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

**ANNEX II**

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan for the thematic programme on human rights and democracy for 2022-2024

**Action Document for the Human Rights Crises Facility**

**MULTIANNUAL PLAN**

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plans in the sense of Article 23(2) of the [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/947](#).

## 1 SYNOPSIS

### 1.1 Action Summary Table

<b>1. Title</b> <b>CRIS/OPSYS</b> <b>business reference</b> <b>Basic Act</b>	Human Rights Crises Facility CRIS reference 2022: 043-837 OPSYS reference for 2022: ACT-60816 / JAD.971297 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument ( <a href="#">Global Europe</a> )
<b>2. Team Europe Initiative</b>	No
<b>3. Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The global action shall be carried out in any countries or situations outside the EU where human rights are most at risk
<b>4. Programming document</b>	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme on Human Rights and Democracy 2021-2027
<b>5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results</b>	<p>Link with the Multi-Annual Indicative Programming for the Thematic Programme on Human Rights and Democracy 2021-2027</p> <p>Priority 1: Protecting and empowering individuals, in particular: Axes of action i. Uphold all human rights as essential to human dignity and iii. Support human rights defenders and counter shrinking space for civil society</p> <p>Priority 4: Safeguarding fundamental freedoms</p> <p>Expected results from MIP: (1.i.) Enhanced oversight and strengthened role of civil society in monitoring, preventing and responding to human rights violations and abuses. (1.iii) Strengthened capacities of human rights defenders and civil society, including strategic litigation, advocacy and public awareness, to work in contexts where restrictive laws and policies, coupled with funding restrictions, prevail. (4.) Strengthened capacities of civil society and independent media to exercise fundamental freedoms.</p>

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION				
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	151 – Government and Civil Society – general			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): SDG 16: promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels  Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls			
8 a) DAC code(s)	15160 - Human rights 100%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel @	Channel 1 – 20000 – Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective
Digitalisation @ Tags: digital connectivity		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	digital governance		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital entrepreneurship		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	job creation		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital skills/literacy		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital services		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity @ Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" 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"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>				
<b>12. Amounts concerned</b>	<p>Budget line 14.02 02 11</p> <p>Total estimated cost: EUR 14,000,000</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 14,000,000</p> <p>The contribution is for an amount of EUR 4,500,000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2022 and for an amount of EUR 4,500,000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2023 and for an amount of EUR 5,000,000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2024, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget, or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.</p>			
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>13. Type of financing<sup>1</sup></b>	<p><b>Direct management</b> through:</p> <p>- Grants</p>			

## 1.2 Summary of the Action

The Regulation (EU) 2021/947, states in recital 42: ‘The Union should pay particular attention, in a flexible manner, to countries and urgency situations where human rights and fundamental freedoms are most at risk and where disrespect for those rights and freedoms is particularly pronounced and systematic.’ The Human Rights Crises Facility will build on the success of its predecessor programme, which was adopted in 2015 to respond to this need.

<sup>1</sup> Art. 27 Global Europe (Regulation (EU) 2021/947)

Current trends towards growing authoritarianism, shrinking civic space, increasing restrictions over freedom of information and expression, and impunity for serious human rights violations, make the need for rapid and confidential support to civil society actors, in particular human rights defenders (HRDs)<sup>2</sup> working in these domains, ever more timely and relevant. It aims at supporting actions in a timely, flexible and reactive way through direct awards to CSOs<sup>3</sup>.

The specific objective of the Human Rights Crises Facility is to enable independent civil society actors to operate for the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and empower them to address particularly severe human rights challenges in a timely manner, by providing direct support in some of the world's most difficult, dangerous and unpredictable political situations and/or where rights and HRDs are the most vulnerable and threatened. Coordinated at HQ level, this needs-based and demand-driven action can meet any MIP priority that requires a response, if it constitutes a “most difficult human rights situation”, requires timely action, or addresses most sensitive situations where human rights and fundamental freedoms are severely restricted. It is expected to respond in particular to the following stated objectives: uphold all human rights as essential to human dignity; safeguard fundamental freedoms; promote equality, gender equality, inclusion and respect for diversity; support human rights defenders; fight impunity and reverse shrinking space for civil society.

