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ANNEX 2

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan in favour of the Americas and the Caribbean for 2023 part II and 2024 part I

Action Document for the 2023 Regional Cooperation Facility for Americas and the Caribbean

MULTIANNUAL PLAN

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

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	2023 Regional Cooperation Facility for Americas and the Caribbean OPSYS number: ACT-61845 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (<u>NDICI-Global Europe</u>)
2. Team Europe Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting (inter alia) regional TEIs (including Green, Amazon Basin, Digital, Security) and country TEIs for countries without a bilateral MIP
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Latin America and the Caribbean, and particularly in all Latin American countries, including the countries that do not have a country MIP, namely Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela.
4. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Americas and the Caribbean for the period 2021-2027 ¹
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Green transition2. Digital transformation3. Sustainable and inclusive economic recovery4. Democratic governance, security and migration5. Social cohesion and addressing inequalities
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Not applicable

¹ Commission Implementing Decision adopting a Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Americas and the Caribbean for the period 2021-2027, C(2021)9356 on 13.12.2021.

7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: 17 (partnerships for the goals) All other SDGs are targeted, with a particular emphasis on: SDG (4) Quality Education SDG (5) Gender Equality SDG (8) Decent work and Economic Growth SDG (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructures SDG (10) Reducing Inequalities SDG (12) Responsible Production and Consumption SDG (13) Climate Action SDG (16) Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions			
8 a) DAC code(s)	43010- Multi-sector (100%)			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel @	10000 Public sector institutions 20000 Non-governmental institutions and civil society 40000 Other multilateral institutions 60000 Private sector institutions			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @ Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity @ Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): BGUE-B2023-14.020140-C1-INTPA Total estimated cost: EUR 20,000,000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 20,000,000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Direct management through: - Grants - Procurement Indirect management with a UN organisation (Green district cooling) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.4			
14. Type of measure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooperation facility <input type="checkbox"/> Measures in favour of Civil Society			

1.2 Summary of the Action

The regional Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Americas and the Caribbean foresees a financial envelop of EUR 1,280,000,000 from which EUR 1,072,000,000 for its Pan-American window in five priority areas: (1) Green transition, (2) Digital transformation, (3) Sustainable and inclusive economic recovery, (4) Democratic governance, security and migration, (5) Social cohesion and addressing inequalities. As part of this envelope a total of EUR 116,000,000 has been set aside

for policy and cooperation support measures: EUR 70,000,000 for the support to the external dimension of EU policies in support to EU interests, and EUR 46,000,000 for cooperation facilities for the region and for the six Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay)².

In 2021 the Commission has launched the Global Gateway strategy that is materializing in the LAC region in a number of Global Gateway flagship projects at country and regional level, mostly integrated in the Global Gateway Investment Agenda announced at the 18 July 2023 EU-CELAC Summit.

In this evolving context the Regional Cooperation Facility aims to facilitate activities supporting Global Gateway flagships and their Team Europe Initiatives³, particularly at regional level and for no MIP countries. It covers inter alia activities accompanying the preparation and implementation of these flagships, policy dialogue and when relevant political dialogue, capacity building, strategic communication, public diplomacy⁴ - including science diplomacy-and the efficient implementation of programmes at regional, multi-country level in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in Latin America countries without a MIP.

With the objective to support primarily the EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda it includes the provision of resources aiming at:

1. achieving the results and impact of the regional strategy as a whole, and particularly in the five priority areas of the Pan-American window. It will support the corresponding specific objectives and expected results.
2. promoting the policy dialogue and cooperation with like-minded sub-regional groups and multi-country initiatives that are in support of regional priority areas.
3. promoting the external projection of EU internal policies and the interests of the EU's external action according to the priorities jointly agreed by concerned Commission Directorate general and services, at regional level and in countries for Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. optimising the effectiveness and efficiency of EU interventions in the LAC region, contributing to mitigating risks and drawing lessons from the EU's previous experience of cooperation through the 2021 NDICI-Global Europe Regional Cooperation Facility, DCI, EDF and PI instruments, and
5. raising awareness, understanding and perception of the EU's partnership with the region, through the design and implementation of regional-level strategic communication activities, as well as where relevant country-level strategic communication and public diplomacy activities for countries that do not have a bilateral MIP⁵.

Complementarity will be sought with EU programmes financed under the regional MIP for Americas and the Caribbean and under the former MFF such as ADELANTE, COPOLAD, Development in Transition, EL PACCTO, EUROCLIMA, EUROSOCIAL, SOCIEUX, TAIEX and TWINNING.

It is complemented by specific Cooperation Facilities dedicated to the Caribbean and to Central America.

² As regards strategic communication and public diplomacy activities, the EUR 46 million cooperation facilities cover strategic communication at country level (for the non-MIP countries) and regional level. It also covers public diplomacy activities in Chile, Panama and Uruguay. Public diplomacy activities in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico are covered by other means. Venezuela cooperation facility needs will be covered by other means, however additional needs might be covered here.

³ Namely for regional TEIs: TEI on Green Transition, TEI on the Amazon Basin, TEI on 5 Great Forests in Meso-America, TEI on the Digital Alliance, TEI on Security, TEI on Inclusive Societies and TE approach on Health.

