address turnover: (1) discussions with counterpart countries with view to focusing training on staff likely to be in position for a minimum 2-3 years; (2) embedding of training in local institutions to facilitate wider coverage; and (3) as appropriate, integrating training into broader programmes, resulting in more officials with transferrable skills.

Lessons learnt

- Country cooperation agreements should be signed in order to establish strong **links** between **MRCs and relevant government ministries** responsible for operating and implementing MRCs, and to improve collaboration between them.
- **MRC**s should also establish **strong relationships with the UN, NGOs, and other donors** and participate in UN/NGO cluster meetings.
- There is a need to **provide information and services especially in migration-prone areas** of the partner countries. This is possible through the expansion of MRCs locally, mobile MRCs or virtual MRCs.
- **Capacity building** should be anchored by mentors – ideally in hubs or hotspots – with direct access to senior operational decision makers and must include blended learning to supplement traditional workshop or classroom learning and simulation. Capacity building should be based on careful and revised assessments, priorities for action, leading to theories of change. Capacity building strategies can help identify how to make skills development more sustainable and embedded in national processes. Drawing on existing UNODC Toolkits, such as the Criminal Justice Assessment Toolkit and specialist assessment toolkits for THB and SOM, the Action will locate its capacity building activities in the context of the overall criminal justice system, with consideration of factors such as recruitment and retention, operational guidelines and resource availability.
- In terms of **strategy and policy development and adoption** – adoption can be achieved, as well as new legislation but it takes significant advocacy, resources and national ownership – all parties must understand and commit to the timeframe. Comprehensive new THB and SOM legislation was adopted in Pakistan as a direct result of Glo.Act drafting support and advocacy, but it took seven years. This forms the backbone now of the current national response and represents one of the most progressive anti-trafficking pieces of law, including a provision on non-punishment.
- Rights-based approach: Even countries that reportedly don't want to address SOM (due to the remittance economy) do want to take steps to protect their citizens and target the exploiters. Promoting a **rights-based approach** such as in the UN SOM Protocol is more effective. Activities and messaging should emphasise: (1) the importance of legal migration processes in reducing the opportunities for, and reach and influence of, criminal smuggling networks, (2) the importance of rights-based approaches to both human rights obligations

- and effective responses to organised crime, (3) the distinction between smuggling and facilitation of irregular migration, based on the Smuggling Protocol definition that includes financial or material benefit as its purpose element.

- Many anti-trafficking/smuggling interventions actually cause direct harm to victims or persons in vulnerable situations or other persons (wrongfully accused or defendants) and consistent regular attention needs to be paid by all in project delivery to ensure that **human rights and gender empowerment** are effectively considered and monitored at all stages of implementation. The Glo.Act Human Rights and Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit is recognised as a practical new tool to support this process. The Action will involve all partners, particularly law enforcement, to highlight the crucial role of civil society in securing effective criminal justice outcomes, including the link between victim protection and care and successful prosecutions

- **Data collection and capacity** is key to measuring results but very few countries have reliable baseline data. Reporting limited numbers of detected victims and few convictions does not necessarily mean that traffickers are not active in these countries and likewise increases in reported victims can reflect an increased capacity to detect flows and should be seen as positive in many countries.

- Measuring criminal justice responses by the number of cases investigated and prosecuted can lead some low-resource countries to put pressure on their law enforcement and judicial officials to increase convictions, sometimes at the loss of the interests of justice and the goal of ending impunity. Increasing the numbers of low-level perpetrators being brought forward can have little disruptive effect on THB/SOM while in some countries raises serious concerns about human rights of defendants and fair trial/due process violations. Focus of actions shall be on the **quality of the investigations/convictions**.

- **Tracing illicit financial flows** is key to effective crime analysis and investigation but is almost uniformly not done as part of counter THB/SOM work in partner countries.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

Outputs level

IF capacity building activities based on specific needs of the project countries are successfully implemented, IF governance mechanisms are employed for implementation of migration policies and IF governments are supported in piloting and implementation of selected migration policy measures, IF informal exchange between countries across project activities is established, AND there is no high turnover in the respective state institutions to support institutional memory THEN the respective national authorities in the project countries will be able to operate effective migration governance mechanisms for development and implementation of national migration policies, encompassing migrants' protection, reintegration, legal pathways, and improve the situation of women and youth affected by migration.