Complementary to other financing streams in the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme (country-based support, human rights defenders mechanisms, among others) and to other thematic and geographical funding, including crisis response, the Human Rights Crises Facility shall provide grants in situations that cannot, because of political sensitivity, need for confidentiality and/or risky implementation conditions, be effectively addressed through other EU funding. By working flexibly where funding organisations working for human rights and their defenders proves to be seriously hampered it addresses the global problem of shrinking civic space, the space where civil society organisations (CSOs) and other groups defend human rights and manifest democracy. Since 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated human rights challenges and has itself become another global human rights crisis.

## 2 RATIONALE

### 2.1 Context

Protecting and promoting human rights and democracy, which are among the EU's founding values, is a **key priority** of EU external action, and a pre-condition for sustainable development and for building more inclusive, open and resilient societies.

Yet 2020 was the first year since 2001 in which the majority of the world's countries were autocracies: 92 countries, home to 54% of the global population<sup>4</sup>.

The **COVID-19 pandemic has amplified long-standing human rights and democracy concerns**. Some governments are using the state of emergency to justify lockdowns and social distancing measures that have in practice reduced the civic and democratic space<sup>5</sup>. Greater restrictions on fundamental freedoms and mass surveillance have hindered the work of civil society, including human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists,

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<sup>2</sup> According to the EU Guidelines on **human rights defenders**, HRDs are those individuals, groups and organs of society groups that promote and protect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights defenders seek the promotion and protection of civil and political rights as well as the promotion, protection and realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. Human rights defenders also promote and protect indigenous peoples' rights and the rights of people belonging to minorities. The definition does not include those individuals or groups who commit or propagate violence.

<sup>3</sup> According to the Global Europe Regulation Article 2 (7), “**civil society organisations**” embrace a wide range of actors with multiple roles and mandates, which may vary over time and across institutions and countries, and includes all non-State, not-for-profit independent and non-violent structures, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, including political, cultural, religious, environmental, social or economic, operating at local, national, regional or international levels, and comprising urban and rural, formal and informal organisations.

<sup>4</sup> [V-Dem annual report 2021](#).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.idea.int/gsod-indices/#/indices/world-map?covid19=1>

lawyers and other professionals. Hoaxes and disinformation were widespread during the pandemic, amounting to an unprecedented ‘infodemic’ and increasing threats against media freedom. The pandemic also triggered an increase in racist and xenophobic attacks, discrimination and violence, stigmatisation and hate crimes, particularly against the most vulnerable groups. It also widened socio-economic gaps. Individuals, in particular women and girls, from the lowest socio-economic categories and all vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities and indigenous people, have been the most affected by the crisis. Many countries have reported a significant increase in sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence. Outbreaks of violence in prisons and detention centres have also been reported.

The **crisis has further contributed to the shrinking space for civil society and weakened the ability of human rights and democracy organisations to operate**, a trend to which no country is immune. Civic space shrinks even more around groups like women human rights defenders and minority HRDs, and through digital channels like social media. As the pandemic continues into 2022, restrictive measures and practices show few signs of easing: in the global climate of limiting fundamental freedoms, permanent restrictive legislation (foreign agent laws, etc.) is spreading to more and more countries.

Effective support for human rights and its defenders in situations where it is most at risk has been an EU priority since 2004 and a priority of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) since its inception in 2007. The Human Rights Crises Facility (hereafter ‘the Crises Facility’) is designed to respond specifically to the alarming and deteriorating situation of independent civil society and human rights defenders (HRDs) around the world. It was first introduced under the EIDHR in 2015, and has been operational since then.

The *Regulation (EU) 2021/947*, defines human rights as a strategic priority. Recital 42 specifies that ‘whilst democracy and human rights, including gender equality and women's empowerment should be reflected and mainstreamed throughout the implementation of the Instrument, Union assistance under the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme and the Civil Society Organisations thematic programme should have a specific complementary and additional role by virtue of its **global nature** and its **independence of action** from the consent of the governments and public authorities of the third countries concerned. That role should allow for cooperation and partnership with civil society, especially on sensitive human rights and democracy issues. ***The Union should pay particular attention, in a flexible manner, to countries and urgency situations where human rights and fundamental freedoms are most at risk and where disrespect for those rights and freedoms is particularly pronounced and systematic manner***’.