⁴ Chile, Panama and Uruguay only, possibly Venezuela

⁵ Chile, Panama and Uruguay only, possibly Venezuela

Coordination will also be ensured with still running similar programmes and facilities funded the former Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) such as the Partnership Instrument.

As a general rule the subsidiarity principle will apply and will be financed at regional level only activities that cannot be financed through bilateral MIPs or sub-delegated envelopes for countries that do not have a bilateral MIP. The same principle will apply for financing actions amongst this regional cooperation facility and sub-regional cooperation facilities for the Caribbean and for Central America.

The action will contribute to the realisation of the EU Gender Action Plan 2021-2025 GAP III, in particular to its thematic area of engagement “Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation, Digitalisation, Climate change and environment” and “Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women”

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

The June 2023 Joint Communication “New Agenda to strengthen EU’s partnership with Latin America and the Caribbean” and the successful EU-CELAC Summit meeting held on 17-18 July 2023 with the launch of an EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda confirmed the relaunch of the bi-regional EU-LAC relationship and the strengthening of EU engagement with the region, which is crucial for EU ambitions to ensure a stronger Europe in today’s challenging global context and which has been particularly hard hit by COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine.

The proposed intervention responds to the shared ambition between the EU and LAC governments to work together towards a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing new challenges deriving from the war in Ukraine, including in the area of raw materials, and supporting the full fledged bi-regional summit held in July 2023 and its main outcome the Global Gateway Investment Agenda built around regional/multi-country Global Gateway flagships and Team Europe initiatives. It provides the tools to support the design and implementation of our regional cooperation and of our cooperation with countries that have no MIP while equally importantly also supporting the external dimension of EU policies and EU interests. It will also support a stronger and more visible EU presence, fostering greater understanding of EU and its policy priorities, through strategic communication campaigns, political communication and where relevant targeted public diplomacy activities.

Such activities will help the EU to reinforce its partnership with LAC both in political terms, advancing engagement on key shared priorities, while also maintaining its leading role as a key trade and investment partner in the region. It will help to position the EU as a leading partner in LAC’s long-term recovery efforts, assisting the region in addressing high degrees of inequality and structural challenges, with the poorer segments of the population (including women in all their diversity, people with disabilities and groups in vulnerable situation) strongly affected by climate change.

Despite some challenges of regional organisations in LAC, EU regional/continental cooperation has been successful and has piloted innovative approaches. NDICI-Global Europe offers more flexibility by allowing us to cooperate not only with traditional regional groups and organisations but also with groups of like-minded countries, as well as with bi-regional entities supporting bi-regional dialogue.

The regional MIP is built around two windows, the Pan American and the Caribbean one. The present action aims at supporting actions and activities part of the Pan-American window, and in particular its five priority areas: 1) Green transition, (2) Digital transformation, (3) Sustainable and inclusive economic recovery, (4) Democratic governance, security and migration, (5) Social cohesion and addressing inequalities. The regional cooperation facility is a tool to respond to emerging needs for

the external dimension of EU policies including the continuation of most relevant actions funded by Partnership Instrument under the former MFF.

2.2 Problem Analysis

In order to reach the objectives and expected results set up in the regional MIP for Americas and the Caribbean (Pan American window) in relation with the outcomes of the July 2023 Summit and its Global Gateway Investment Agenda, the programmes and actions foreseen in each of these priorities need to be supported and complemented by support measures with the specific objectives to provide:

1. the required cooperation and **technical assistance**: at regional and multi-country level, and as well at country level for Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP, for the identification, formulation with gender and human rights sensitive approach, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and audits of actions, including the implementation of Global Gateway flagships and TEI priority actions, as well as TAIEX and TWINNING interventions when relevant;
2. **support to policy dialogue**: support to policy dialogue at regional and multi-country level, and as well at country level for Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP, in support to sector dialogue and when relevant to political dialogue. It will cover events, conferences, studies, fellowships, exchange platforms, including with civil society women's human rights and people with disabilities organizations and private sector, leading to policy reforms and engagements with regional and multi-country partners, governments and other stakeholders.
3. support to **long-term strategic communication and public diplomacy**: support to strategic communication at (sub) regional level, and strategic communication and public diplomacy activities where relevant in those countries without a bilateral MIP. It will enhance public awareness, understanding and support for the EU's partnership with the region, particularly its priorities, values, and impact with gender and human rights sensitive approach. It includes strategic communication at regional level including the design and roll out of major public campaigns, strategic communication at country level for Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, as well as strategic communication and public diplomacy activities at country-level for Chile, Panama and Uruguay⁶.
4. **support to EU projection** in the region and, at country level, in the countries concerned: it will support priorities for the EU's external action in the region, including EU interest-driven actions and the external dimension of EU policies as promoted by the EEAS and Commission DGs and services. It includes support to EU LAC Foundation.