IF existing MRCs are supported to continue their operations within competent government institutions, and new MRCs are established and IF MRCs successfully carry out awareness raising, counselling, referral and skills training activities AND there is continued support of the respective governments to the MRC operations THEN potential, outgoing and returning migrants can take informed decisions about the options to migrate or remain in their country of origin.

IF there are efficient legal frameworks in the areas of THB and SOM and IF the existing challenges which impede effective investigations and prosecutions are adequately addressed, and IF data collection systems and evidence-based strategies at the national, regional and international levels are improved, and IF protection and prevention approaches are also mainstreamed throughout, THEN partner countries in Central Asia and the Middle East are able to address the challenges of THB and SOM.

Outcomes level

IF respective national authorities in the project countries are able to operate effective migration governance mechanisms for development and implementation of national migration policies, encompassing migrants' protection, employment, and situation of women and youth affected by migration and IF migration governance in the project countries are further supported by cooperation and exchange networks on national and international

levels AND improvement of migration governance continues to be high on the agendas of respective governments, THEN migration governance in the project countries will be improved.

IF insufficient expertise concerning detection, investigation and prosecution is addressed through training, mentorship and coaching of dedicated units and officials, IF these national experts are able to keep up with fast evolving criminal activities, THEN countries will have a robust criminal justice response with improved operational outcomes to break the THB and SOM business model, while fully protecting the rights of victims.

Impact level

IF migration governance in the project countries is improved and IF government-led systems for informed migration-related decision making cover the full migration cycle in targeted countries AND the respective governments in targeted countries will continue supporting the overall objective and main goals of the project, THEN the project will contribute to migrant protection, as well as further support the respective governments to improve migration management and to counter and prevent irregular migration and THB/SOM.

IF agency to agency communication is improved and provided without formal requests, and IF there is a comprehensive, efficient, effective, multi-agency and flexible international legal cooperation, THEN the appropriate investigation and prosecution of traffickers and smugglers could be ensured.

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
Impact	Contribute to migrant protection in the target countries covering all phases of (in and out) migration, including countering and preventing irregular migration, THB and SOM	1. Number of migrants (w/m) who migrate through legal channels, per country of origin in the Silk Routes and Central Asia regions	1. tbc during inception phase	1. 25% variation	• Policy documents and guidelines; action plans; MoU; • THB report, national data, Eurostat • Reports of labour attaches and embassies, unemployment services, etc. • Reports of programmes, implemented in the region	*Not applicable*
		2. Number of SOM and THB cases prosecuted per year, per country.	2. tbc during inception phase	2. 10% increase per year		
Outcome 1	1. Enhance a gender-sensitive and rights-based comprehensive migration governance in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.	1.1. Number of newly adopted or revised laws / strategies/ policies directly relevant to implement the commitments taken in the	1.1. tbc during inception phase	1.1. At least one per country	• Laws, policies, strategy documents	• Active engagement of five SRC, as well as EU

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
		Budapest Process, disaggregated by country			• Project implementation reports/Project evaluation reports	Member States in all components of the Action
		1.2 Number of ministries/offices submitting results data at least annually following the agreed framework	1.2. tbc during inception phase	1.2. Availability of data per year and each country		• Political stability in the SRCs
		1.3 Number of migration relevant policies, strategies and procedures have been adopted/reviewed, per country that include particular sections on gender equality and human rights	1.3. tbc during inception phase	1.3. At least one per country		• Increased security issues and natural disasters do not divert the attention of national authorities
Outcome 2	2. Enhance informed decision making and resilience of migrants at the personal, family and community level in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan covering the full migration cycle and in respect of gender and human rights considerations	2.1. % of migrants who have attended information sessions report that they gained new knowledge on legal migration pathways (by sex and country of origin)	2.1. Tbc during inception phase	2.1. At least 80% surveyed	• MRC clients databases • Meeting reports • Participant survey	
		2.2. Number of foreign residents or migrants (w/m) accessing existing public services to seek rights-based support and assistance, by country and public service addressed	2.2. tbc during inception phase	2.2. 30% increase		
		2.3. Number of beneficiaries of the pre-departure briefings organised by the project who are now employed abroad, disaggregated by sex and country	2.3. tbc during inception phase	2.3. 25% increase		