Specific objectives of the *Regulation (EU) 2021/947* (Article 3.2(c)) include ‘at a global level: to protect, promote and advance democracy, the rule of law, including accountability mechanisms, and human rights, including gender equality and the protection of human rights defenders, ***including in the most difficult circumstances and urgent situations***. Article 27.3 (b) states that a direct award procedure may be used for ‘**grants**, where appropriate without the need for co-financing, **to finance actions in the most difficult conditions where the publication of a call for proposals would be inappropriate, including situations where there is a serious lack of fundamental freedoms, including violation of human rights, threats to democratic institutions, escalation of crisis or armed conflict, where human security is most at risk or where human rights organisations and defenders, mediators and other civil society actors involved in crisis and armed conflict related dialogue, reconciliation and peacebuilding operate under the most difficult conditions. Such grants shall not exceed EUR 1 000 000 and their duration shall not exceed 18 months**, which may be extended by a further 12 months in the event of objective and unforeseen obstacles to their implementation’.

Annex III of *Regulation (EU) 2021/947* specifies areas of intervention for a human rights and democracy thematic programme. These provide that ‘Union assistance shall particularly **address the most context-sensitive human rights issues, respond to the shrinking space for civil society** active in the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as counter other emerging and complex challenges’ (Annex III, 1, 1a). They also include ‘protecting and empowering human rights defenders worldwide, in particular **in countries where disrespect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is particularly pronounced and systematic**, including where restrictive measures have been introduced to limit their actions and their action is critical to reinforce the institutional and legal human rights framework. Emergency, medium-term and long-term assistance as well as sustainable measures shall be given to human rights defenders and civil society, in particular local human rights defenders and civil society (...)’ (Annex III, 1, 1b)

The action contributes to the realization of the objectives set out in the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III thematic

areas “Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence” and “Promoting equal participation and leadership” among others.

## 2.2 Problem Analysis

The action responds to well-documented trends towards growing authoritarianism, shrinking civic space, increasing restrictions over freedom of information and expression, and impunity for serious human rights violations. Human rights crises are unpredictable and can be triggered by numerous factors. They may be short- medium- or long-term. Countries may be considered ‘most difficult’ to work in not only because of the presence of conflict, a dramatic political moment or a highly repressive government, but also because geopolitical considerations can sometimes make it very sensitive to work on human rights issues openly in countries in which the EU otherwise maintains a positive and constructive relationship, or because discussion of certain universal human rights are politically impossible or counterproductive.

The concept of ‘most at risk’ broadly refers to countries and situations marked by a serious lack of respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms; where there is a pattern of human rights violations and abuses, at times coupled with violations of international humanitarian law, including gross and systematic ones, often with impunity; where the security of individuals is not guaranteed and there is little room for inclusion, participation, accountability and political pluralism; where civil society operates under extreme difficulty or individual human rights defenders face specific risks and are in extremely vulnerable situations.

In some countries, state fragility and/or conflict situations open the way for human rights violations by non-state actors as well as authorities, and clear risks to those individuals and groups who speak out or act to defend human rights, especially when they are also women or belong to vulnerable groups. In other countries, including some established democracies, serious shortcomings in respect for human rights are especially hard to address because of strong geopolitical factors and interests, including strategic needs to maintain dialogue on human rights and democracy. Impunity and repressive legislation incompatible with universal human rights norms are hallmarks. Both scenarios reflect “difficult country contexts” for human rights defenders, civic activists and their organisations. In some cases human rights work can only or mainly be carried out from outside the country.

There are clearly more human rights crises than EU operational resources to respond to them, so priority-setting is important. However, factors limiting the feasibility of planned measures and risks to achieving results also need to be carefully considered. The Crises Facility must therefore maintain a degree of flexibility in defining human rights crises and difficult countries, and in identifying projects, with complementarity to conflict analysis where appropriate and to humanitarian, development and peace nexus-oriented approaches. The Crises Facility remains demand-driven, depending on the initiative and the needs identified by the applicant CSOs.