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

As Duty-bearers:

- LAC countries: through a regular regional dialogue at technical level, senior official level (institutional dialogue to exchange on EU regional actions), Ambassadors level (LAC embassies in Brussels), Ministerial level or Head of State level (deliverables and side events) including gender focal point at the Ministerial level;
- Regional and multi-country organisations and or institutions active in the region (including CELAC, OAS, Pacific Alliance, Andean Community, Mercosur, Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization -ACTO);
- EU Delegations and HQ services in their implementation work of the Global Gateway flagships

⁶ Venezuela would be eligible too if not covered by other means.

- Regional platforms with local government institutions, when relevant;
- Bi-regional organisations with capacity to strengthening the partnership between the EU and the LAC region (notably the EU LAC Foundation) ;
- EU Member States Agencies that are involved in regional and multi-country EU supported actions, as well as relevant EU stakeholders for EU interest driven actions.

As Right-holders:

- Regional platforms for business organisations and the private sector, academic organisations, including women in all their diversity; Regional organisations and platforms from the civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and particularly for Youth and Women, women’s human right organizations and organizations of people with disabilities;

Similarly, where relevant, for Latin America Countries that have no bilateral MIP, in each country concerned the main stakeholders will be: national, and local governments and institutions, business organisations and the private sector, academic organisations, think tanks, civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), women’s human right and people with disabilities organizations and EU Member States Agencies involved in EU supported actions.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to contribute to the strengthening of the partnership of the EU with the LAC region, its multi-country actors and the countries concerned, and to their sustainable development.

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

1. Support the LAC Global Gateway flagships in relation with (i) the five priority areas identified for the Pan-American window of the regional MIP Americas and the Caribbean, (ii) the regional Team Europe Initiatives⁷ and (iii) the regional or multi-country policy dialogue;
2. Support country Team Europe Initiatives⁸, policy dialogue, cooperation priorities and when relevant political dialogue in the six Latin America countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay) that have no bilateral MIP;
3. Support EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies, promoting gender equality and human rights sensitive approach.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to

Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1):

- 1.1 Support for the implementation of the regional MIP, particularly its related Global Gateway flagships: The actions foreseen in the five priority areas of the regional MIP (Pan American window) are properly identified, designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact; including gender and human rights sensitive approach with particular attention to people with disabilities;

⁷ Namely: (1) “green transition”, (2) “Amazon Basin”, (3) “EU LAC digital alliance”, (4) “EU LAC justice and security”, and (5) “Inclusive and equal societies”, as well as (6) the EU-LAC health initiative (Team Europe approach)

⁸ Only for Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP

1.2 Support for regional policy dialogues with governments and regional or multi country organisations: The regional and multi country policy dialogue(s) as well as regional Team Europe Initiatives in support of the five priority areas mentioned above at point 1.1 are effective;

1.3 Regional Strategic Communication: Strategic communication activities have been adequately designed and successfully implemented, promoting gender equality and people with disabilities.

Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2):

2.1 Support to the implementation of bilateral actions embedded the regional MIP: The actions foreseen at bilateral level for the implementation of the regional MIP particularly for its related Global Gateway flagships are properly identified, designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact, including gender and human rights sensitive approach;

2.2 Support for policy dialogues with governments: The national policy dialogue(s) in support of the country Team Europe Initiatives⁹, of bilateral priorities and of the bilateral political dialogue is(are) effective;

2.3 Strategic communication and public diplomacy: corresponding activities have been designed and successfully implemented, promoting gender equality and human rights sensitive approach.

Outcome 3 (or Specific Objective 3):

3.1 Support for bi-regional and country policy dialogues, for the external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region and in support to the EU external action¹⁰: The priority activities identified jointly between Commission services and EEAS are implemented and deliver their intended impact, including gender and human rights sensitive approach.

3.2 Support to the bi-regional policy dialogue, type of interventions previously covered by the Partnership Instrument: The EU LAC Foundation has contributed effectively to the EU LAC bi regional dialogue, including gender and human rights sensitive approach.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1. (“*The actions foreseen in the five priority areas of the regional MIP (Pan American window) are properly identified, designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact*”)¹¹:

- Support for the implementation of the regional MIP and primarily its related Global Gateway flagships, provide technical support to the design of projects and programmes, which requires great expertise and in depth-analysis. Implementation follow-up may also be required;
- Support gender and human rights need assessments including consultation with main women’s human rights and people with disabilities organizations.
- Reinforce auditing and assessment activities to ensure the proper and sound management of EU funds and implementation of EU cooperation activities.

⁹ Only for Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP

¹⁰ In coordination with and complemented by the relevant actions under thematic programmes and the Rapid Response Pillar/ Foreign Policy Needs of NDICI Global Europe.