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
Outcome 3	3. Increase the effectiveness of responses to THB and SOM in target countries, with a particular focus on criminal justice elements, in line with international law and with full respect for human rights.	3.1 Number of partner countries that have reviewed, amended existing and/or developed new policies/strategies/action plans against THB and/or SOM following EU support	3.1. tbc during inception phase	3.1. At least: one country in the Middle East and one in Central Asia	• Publications, briefs, reports available on the programme website • Reports of partner countries • Parliamentary/ government reports • National strategies/action plans/policies/leg islation submitted by partner countries • UNODC Toolkit for mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender Equality into criminal justice interventions to address THB/SOM • Project monitoring and learning system	• Political and/or institutional commitment to and active engagement by partner countries to pursue necessary steps to develop and/or strengthen national policies and legal frameworks against THB/SOM. • Partner countries are willing to address barriers to effective action including through (1) ensuring appropriate participation in project activities and (2) addressing frequent rotation of individuals in key positions.
		3.2. Number of partner countries that have reviewed, amended existing and/or developed new legislation against THB and/or SOM	3.1. tbc during inception phase	3.2. At least: one country in the Middle East and one in Central Asia		
Output 1	1.1. National authorities are capacitated to operate effective governance mechanisms for development and implementation of national migration policies, encompassing	1.1.1. Number of new or revised strategies/policies/plans associated to the technical	1.1.1. tbc during inception phase	1.1.1. At least one per country	• Project implementation reports	• Political relevance of

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
relating to Outcome 1	migrant protection, reintegration, and employment, with focus on groups in vulnerable situations, women and youth affected by migration.	assistance drafted by the government with support of the EU-funded intervention			• Project evaluation reports • Feedback from government counterparts • Official reports (governments, international organisations, donors) • Survey • Photos, review reports, government certificate for MRC establishment • MRC clients databases • Procedure documents • Meeting reports • Participant survey	strong migration management • Level of participation of government • Political stability
		1.1.2. Number of technical assistance requests received from and completed in the target countries	1.1.2. tbc during inception phase	1.1.2. increase by 30%		
Output 2 **Relating to Outcome 1**	1.2. Key stakeholders from public and private sector (such as consular staff/welfare attaches, recruitment agents) in sending and selected receiving countries have sufficient capacities and awareness to effectively support the implementation of the target countries' migration policies.	1.2.1Number of government officials trained and reporting to use the knowledge in their work, disaggregated by sex and sector	1.2.1 tbc during inception phase	1.2.1 tbc during inception phase		
		1.2.2 Number of consular staff/welfare attaches and recruitment agents trained and reporting to apply the knowledge in their work, disaggregated by sex and sector	1.2.2 tbc during inception phase	1.2.2 tbc during inception phase		
Output 3 **relating to Outcome 1**	1.3. Cooperation and exchange networks on national, regional and international level in the area of migration governance and migrant protection are enhanced and supported	1.3.1. Number of new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place enabling regional cooperation for law enforcement agencies, including for the exchange of data and information on criminal activities concerning irregular migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling	1.3.1. tbc during inception phase	1.3.1. 4 SOPs functional		
		1.3.2 Number of law enforcement officials with decision-making capacity	1.3.2. tbc during inception phase	1.3.2. 1000		

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
		who participate actively in the project's meetings and events (attendance of at least one meeting/event every year), disaggregated by sex, country, agency				
Output 1 **relating to Outcome 2**	2.1. Existing MRCs in Pakistan, Tajikistan are embedded within competent government institutions and the virtual MRC Afghanistan continues to provide services	2.1.1. Number of migrants using the services provided by MRCs by sex and country of origin 2.1.2 % of users who are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the MRC service used (by sex, MRC and type of service 2.1.3 Status of the sustainability strategy	2.1.1. tbc during inception phase 2.1.2 tbc in a baseline survey in 2023 2.1.3 No draft sustainability strategies available	2.1.1. at least 80% positive feedback by migrants, returnees & their families 2.1.2 at least 80% positive feedback by migrants, returnees & their families 2.1.3 At least one per country		
Output 2 **relating to Outcome 2**	2.2. New MRCs in Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan are established and supported within competent government institutions.	2.2.1. Number of operational and fully equipped MRCs constructed with project support, per country 2.2.2 Number of migrants benefitting from the services of new MRCs 2.2.3. Number of participants (w/m) trained/mentored and coached in line with	2.2.1. 4 existing MRCs 2.2.2 0 2.2.3 0 2.2.4 no draft strategies	2.2.1. 3 new MRCs 2.2.2 tbc during inception phase 2.2.3 tbc during inception phase		