As a global action, the Crises Facility responds to the trends of shrinking space and democratic backsliding that make difficult taking action on human rights through other programmes or other actions under the thematic programme. In addition to crackdowns on civic space, and action by CSOs and HRDs, the Crises Facility will also continue to address the growing global problem of mis- and dis-information and attacks targeting media and journalists. Particular attention will be given to counter cyber-surveillance and cyber-threats. Reflecting this, the UN adopted a Guidance Note on Protecting and Promoting Civic Space in September 2020, and OECD adopted ‘Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance’ in July 2021.

The action mainly foresees the protection and promotion of human rights at country level, including the safeguard of the work of those promoting and protecting human rights. In some countries, where such efforts are viewed as a threat by authorities and may even be criminalised, influence on domestic politics may be limited to monitoring and documentation, advocacy, strategic litigation, etc. While mainly targeting civil society operating inside the most difficult country contexts, this facility may also support organisations based outside the given country, such as groups that are located in neighbouring countries or within diaspora communities.

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 and target groups concerned by this action are independent civil society actors working on human rights and democracy, in particular civil society organisations (CSOs<sup>6</sup>), journalists, bloggers, activists and human rights defenders (HRDs)<sup>7</sup>, including women HRDs, operating in difficult situations both inside and outside target countries. Planned activities focus on countries or situations worldwide where public actions to support human rights are not possible without putting the implementing partners themselves at risk, where CSOs and HRDs are at risk, where they work under severe constraints and where they are most under pressure. The Crises Facility can be used to support organisations that are based outside the ‘most at risk’ country that is the focus of their activities, such as groups located in neighbouring countries or within diaspora communities. Taking into account intersectional challenges in specific contexts, it can also provide support to women’s organisations, indigenous peoples groups, sexual minorities, and so on, operating in difficult situations and facing different kinds of threats.

The Crises Facility can partner with international CSOs to reach these groups ‘with a view to reaching and best responding to the widest possible range of such stakeholders’ (Article 27(2) of *Regulation (EU) 2021/947*). Relevant national, regional and international organisations, institutions and donors involved in supporting independent CSOs and HRDs operating in the most difficult, sensitive and restricted situations, who often bring the benefit of a specific expertise, are also among the identified stakeholders, as are EU Member States and institutions. Secondary cooperation with enabling actors such as national human rights institutions, state agents such as prison authorities, police and the judiciary, and private companies, may in some cases be instrumental to achieving objectives under this action but these cannot be implementing partners.

The final beneficiaries are individuals, independent media outlets, and the wider public in target countries who will benefit from actions that protect and promote their rights, particularly in difficult human rights situations.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective** (Impact) of the Crises Facility is to promote and protect human rights by addressing some of the most difficult human rights situations in the world. It will contribute to the result ‘Improve the effectiveness of HRDs, NHRIs, CSOs to operate in a safe space for the promotion and protection of human rights’ by supporting CSOs to work on human rights in the most challenging situations, caused by restrictive and risky operating environments, highly sensitive content, and/or human rights crisis situations.

The **Specific Objective** (Outcome) of this action is to

1. Enable independent civil society actors to operate for the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in some of the world's most difficult contexts, and empower them to address particularly severe human rights challenges in a timely manner.

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

1. Human rights work supported (monitoring, documentation, advocacy, awareness-raising, knowledge sharing, etc.)
  - 2.1 Strengthened capacity, effectiveness and resilience of relevant human rights actors (CSOs, HRDs,

<sup>6</sup> According to the Global Europe Regulation Article 2 (7), “**civil society organisations**” embrace a wide range of actors with multiple roles and mandates, which may vary over time and across institutions and countries, and includes all non-State, not-for-profit independent and non-violent structures, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, including political, cultural, religious, environmental, social or economic, operating at local, national, regional or international levels, and comprising urban and rural, formal and informal organisations.

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media, activists in all their diversity)

2.2 Space for human rights actors and their work in particularly restricted environments is defended and enabled

### 3.2 Indicative Activities

This “enabling” stated in the Specific Objective (Outcome) may include *protecting* CSOs and HRDs from threats and attacks, *preserving* CSO and activists’ viability in environments where they are most at risk, and/or *promoting* human rights work under the most difficult situations and in crisis contexts.