¹¹ Outputs 1-1 and 1-2 may allow exceptionally covering emerging needs for no MIP countries that are not specifically covered by this regional cooperation facility or by other means, e.g. Venezuela

Activities related to Output 1.2 (*“The policy dialogue(s) in support of the five priority areas mentioned above is effective”*)¹²:

- support for policy dialogue with governments and regional/multi-country organisations; provide the Latin American region with specific thematic studies, organise seminars, events, workshops and contribute to policy dialogue related initiatives, to support the definition of regional strategies and policies on priority areas related to EU cooperation, as well as when relevant in support to the political dialogue. It includes key crosscutting issues such as gender equality and human rights as necessary;

Activities related to Output 1.3 (*“Strategic communication activities have been adequately designed and successfully implemented”*):

- Implement political communication activities, in particular those related to Summits, events and visits by College members;
- Support political communication on regional and multi-country Global Gateway flagships and Team Europe initiatives;
- Sourcing, producing and disseminating content (sourcing quality footage/images, video production, animation/design etc.), required for targeting specified audiences in the region, promoting gender equality and human rights based approach;
- Facilitate additional research required to ensure strategic communication activities are data-driven and measurable, with gender and human rights-based approach. This may include audience analysis and perception surveys, media landscape, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities to measure impact of communication activities undertaken.

Activities related to Output 2.1 (*“The actions foreseen at bilateral level are properly identified, designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact”*):

- Support for the implementation of country level actions embedded in the regional MIP and primarily their related Global Gateway flagships; provide technical support to the design of projects and programmes in support to bilateral Team Europe Initiatives, implementation, follow-up, auditing and assessment activities, with gender and human rights sensitive approach.

Activities related to Output 2.2 (*“The national policy dialogue(s) in support of the Team Europe Initiatives and bilateral priorities is effective”*):

- support for policy dialogue with governments; provide the “no MIP” countries with studies and organise seminars, events, workshops to support the definition of national strategies and policies on sectors related to EU cooperation, promoting gender equality and human based approach, as well as when relevant in support to the political dialogue.

Activities related to output 2.3: (*“Strategic communication and public diplomacy activities have been designed and successfully implemented”*)¹³:

- Strategic and accessible communication activities to promote general public audiences’ understanding and awareness of the Union's values, interests, specific policies and impact in the concerned country, with gender and human rights sensitive approach;
- Public diplomacy activities to engage with selected targeted audiences through the projection of EU interests and values, influencing and building trust and partnerships, and developing networks.

¹² See footnote 7

¹³ For Chile, Panama and Uruguay only

Activities related to Output 3.1 (“The *priority activities identified jointly between DG INTPA, EEAS and concerned Commission DGs and services for the external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region are implemented and deliver their intended impact*”):

- support EEAS, Commission DGs and services on jointly selected priorities with activities such as studies, organisation of seminars and events, policy dialogue and when relevant political dialogue related initiatives, workshops to support the external dimension of EU policies on issues related to EU cooperation and policy dialogue including gender and human rights based approach. Support capacity development and institutional building, including through technical assistance and exchange of expertise such as the TAIEX mechanism with EU Member States. This includes any support to the EU-LAC Foundation in relation with the implementation of the external dimension of EU policies. These activities will be carried out both at regional level and for concerned countries¹⁴. The corresponding policy dialogue activities should follow the principle of subsidiarity and not duplicate or overlap with activities covered by regional programmes and/or by the specific objectives 1 and 2 of the present action.
- in particular it will support the *EU-Brazil Policy Dialogue Support Facility*, serving the external dimension of EU policies promoted by the Commission as well as support to encourage the use of green district cooling.

Activities related to Output 3.2 (“*The EU LAC Foundation has contributed effectively to the EU LAC bi regional dialogue*”):

- Bi-regional events to promote exchange and transfer of knowledge among civil society stakeholders, including women’s human rights and people with disabilities organizations, to foster and support collaborative networks for promoting exchanges of knowledge and best practices;
- Awareness raising initiatives, mainly within the EU-CELAC partnerships that have traditionally been less integrated into the bi- regional process;
- Generating studies and disseminating information, including engagement of men and boys in transforming mentalities and behaviours towards gender equality;
- Strengthening the capacity of the Foundation.

In addition, all activities listed above will include a more specific focus on the targets for general policy objectives, RIO Convention markers and policy objectives. In particular:

- “aid to environment”, “biological diversity”, “climate change mitigation and adaptation” will be targeted by the support provided to a regional programme like Euroclima, to the corresponding regional Team Europe initiatives, to their visibility, as well as to corresponding sector policy and outreach activities in regional and bi-regional dialogues and events;
- “digital connectivity, governance, entrepreneurship and services” and “digital connectivity” will be targeted by the support provided to a the regional programme on digital, to the corresponding regional Team Europe initiative, to their visibility, as well as to corresponding sector policy and outreach activities in regional and bi-regional dialogues and events in the framework of the EU-LAC digital alliance;
- “trade development” will be targeted by the support provided to a regional programme on “trade and inclusive economic recovery”, to its visibility, to corresponding sector policy and outreach activities in regional and bi-regional dialogues and events, as well as by additional targeted support to the implementation of associations agreements in the region;

¹⁴ For the purpose of this action document a country policy support facility may be financed for Mexico

- “Participation development/good governance”, “Gender equality and women and girls empowerment”, “reduction of inequalities including people with disabilities and groups living in vulnerable situations” will be targeted by the support provided to regional programmes on democratic governance and security and on social cohesion and addressing inequalities, to the corresponding regional Team Europe initiatives, to their visibility, as well as to corresponding sector policy and outreach activities in regional and bi-regional dialogues and events; also by ensuring that these aspects are mainstreamed.