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
		capacity building strategy per country 2.1.4 Sustainability strategy drafted		2.2.4 At least one per country		
Output 3 **relating to Outcome 2**	2.3. MRCs provide information, counselling and referral to outgoing/potential migrants and returnees.	2.3.1. Number of migrants, potential migrants and individuals from host communities who have received protection and/or assistance at MRCs with project support, disaggregated by sex, country, type of support received	2.3.1. tbc during inception phase	2.3.1. 10,000		
		2.3.2. Number of people reached through media campaigns conveying information aiming to promote understanding of migration with project support, by country and type of media.	2.3.2. tbc during inception phase	2.3.2. At least one information campaign per country		
Output 4 **relating to Outcome 2**	2.4. Skills and competencies of potential/outgoing migrants and returnees are enhanced.	2.4.1. Number of potential/outgoing migrants and returnees (m/f) with increased skills required in the labour market 2.4.2 Number of potential/outgoing migrants and returnees attending EU-funded job fairs and social media campaigns on skills development/ transfer,	2.4.1. 0 2.4.2 0	2.4.1. tbc during inception phase 2.4.2 at least 1 job fair and 1 social media campaign per year and country		

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
		disaggregated by sex and country of origin				
Output 1 **relating to Outcome 3**	3.1. Capacities of assisted governments are strengthened to implement evidence-based policies/strategies/action plans to prevent and address THB and SOM following a human rights and gender-based approach.	3.1.1. Number of national (new or updated) gaps and needs analyses (with recommendations) produced to inform the development and/or revision of national policies/strategies/action plans	3.1.1. 2019 Glo.Act country gaps and needs assessments in Iraq and Pakistan, none for Central Asian countries.	3.1.1. At least 1 new or updated gaps and needs analysis (with recommendations) per target country	• Reports, analyses and assessments produced • Guidance materials, tools or case analysis developed • Mission and workshop reports • Project monitoring and learning system • Criminal justice system capacity building strategy for THB and SOM • Agendas and lists of participants • End-of-workshop and follow-up evaluation questionnaires • Assessment reports • Mission reports • Project monitoring and learning system • Adapted and/or newly developed training	• Partner countries are willing to address barriers to effective action including through (1) ensuring appropriate participation in project activities and (2) addressing frequent rotation of individuals in key positions. • Counterparts are willing to follow a multidisciplinary approach in the development and implementation of THB and/or SOM policies/strategies/action plans. • Counterparts and external funding organisations are willing to align assistance with evidence
		3.1.2 Number of strategy and policy guidance materials, tools and case analysis developed together with new or innovative partners, including human rights, gender equality and children's rights experts	3.1.2. 2021 Glo.Act Human Rights and Gender Toolkit	3.1.2. At least one new tool developed in partnership with human rights, gender equality and children's rights experts		
		3.1.3. Number of initiatives to support implementation, monitoring, or reporting on policies/strategies/action plans	3.1.3. Iraq (judicial guidance note on victim protection pending approval), Pakistan (National Action Plan 2021-2025 monitoring template), Uzbekistan (one ongoing initiative on THB policy), none in the other Central Asian countries.	3.1.3 At least new 2 initiatives		

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
		3.1.4. Number of target countries with criminal justice system capacity building strategy for THB and SOM	3.1.4. Iraq (one draft capacity building strategy for police and judicial investigators), Pakistan (one FIA capacity building strategy), none for the Central Asian countries.	3.1.4. At least one per assisted partner country	materials incorporated in training curricula • Agendas and lists of participants • End-of-workshop and follow-up evaluation questionnaires • Assessment reports • Mission reports • Partnership agreements with national training academies and/or educational institutions • Launch and dissemination events of publications developed • Project monitoring and learning system	and accumulated knowledge. • Assisted partner countries retain essential foundation stones on which to build an effective response to THB and SOM • Partner countries nominate qualified officials to participate in training/mentoring/coaching activities. • Skills/expertise gained from training/mentoring/coaching activities are effectively applied in the investigation and/or prosecution of THB/SOM cases. • Tools, materials, SOPs and guidelines produced and adopted are being applied to
		3.1.5. Number of participants (m/f) trained/mentored and coached in line with capacity building strategy	3.1.5. practitioners and stakeholders trained: Iraq: 261, Pakistan: 1474; no data for the other Central Asian countries.	3.1.5. At least another 150 people trained (m/f), with at least 30 trained in each target country with agreed capacity building strategy		
		3.1.6. Number of tools, materials, SOPs and guidelines produced to support effective national criminal justice responses to THB/SOM	tbc during inception phase	tbc during inception phase		