As a **result**, independent civil society and HRDs are able to operate in some of the world's most difficult places, and are empowered to address particularly severe human rights challenges in a timely manner.

Whilst specific activities are developed on the initiative of implementing partners, **standard types of activities** should be gender-responsive, based on gender and human rights capacity gap analysis, and could include:

- documentation, monitoring and reporting of human rights violations, including trial monitoring;
- any type of legal assistance, to contribute to protection, redress for victims, strategic litigation or other aims
- developing and disseminating customised resources and tools;
- customised capacity building, training, technical assistance, advice, including e.g. in digital and physical security and thematic and functional human rights matters;
- support to peer-to-peer learning, exchanges and networking among human rights actors and with other stakeholders;
- advocacy, awareness raising, knowledge sharing and public campaigning;
- organising thematic workshops and seminars;
- sub-granting (financial support to third parties);
- support to human rights defenders.

Indicative activities related to Output 1:

- Documentation, monitoring and reporting, including trial monitoring;
- Legal assistance;
- Advocacy, awareness raising and public campaigning;
- Customised resources and tools - development and dissemination;
- Organisation of thematic workshops;

Indicative activities related to Output 2.1:

- Support to peer-to-peer learning and exchanges;
- Customised capacity building, training, technical assistance, advice, including e.g. in digital and physical security and thematic and functional human rights matters;
- Re-granting/sub-granting, including micro-grants and protection grants

Indicative activities related to Output 2.2:

- Documentation, monitoring and reporting, including trial monitoring;
- Legal assistance;
- Advocacy, awareness raising and public campaigning;
- Development and dissemination of customised resources and tools -;
- Organisation of thematic workshops;
- Support to peer-to-peer learning and exchanges;
- Customised capacity building, training, technical assistance, advice, including e.g. in digital and physical security and thematic and functional human rights matters;
- Re-granting/sub-granting, including micro-grants and protection grants



### 3.3 Mainstreaming

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

The Action is not as such environmentally or climatically sensitive. However, each project will make sure that results are sustainable in light of climate change and environmental degradation, and will not cause environmental damage or contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, including impacts on biodiversity. In addition, environmental rights defenders and climate activists are possible beneficiaries of projects under this Action.

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#### **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, including gender identity, is recognised as an intersectional risk factor for the identification of needs and risks pertaining to the human rights defenders and civil society organisations and actors targeted by the Crises Facility. Shrinking space is understood to comprise irregular developments, or more or earlier shrinking for certain context-specific lines of discrimination. Broader human rights violations also target certain groups, including women and girls and LGBTI individuals and groups, disproportionately. In line with the ‘leave no-one behind’ principle and the 2030 Agenda, particular attention will be given to advancing the rights of excluded and discriminated individuals and groups such as discriminated minorities, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. The Action is also aligned with the priorities of the gender action plan (GAP) III, so gender will be mainstreamed into all actions.

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#### **Human Rights**

The promotion and defense of human rights is the main objective of this Action.

In addition, all projects funded under the Action will be designed and implemented according to the human rights based-approach methodology, as outlined in the 2021 Toolbox for placing rights-holders at the centre of EU’s International Partnerships and required in NDICI-Global Europe Regulation article 8, ensuring that all activities leave no one behind, while addressing the multiple and intersecting discrimination faced by minorities and persons in vulnerable situations. In doing so, the projects will be designed through the application of the working principles of the human rights-based approach; applying all rights, participation and access to the decision making process, non-discrimination and equal access, accountability and access to the rule of law, transparency and access to information, supported by disaggregated data.

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#### **Disability**

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that whilst disability may be prioritised in activities under the Action, this will depend on the needs of a specific context and cannot be confirmed for the Action overall. However, the action focuses contexts of shrinking democratic and civic space, which are understood to comprise irregular developments, or more or earlier shrinking for certain context-specific lines of discrimination, including disability. Broader human rights violations also target certain groups disproportionately. In line with the ‘leave no-one behind’ principle and the 2030 Agenda, particular attention will be given to advancing the rights and participation of excluded and discriminated individuals and groups. Efforts will also be made to reach out to victims of human rights violations, which may correlate with disability.