The commitment of the EU’s contribution to the Team Europe Initiatives foreseen under this action and annual action plan will be complemented by other contributions from Team Europe approach 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

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

The Regional Cooperation Facility, as a tool to convey the external dimension of EU internal policies, will promote the principles of the European Green Deal, focusing on accelerating paths towards more environmentally sustainable societies, with low-carbon economies, sustainable raw materials value chains, resilient to the impacts of climate change, green district cooling, and protecting their ecosystems and biodiversity on land and ocean. The EU added value of the action will be reflected in the promotion of the European Green Deal and especially key EU policy documents as the Adaptation, Biodiversity –including Forestry-, Farm to Fork, Circularity and Critical Raw Materials strategies.

As part of the policy dialogue with Latin American countries, and aligning to the MIPs and TEI for the region, the Regional Cooperation Facility will align its support in promoting the implementation of the NDCs.

Finally, during its management, the Facility will take in consideration measures to minimise carbon emissions (e.g. optimisations of flight travels, CO₂ compensation measures); make use of renewable energies and energy saving measures; reduce waste and to assist with reuse and recycling.

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project): The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category B, not requiring an EIA, but for which environment aspects will be addressed during design.

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project): The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is a significant objective with particular attention to tackling inequalities and furthering women’s and girls’ empowerment.

The Action will promote gender equality, women’s and girls’ rights and empowerment and non-discrimination on any grounds, through targeted and mainstreamed communication activities. Beyond the inclusion of women in all their diversity, the action will ensure that gender dynamics, relations of power, conditions of access and differential needs between men and women are analysed.

Human Rights

A human rights-based approach will be applied during the implementation of the Action, with particular attention to promoting the rights of women, girls, and vulnerable groups, including refugees, displaced people and migrants, as well as indigenous people.

The action will incorporate the principle of no left one behind. By doing so, the proposed Action will aim at strengthening the respect, protection, and fulfilment of women's human rights.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that disability is a significant objective and actions will support respect of the rights of persons with disabilities including those in the workplace. Accessibility to seminars, events, workshops and information of persons with disabilities will be promoted throughout the activities of the facility. Reasonable accommodation will be provided for participants with disabilities.

Additionally, organisations for persons with disabilities (OPDs), especially those led by women with disabilities (WWD) will be engaged in the Action to conduct joint activities.

Democracy

The Action will promote engagement with youth and women and enhance their skills, employability and political participation.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The Action will contribute to improving the adaptive capacity and resilience of the region.

Disaster Risk Reduction

By contributing to Green transition and digital transformation the Action will also support the region's ability to better mitigate risk (particularly risks associated to deforestation and climate change) especially for indigenous and vulnerable communities.

Other considerations if relevant

Contribute to the achievement of SDGs. Contribute to rebuild better from COVID-19 crisis through sustainable economic recovery and inclusive growth.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
Planning, process and systems	Timely identification of needs and launching of the relevant tendering or negotiation process	High	High	Concerned EU Delegations and HQ will seek to identify the specific needs for support measures in a well-timed and appropriate manner allowing to launch the tender procedures within the appropriate time
People and the Organisation	Competing priorities and limited human resources hampering active participation in project activities	Low	Medium	The management of part of the activities remains new for HQ and concerned EU delegations (particularly for activities in relation to the external

				dimension of EU priorities); therefore a careful planning of resource should be made to carry out these additional tasks.
Planning, Processes, and Systems	Activities under the action overlap with or duplicates existing EU support.	Low	Medium	*Regular meetings of a Coordination Committee of the Action with EEAS, and Commission services
	Women are prevented from participating for a multitude of reasons, including cultural customs, prejudicial gender norms, inadequate legal frameworks and protection mechanisms, poor access to education and land ownership rights and practices. The same risk applies to people living with disabilities.	Medium	Medium	Organizations and networks of women and persons with disabilities will be among the groups consulted, thus strengthening women's participation in decision-making of peace and mediation, planning and access to economic opportunities.
	Limited commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, the human rights-based approach and persons with disabilities on the part of targeted entities at national, regional and local level and non-state actors	Medium	Medium	The action will provide sufficient resources to work with targeted entities and non-state actors on the importance of gender mainstreaming, the human rights-based approach and the rights of person with disabilities.

Lessons Learnt:

Lessons learnt from EU experience with the former MFF regional support measures, with the last 2021 and 2022 Regional Cooperation Facilities, and the Partnership Instrument. Also lessons learned during the former MFF in engaging with UMICs and HICs that have no country MIP (e.g. through blending of the development in transition facility, see regional evaluation 2009-2017). In particular a specific attention will be given to the following:

- Collection and selection process of needs expressed by EEAS, Commission DGs and services, through comprehensive and bi-annual coordination or steering committees meetings;
- Strategic communication, by providing the appropriate support to EU delegations efforts in their national strategic communication (major public campaigns, design of strategic communication activities).