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
						investigate and prosecute THB and/or SOM cases, following a victim-centred approach.
Output 2 **relating to Outcome 3**	3.2. Gaps and inconsistencies in national laws and procedures on THB and SOM identified, with clear recommendations for improvement through law changes, judicial decree or other means as appropriate	3.2.1. Number of national (new or updated) legal assessments (with recommendations) produced with EU support to inform the development and/or revision of national legislation	3.2.1. 2019 Glo.Act legal assessments in Iraq and Pakistan, none for targeted Central Asian countries.	3.2.1. At least one new or updated legal assessment (with recommendations) per assisted partner country	• Reports, analyses and assessments produced • Mission and workshop reports • Project monitoring and learning system	• Adequate political and/or institutional commitment to legal change. • Changes to the legal frameworks are not hindered by political climate. • Proposed or amended THB and/or SOM laws are not in conflict with other laws.
		3.2.2. Number of initiatives to promote legislative development (legal drafting workshops and assistance, technical working groups, promotion of THB/SOM Protocol ratification)	tbc during inception phase	3.2.2 At least 2 initiatives		
Output 3 **relating to Outcome 3**	3.3. Governments and civil society partners in assisted partner countries have the skills and mechanisms to identify, screen and refer for assistance, and support (adult and child) victims of trafficking, victims of aggravated migrant smuggling and smuggled migrants in vulnerable situations following a human rights-based and gender equal approach.	3.3.1. Number of government and civil society representatives (m/f) participating in initiatives on identification, referral and assistance to (adult and child) victims of trafficking, smuggled migrants and other migrants in vulnerable	tbc during inception phase	3.3.1. At least 2 initiatives	• Data from UNODC Global Report on THB and Global Study on SOM or similar studies conducted. • Reports from other UN agencies and international organizations.	• Assisted partner countries are committed to acknowledge and address the need for enhanced victim protection and assistance, including through

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
		situations, in line with international standards per country			• Workshop reports, including recommendations. • Mission reports. • Public announcements by partner countries. • Responses to the Review Mechanism questionnaire • Toolkit: For mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender Equality into criminal justice interventions to address THB/SOM • Project monitoring and learning system	engagement of civil society. • Improved access to assistance services will build trust and encourage victims of trafficking and migrants in vulnerable situations to cooperate and disclose criminals.
Output 4 **relating to Outcome 3**	3.4. International police and judicial cooperation among partner countries is supported following a human rights-based, gender equal and child friendly approach, focused on breaking the business model.	3.4.1. Number of police and judicial representatives participating in activities facilitated to support effective mutual legal assistance in criminal matters related to THB and SOM	3.4.1 Limited at programme outset, Judicial Cooperation Net-work for Central Asia and Southern Caucasus (CASC) in Central Asia, ongoing efforts in Uzbekistan.	3.4.1 At least 2 initiatives	• Workshop agendas and lists of participants. • Recommendations, reports and minutes from workshops • Mission Reports • Agenda and lists of participants • Online and in-person	• Partner countries are willing to engage in activities that would promote international cooperation. • Police-to-police cooperative agreements translate into
		3.4.2. Number of police and judicial representatives	3.4.2. 3.1.1 Iraq (ongoing – Glo.Act Asia and	3.4.2 At least new 2 initiatives		

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
		participating in activities facilitated to support effective bilateral police-to police cooperation on issues related to THB and SOM	the Middle East), Pakistan (ongoing – Glo.Act Asia and the Middle East), Central Asia (ongoing BOMCA, UNODC efforts on bilateral, regional, trans-regional (with Central America) as well as international cooperation in 2021, 2022 and planned for 2023 to facilitate evidence collection in ongoing criminal investigations. Ongoing Budapest Process meetings facilitated by ICMPD		communication with key stakeholders • Bilateral Cooperation Agreements	prompt, effective cooperative operations on the ground.