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#### **Democracy**

The Action directly addresses the fundamental civic rights underpinning democracy, especially the Freedoms of Association, peaceful Assembly, Opinion and Expression, and encourages inclusive participation in the civic and political sphere. It aims to support civic actors to resist and counter trends of democratic backsliding, including in some cases by reinforcing the rule of law and administration of justice, and the fight against impunity for violations of human rights. Whilst political pluralism may be encouraged through Crises Facility activities, specific support for political opposition is not envisaged.

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

Conflict is a significant factor in the determination of a difficult country context. As such, where appropriate, conflict analysis may be undertaken in the development of projects under this Action.

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**Disaster Risk Reduction**

Man-made and natural disasters may be drivers of unstable political and socio-economic contexts, including inequalities, in which human rights crises can easily occur. Environmental human rights defenders in particular are implicated in DRR activities. As such, in specific contexts these may be addressed through this action.

**Other considerations if relevant**

Access for CSOs and HRDs outside capitals and in remote areas, and less-established groups including looser social or youth movements, will be given particular attention, including through specific capacity building and sub-granting activities. Mindful of the growing potential for retaliation against foreign-funded CSOs, competition among CSOs, dependency on donors, etc., the Crises Facility must also consider the ‘do-no-harm’ principle in its support.

Given the need to take into account the opportunities and challenges of new technologies, the Crises Facility will mainstream digital issues both into the identification of needs and problems (human rights violations and shrinking space occurring online) and into project activities (analysis and deployment of digital tools for the protection and promotion of human rights).

**3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Likelihood</b> (High/ Medium/ Low)	<b>Impact</b> (High/ Medium /Low)	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
Political	Projects implemented under this action take place in extremely difficult, dangerous and volatile places, and carry multiple political and physical risks that must not be underestimated and that can have implications for the EU institutions. In the past, project partners have been threatened, harassed and imprisoned.	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	This risk needs to be closely monitored and mitigated. The personal safety of beneficiaries and partners is to be carefully assessed for all supported projects.  Special attention will be paid to the confidentiality and security requirements. In particular, the names of the final beneficiaries of grants and direct support will not be made public unless requested otherwise by the beneficiary, and proper confidentiality measures will be taken. Management of the most difficult projects is centralised at HQ level.
Political	Giving cause to accusations of ‘foreign interference’ which damages the status of groups or individuals or may be used in defamation campaigns or legal action. There are risks for both grant recipients/ implementing partners/ target groups and for the European Union.	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	Confidentiality of project information, documentation and communication, underpinned by solid document security protocols. ‘Sensitive non-classified’ (SNC) is the marker currently employed by the EU. Awareness that EU delegation internet servers hosted in non-EU countries may be vulnerable to surveillance or attack. Awareness among all stakeholders and information systems of security status. ‘Do no harm’ approach.

Political/ legal	Inadvertently breaching existing laws or decrees linked to emergency measures (e.g. linked to national security or public health concerns or in conflict or disaster situations), in particular those considered arbitrary, contrary to international law and/or part of a crackdown on civic space.	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	Careful analysis must be made of the legality of project activities at the time of application and regularly throughout implementation wherever this risk is present. Projects should integrate contingency planning for activities to desist in case of new and restrictive legal stipulations.
	CSOs may have to operate in fragile, crisis and risk-prone places.	<b>M</b>	<b>L</b>	HQ to tailor assistance in a way that allows CSOs to contribute to the resolution of problem.
	Politically-sensitive projects in closed environments may make the assessment of projects and associated risks difficult and challenging.	<b>M</b>	<b>L</b>	A working methodology includes the need for opinion and approval of relevant EEAS and Commission departments, including in EU delegations. Potential digital security concerns are taken into consideration (consultation in person at HQ, encrypted emails, etc.).
	Difficulties in assessing the impact and monitoring the results of confidential projects leave an accountability gap. This and visibility restrictions reduce the apparent value of the thematic programme in reporting processes that trigger budget and other operational decision making.	<b>L</b>	<b>L</b>	Aggregated and anonymised reporting of results can be used to avoid important results being overlooked. The Crises Facility will be included in the overall evaluation of the programme. Strict financial and contractual standards are maintained despite visibility restrictions, and secured documentation is available in case reasonable suspicion warrants deeper examination. The M&E and access to information will be supported by collection of disaggregated at least by sex,) whenever considered possible and secure.