3.5 The Intervention Logic¹⁵

The underlying intervention logic for this action is to support the EU-LAC partnership, including its EU driven political agenda and EU's economic and strategic interest. It will enable the EU to implement the Global Gateway Investment Agenda, to facilitate a well-structured and strategic capacity building and policy dialogue process with LAC, enhancing EU opportunities to stimulate policy reforms, promoting EU values and promoting the external projection of EU internal policies, the external action as well as international standards. They will provide inter alia short-term technical assistance linked to the identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring, auditing and evaluation activities necessary to the efficient implementation of the regional programmes implemented under the MIP 2021-2027 and possible short-term actions to accompany the policy dialogues. It includes the provision of resources aiming at activities such as: organising seminars, meetings, events and training sessions; undertaking thematic studies and publications; exchanging and gathering information; developing online networks; in order to achieve the results and impact of the continental strategy as a whole. By targeting the public through strategic communication, we can measurably increase awareness, understanding and approval of the EU's partnership with the region. By doing so, we build support for priorities identified under the EU-LAC partnership and for the external dimension of the EU's internal priorities. Public diplomacy will also contribute to further mutual understanding and long-term engagement with stakeholders in concerned countries. The support measures will optimise the effectiveness and efficiency of EU interventions in the LAC region, contributing to mitigate the risks and draw lessons from the EU's previous experience of cooperation.

This action will support cooperation facilities for regional needs and Latin America “no MIP” country needs as well as line DGs needs (EU projection), as follows:

- Regional: EUR 18,400,000:
 - EUR 6,900,000 regional cooperation facility, supporting primarily the preparation and implementation of Global gateway flagships;
 - EUR 11,500,000 million for line DGs and EU external action (EU projection).
- “no MIP” countries:
 - EUR 1,600,000 for support measures in favour of Brazil (EUR 1,000,000) and Uruguay (EUR 600,000).

The “no MIP” country Cooperation Facilities will support the respective Delegations at maintaining a constructive dialogue around a wide range of areas of mutual interest, such as the achievement of SDGs, climate change, environment, biodiversity, digital transformation, inequalities, decent work, ocean governance -including the fight against IUU fishing-, good governance and transparency, migration, youth, trade, economic development, gender equality, human rights, democracy, security, migration as well as social cohesion and addressing inequalities. The Cooperation Facility will cover strategic communication needs and help mobilise cooperation activities to implement priority actions of the Team Europe Initiative(s)¹⁶ in order to foster the partnership with the respective partner countries.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

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

¹⁵ [@TEI Methodological Note to Support Design](#)

¹⁶ All Team Europe Initiatives covered by the regional MIP: regional TEIs and TEIs for countries that have no bilateral MIP

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

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 measures¹⁷.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management).

(i) EU-LAC Foundation

(a) Purpose of the grant

The grant will contribute to achieve the specific objective 3 "Support EU interests in the LAC region, the biregional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies", and more specifically its output 3-2 "The EU LAC Foundation has contributed effectively to the EU LAC bi regional dialogue".

(b) Type of applicants targeted: Bi-regional organisation able to engage on activities in support to the bi-regional dialogue and partnership.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the EU-LAC Foundation in accordance with the provisions of article 195(1) (f) of the EU Financial Regulation. Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because as per its constitutive charter, the EU-LAC Foundation has a de jure monopoly over the implementation at institutional level of the recommendations emanating from the EU-LAC political summits. EU-LAC Foundation is indeed the only institution that has been established by a political decision of all the Heads of State or Government of the EU and LAC countries to strengthen the bi-regional partnership.

The need for close contacts with the authorities of the partner countries require technical competence, high degree of specialization and institutional access that can only be provided altogether by the EU-LAC Foundation by virtue of the unique role and mandate it has been conferred upon. In compliance with its mandate set out in its Statutes and constitutive agreement, the Foundation will continue contributing to: (i) the strengthening of the EU-CELAC bi-regional partnership process involving participation and inputs of civil society and other social actors; (ii) encouraging further mutual

¹⁷ 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.

knowledge and understanding between both regions; and (iii) enhancing the mutual visibility between both regions, as well as, of the bi-regional strategic partnership itself.

(ii) Grants to specific objectives 1, 2 and 3

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grant(s) will contribute to achieve:

- the specific objective 1 “*Support (i) the five priority areas identified for the Pan-American window of the regional MIP Americas and the Caribbean, (ii) the regional Team Europe Initiatives and (iii) the regional or multi-country policy dialogue*” and more specifically its output 1-2 “*provide the Latin American region with studies, organise seminars, events, workshops and contribute to policy dialogue related initiatives, to support the definition of regional strategies and policies on priority areas related to EU cooperation*”;
- the specific objective 2 “*Support the six Latin America countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay) that have no bilateral MIP in their bilateral Team Europe Initiatives, in their policy dialogue, in their cooperation priorities and in support when relevant to their political dialogue*”, and more specifically its output 2-1 “*The actions foreseen at bilateral level are properly designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact*”.
- the specific objective 3 “*Support EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies* “ and more specifically its output 3-1 “*The priority activities identified jointly between DG INTPA, EEAS and other Commission DGs and services for the external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region and in support to the EU external action are implemented and deliver their intended impact*”.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

- EU Member States, in the case of twinning grants (eventually, but not only, through the TAIEX programme);
- Bi-regional organisations with the capacity to strengthening EU-LAC partnership;
- Local authorities and/or public bodies representing local authorities which in light of their technical competences and/or capacities and/or experience can support the policy dialogue, the cooperation priorities.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to one or more entities, in application to the article 195 c) and f) of the Financial Regulation, in the case of a legal or factual monopoly situation or if the action has specific characteristics requiring a specific type of beneficiary for its technical competence, specialisation or administrative power by nature. Bi-regional organisations, local authorities and/or public bodies representing local authorities and/or services of the EU commission and/or EU Member States (in case of twinning grants) will be selected using the following criteria:

- specific technical competences, and/or capacity(ies), and/or experience

Direct awards will be duly substantiated.