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 countries.

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 48 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 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[36].

4.3.1 Indirect Management with (a) pillar assessed entity(ies)

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

For the implementation of Specific Objectives 1 (Enhance a gender-sensitive and rights-based comprehensive migration governance in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) and Specific Objective 2 (Enhance informed decision making and resilience of migrants at the personal, family and community level in Afghanistan[37], Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan covering the full migration cycle and in respect of gender and human rights considerations):

- Experience and track record managing international cooperation programmes in the area of migration management in the main target countries;

- operational capacity to identify key stakeholders (e.g. in judiciary, police);

- to have access to and mobilise expertise to address specific capacity building activities;

- capacity to generate data for the proper implementation of the Action.

For the implementation of Specific Objective 3 (Increase the effectiveness of responses to THB SOM in target countries, with a particular focus on criminal justice elements, in line with international law and with full respect for human rights.):

- Experience and track record managing international cooperation programmes in the area of SOM/TIB in the main target countries,

- operational capacity to identify key stakeholders (e.g. in judiciary, police),

---

[36] 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.

[37] In line with Council Conclusions of September 2021, EU and Member State activities in Afghanistan will be guided by the identified benchmarks for engagement and carried out without benefit to or interference from the de facto authorities. Virtual MRC Afghanistan: The MRC Afghanistan will continue to provide people with advice on relocation and humanitarian aid programmes and access to protection as well as dangers, risks and consequences of irregular migration following the government take-over by the Taliban in August 2021.

- to have access to and mobilise expertise to address specific capacity building activities, capacity to generate data for the proper implementation of the Action;

- capacity to generate data for the proper implementation of the Action.

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

The preferred implementation modality is indirect management. If the implementation modality in indirect management cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, a direct management modality could be used to achieve SO1, 2 and 3 in the form of a grant to public bodies, and/or NGOs, and/or non-pillar assessed international organisations, or in the form of a contribution agreement with pillar assessed international organisations.

4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.4 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Specific Objective (SO) 1: Enhance a gender-sensitive and rights-based comprehensive migration governance in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan – composed of:	
Indirect management with pillar assessed entity - cf. section 4.3.1	1 000 000
Specific Objective (SO) 2: Enhance informed decision making and resilience of migrants at the personal, family and community level in Afghanistan[38], Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan covering the full migration cycle and in respect of gender and human rights considerations – composed of:	
Indirect management with pillar assessed entity - cf. section 4.3.1	4 000 000
Specific Objective (SO) 3: Increase the effectiveness of responses to THB SOM in target countries, with a particular focus on criminal justice elements, in line with international law and with full respect for human rights.	

---

[38] In line with Council Conclusions of September 2021, EU and Member State activities in Afghanistan will be guided by the identified benchmarks for engagement and carried out without benefit to or interference from the de facto authorities. Virtual MRC Afghanistan: The MRC Afghanistan will continue to provide people with advice on relocation and humanitarian aid programmes and access to protection as well as dangers, risks and consequences of irregular migration following the government take-over by the Taliban in August 2021.

Indirect management with pillar assessed entity - cf. section 4.3.1	4 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 **Audit** – cf. section 5.3	Will be covered by another Decision
Totals	**9 000 000**

4.5 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The implementing partners will be responsible for project management, organisation of annual project steering committee meetings (including the Commission and representatives of the beneficiary countries) to provide strategic guidance and ensure overall coordination and coherence of activities, monitor deliverables, and drafting reports. The Commission will be directly involved in the monitoring and steering of the Action.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the Action.

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).

All monitoring and reporting shall assess how the action is taking into account the human rights based approach and gender equality.

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).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring: the implementing partners will fully coordinate and monitor the activities on a country-by-country basis, and report to the Commission in an aggregated and regular basis.

5.2 Evaluation

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

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to possible adjustments/reorientation of the project, if necessary.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels for policy revision and to inform potential follow-up programmes.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 30 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.

All evaluations shall assess to what extent the action is considering the HRBA, as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment. Expertise on human rights and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

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.

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.