#### **Lessons Learnt:**

The Crises Facility programme established in 2015 will be included in the EIDHR evaluation. Due to their short duration and sensitive nature, most of the past Crises Facility projects have not been subject to ROM (results-oriented monitoring) reviews. However, data analysis of Crises Facility overviews and annual strategic implementation plans for operational managers have identified a number of lessons learnt in its first 5 years.

- Grants have increased over the years, from an average of EUR 555 000 in 2015 to an average of EUR 756 000 under the 2019 budget. About five grants per budget year have since been concluded.
- Overall demand for annual expenditure has consistently exceeded the allocation, suggesting a need for increasing it - which has been proposed for 2022-24.
- Policy backing and feasibility in terms of operational security have in practice been the main determinants for successful contracting of Crises Facility project applications.
- Media, journalism, freedom of expression and right to information remain a significant and growing area of work under the Crises Facility.

### 3.5 The Intervention Logic

Actions under the Crises Facility will contribute to the enjoyment of human rights in the country or countries concerned.

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that, during a human rights crisis, enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms is hampered by numerous factors:

- non-application of international human rights law and standards by duty-bearers;
- violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by duty bearers and non-state actors (sometimes with impunity), and where relevant violations of international humanitarian law;
- disrespect for the rule of law or excessive, arbitrary or disproportionate legislation that might constitute shrinking civic space;
- discrimination against certain groups or actors;
- practices reflecting an intolerance of dissent.

Under such circumstances human rights defenders, including CSOs and other groups, may lack the means to continue defending and promoting human rights, because for instance:

- they are threatened/harassed,
- their material or financial means are cut off,
- they are unable to access information and affected populations,
- they are exiled,
- they are arbitrarily arrested/imprisoned,
- they are placed under surveillance.

The Crises Facility would support projects that attempt to restore the viability of human rights work such as monitoring, documentation, advocacy, awareness-raising and knowledge-sharing in spite of these challenges, and preserve the viability of the actors who carry out this work (CSOs, HRDs, activists, institutions such as NHRIs), therefore contributing to the promotion and universal protection of human rights. Activities would thus include: (1) thematic activities specifically on human rights; and (2) assistance to strengthen capacity, effectiveness and resilience of relevant actors; as well as (3) activities aimed at defending space for the activities and the actors within a limited enabling environment.

The full range of universal human rights would fall within the **scope of the Crises Facility** and are potentially eligible for support. So far the demand-driven EIDHR Facility has primarily supported independent civil society in the following areas, whether online or offline: freedom of expression and of opinion (including cultural expression); access to information; freedom of assembly and association; freedom of (academic) thought; non-discrimination; the fight against torture and ill-treatment (including police brutality and detention conditions, among others); access to independent and impartial justice; and legal assistance (including against torture and ill-treatment). Notably, many of these fundamental freedoms are key elements of civic space, which Facility support has contributed to preserving and defending.

### **Complementarity, synergy and coordination with other programmes**

As the Crises Facility is intended as a short-term crisis response, it is essential that it complements and links well with longer-term policies and operational efforts in the affected country, including bilateral cooperation, geographical and other thematic programming and rapid response. Under the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme, experience with the human rights defenders (HRD) mechanisms (ProtectDefenders and the Emergency Fund) can serve to identify needs that the Crises Facility is best placed to address. Support to HRDs is not always about crisis situations: in-depth investigations can lead the way to structural reforms, and political support to HRDs can be key for future transitions.

As the thematic country allocations (Annex I to this MAAP) aim to support human rights locally, the demand-driven Crises Facility should only be used if local calls for proposal or other sources of support including from the geographical pillar under Regulation (EU) 2021/947 are not possible or not reactive enough, verified through consultation with geographical and Delegation colleagues. In fast-developing situations, the Crises Facility can also serve to bridge difficult periods, after which thematic country allocations or other programmes (for instance medium-term activities under geographical programmes) can continue supporting similar human rights objectives. Larger-scale rapid response actions, involving a variety of actors, may be suitable for high profile political interventions, which Crises Facility projects can also complement given the Facility's clear focus on rights and low-profile approach.