It includes the ability to support the policy dialogue, the cooperation priorities and/or contribute to the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and audit of EU actions undertaken in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama and Uruguay, as well as in the LAC region.

4.3.2 Direct Management (Procurement)

The action in its specific objectives and expected outcomes indicated below will be implemented through one or more service contracts signed and managed by the European Union as contracting authority as per below:

1. Objective 1: Support the five priority areas identified for the Pan-American window of the regional MIP Americas and the Caribbean to regional Team Europe Initiatives and to regional or multi-country policy dialogue.

Outputs:

1.1 The actions foreseen in the five priority areas of the regional MIP (Pan American window) are properly designed, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact.

1.2 The policy dialogue(s) in support of the five priority areas mentioned above is effective

1.3 Strategic communication activities have been adequately designed and successfully implemented

2. Objective 2: Support the six Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP in their bilateral Team Europe Initiatives, in their policy dialogue, in their cooperation priorities, and in support when relevant to their political dialogue (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay):

Outputs:

2.1 The actions foreseen at bilateral level are properly designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact

2.2 The national policy dialogue(s) in support of the Team Europe Initiatives and bilateral priorities is effective

2.3 Strategic communication activities have been designed and successfully implemented

3. Objective 3: Support EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies:

Outputs:

3.1 The priority activities identified jointly with EEAS and Commission DGs and services for the external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region are implemented and deliver their intended impact.

Component	Indicative type (works, supplies, services)	Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure
Objective 1: Support the five regional priority areas identified for the Pan-American window composed of		
Output 1.1: support for the implementation of the regional MIP (technical assistance)	service	Q4/2023 to Q4/2024
Output 1.2: Support for regional policy dialogues with governments and regional or multi country organisations	service	Q4/2023 to Q4/2024
Output 1.3: regional strategic communication	Not applicable	
Objective 2: Support bilateral Team Europe Initiatives, policy dialogue, cooperation priorities and when relevant political dialogue in the six Latin America countries	Not applicable	

(Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay) that have no bilateral MIP composed of		
Output 2.1: Support to the implementation of bilateral actions embedded the regional MIP (technical assistance)	service	Q4/2023 to Q4/2024
Output 2.2: Support for policy dialogues with governments	service	Q4/2023 to Q4/2024
Output 2.3: strategic communication and public diplomacy	service	Q4/2023 to Q4/2024
Objective 3: Support EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies composed of		
Output 3.1: support for policy dialogue: external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region	service	Q4/2023 to Q4/2024

4.3.3 Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed international Organisation

A part of this action related to the support to the external dimension of EU policies and under output 3.1 “*support for policy dialogue: external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region*”, may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission’s services using the following criteria:

- Experience in the promotion of alternative and sustainable cooling solutions in the LAC region;
- Experience in the setup of regulatory and voluntary measures in this area;
- Experience in addressing market barriers to manufacturing in this area.

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

If the implementation modalities in direct management cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of Commission’s control, alternative implementation modalities in indirect management with a Member State organisation or an international organisation might be considered, especially, for actions under objectives 1, 2 and 3, and particularly for the continuation of actions financed under the former Partnership Instrument.

In this case, the implementing entities would be selected on the basis of their specific technical competences and/or sectorial capacity(ies) and/or sectorial experience in the specific field and area of interest under the specific objectives 1, 2 and 3, including, but not only, their capacity to support (i) the five priority areas identified for the Pan-American window of the regional MIP Americas and the Caribbean, (ii) the regional Team Europe Initiatives (iii) the regional or multi-country policy dialogue (iv) to support the cooperation priorities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, Venezuela) including their Team Europe Initiatives, their policy dialogue, and (v) support the EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the externalisation of EU policies.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Objective 1: Support the Global Gateway flagships in line with the five regional priority areas identified for the Pan-American window composed of	6 900 000
Output 1.1: support for the implementation Global Gateway Investment Agenda and of the regional MIP (technical assistance)	
Procurement (direct management)	2 200 000
Output 1.2: Support for regional policy dialogues with governments and regional or multi country organisations	
Procurement (direct management)	2 200 000
Grant (direct management)	2 500 000
Output 1.3: regional strategic communication	Not applicable
Objective 2: Support the six Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP in their bilateral Team Europe Initiatives, in their policy dialogue and in their cooperation priorities composed of	1 600 000
Output 2.1: Support to the implementation of bilateral actions embedded the regional MIP (technical assistance)	
Procurement (direct management)	500 000
Output 2.2: Support for policy dialogues with governments	
Procurement (direct management)	250 000
Grants (direct management)	250 000
Output 2.3: strategic communication and public diplomacy ^[1]	
^[1] Public diplomacy: for Chile, Panama and Uruguay only	
Procurement (direct management)	300 000
Grants (direct management)	300 000
Objective 3: Support EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies composed of	11 500 000
Output 3.1: support for policy dialogue: external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region	
Procurement (direct management)	2 500 000
Grant (direct management)	4 500 000

Contribution Agreement (indirect management)	3 000 000
Output 3.2: support to the bi-regional policy dialogue through the EU LAC Foundation	
Grant (direct management)	1 500 000
Grants – total envelope	9 050 000
Procurement – total envelope	7 950 000
Contingencies	0
Totals	20 000 000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The implementation of the Action will follow the organisational set up and responsibilities as follows:

1. Support the five priority areas identified for the Pan-American window of the regional MIP Americas and the Caribbean to regional Team Europe Initiatives and to regional or multi-country policy dialogue:

Output 1.1 “*The actions foreseen in the five priority areas of the regional MIP (Pan American window) are properly designed, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact*” and **output 1.2** “*The policy dialogue(s) in support of the five priority areas mentioned above is effective*” will be managed by the Commission (INTPA B) with a regular reporting to the Americas Regional Cooperation Team set up by DG INTPA, and in consultation with EEAS/Americas when relevant.

Output 1.3 “*Strategic communication activities have been adequately designed and successfully implemented*” will be managed by INTPA 02. Priorities to be implemented will be discussed and regular monitoring will be ensured through the coordination structure on strategic communication and public diplomacy set up between DG INTPA, DG NEAR, EEAS and FPI.

2. Support bilateral Team Europe Initiatives, policy dialogue, cooperation priorities and when relevant political dialogue in Latin America countries that have no bilateral MIP (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela if it cannot be covered by other means):

output 2.1 “*The actions foreseen at bilateral level are properly designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated, audited and deliver the expected impact*”,

output 2.2 “*The national policy dialogue(s) in support of the Team Europe Initiatives and bilateral priorities is effective*” and

output 2.3 “*Strategic communication activities have been designed and successfully implemented¹⁸*” will be managed by the Commission by the EU Delegation concerned, with strategic guidance provided by DG INTPA 02 on output 2.3. A regular reporting will be provided to Headquarters DG INTPA B and shared with EEAS Americas.

3. Support EU interests in the LAC region, the bi-regional partnership and the external dimension of EU policies:

¹⁸ Only for Chile, Panama and Uruguay

Outputs 3.1 *“The priority activities identified jointly with EEAS and Commission DGs and services for the external dimension of EU policies in the LAC region are implemented and deliver their intended impact”:*

- The regional policy support facility will be managed by Headquarters, while country policy support facilities will be managed by the EU Delegation concerned (e.g., Brazil);
- A coordination mechanism with the EEAS and all Commission Directorate General (DG) and Services interested by the region will be put in place to collect proposals for financing and their level of priority;
- A steering committee chaired by INTPA and comprising EEAS and concerned EU Delegations and Commission DGs and Services will be set up for each policy support facility at regional or national level.

Output 3.2: *“support to the bi-regional dialogue through EU-LAC Foundation”*

- The grant will be managed for the EU side by Headquarters (INTPA B);
- A steering committee will be set up to supervise the management of the operational grant, co-chaired by the Commission (INTPA B) and EEAS (Americas).

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.

As a general rule the EEAS will be associated in the identification and follow up of activities of relevance to the agenda for external action with LAC.

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.

Reports shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

All monitoring and reporting shall assess how the action is considering the principle of gender equality, human rights-based approach, and rights of persons with disabilities including inclusion and diversity. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex and age, and disability if possible.

5.2 Evaluation

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

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the component for the external dimension of EU policies.

Expertise on gender equality and human rights will be ensured within monitoring and evaluation teams as necessary.

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.

In addition, all evaluations shall assess to what extent the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment and disability inclusion. Expertise on human rights, disability and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country 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, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

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

5.3 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 has adopted a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

Strategic communication and public diplomacy funds under this action will support no-MIP countries to implement communication actions designed to ensure awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and the added value of its partnership with the country is commensurate with the scale, scope and ambition of our engagement. This will include large scale public awareness campaign(s) targeting wider audiences, as well as more specialised political communication around Global Gateway flagships and Team Europe initiatives. Activities will be based on a strategic plan drawn up by the EU Delegation(s) concerned.

Audiences targeted by the different activities will include:

- Specialised audiences, including media, think tanks, business community and private sector, activists and other multipliers who have a stake in the sphere of policy, advocacy and international relations;
- Key political and opinion leaders and the wider diplomatic community;
- Wider audiences, particularly in the 18-35 years bracket, who are not engaged in the field of international relations and who may not be aware of the EU's partnership with the region.

It is envisaged that a contract for communication and visibility may be contracted under a framework contract.