Under the *Regulation (EU) 2021/947*, the CSO thematic programme will prioritise work on creating an enabling environment for civil society, at both global and partner country level. The new global monitoring and engagement system under the programme will encompass monitoring of all aspects pertaining to civic space and an enabling environment for civil society; early warnings in times of imminent change; global flexible short-term support to enable civil society actors to quickly engage in situations of deterioration and/or positive developments pertaining to this environment; and long-term support for CSO capacity. In contrast with the Crises Facility, these actions are not designed for the most difficult and risky situations. They will furthermore engage with a broad range of civil society actors and entail CSO activities in a broader thematic scope. Implementing these complementary mechanisms in parallel can ensure that serious problems, vulnerable CSOs, and opportunities to prevent a deterioration or improve the situation are not 'left behind' or do not fall through gaps in EU support, and can also help avoid duplication. Coordination with the crisis response part of the NDICI rapid response pillar (former IcSP) is also called for. Synergies with or additional support to the European Endowment for Democracy might also be explored.

Finally, the projects resulting from the 2020 EIDHR global call on shrinking civic, democratic and civil society space have the potential to substantially complement Crises Facility projects, insofar as they will develop multi-country resources hubs to address deteriorating situations.

### 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.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (a): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (a): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To promote and protect human rights by addressing some of the most difficult human rights situations in the world.	<p>Number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU, disaggregated by sex and age (EU RF)</p> <p>Number of national and sub-national laws and public policies, which directly or indirectly protect and promote human rights, adopted or amended thanks to the critical role played by civil society organizations through EU support (MIP, EU RF)</p> <p>Country's score according to the CIVICUS Monitor in relation to country's quality of civic space (HR ResultsChain)</p>	TBD in 2022-2023		<p>EU intervention monitoring and reporting systems: (i) interim and final reports from implementing organisations, including governments, international organisations, non-state actors, etc (ii) ROM reviews and (iii) evaluations</p> <p>Civil society and HRD reports (e.g. CIVICUS Monitor, Freedom of the World -report, World Press Freedom, ProtectDefenders.eu).</p> <p>Reports by UN Special Rapporteurs, resolutions adopted by UNGA and UNHRC, UPR reports, UN Treaty Body reports, reports adopted by regional and national human rights mechanisms, SDG implementation reports.</p> <p>Media reports.</p>	Not applicable

<p><b>Outcomes</b></p>	<p>Independent civil society actors enabled to operate for the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in some of the world's most difficult contexts, and empowered to address particularly severe human rights challenges in a timely manner</p> <p>(corresponding to HR Results Chain Outcome D - Improved effectiveness of the actions of Human Rights Defenders, including independent NHRIs, and CSOs operating in safe space for the promotion and protection of human rights)</p>	<p>Number and nature of actions financed through a direct award and negotiated procedure targeting some of the world's most difficult situations, paying particular attention to gender sensitivity.</p> <p>Number of CS-led advocacy strategies and campaigns to raise awareness on unlawful restrictions on fundamental freedoms funded by the EU (MIP indicator).</p> <p>Number of (civil society organisations of) Human Rights Defenders (not in direct risk) supported by EU interventions in capacity development for networking, advocacy, security training (HR results chain)</p> <p>Number of CSOs and HRDs empowered to operate in such situations, disaggregated by sex.</p> <p>Number of EU-funded interventions in support of CS-led initiatives that have, directly or indirectly, contributed to countering shrinking space.</p>	<p>TBD in 2022-2023</p>		<p>EU intervention monitoring and reporting systems: annual and final reports from implementing organisations, ROM reviews, and evaluations.</p>	<p>Civil society and HRDs continue engaging and are willing to carry out activities and adapt to circumstances, despite serious risks and potentially deteriorating situations.</p> <p>Consulted Commission departments are supportive of direct awards to civil society and HRDs following consultations.</p>
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<p><b>Output 1</b> <b>related to</b> <b>Outcome 1</b></p>	<p>1 Human rights work supported (monitoring, documentation, advocacy, awareness-raising, knowledge sharing, etc.) (corresponding to HR Results Chain output 4, as well as 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17)</p>	<p>Number and nature of human rights actions successfully undertaken under difficult circumstances (monitoring, documentation, advocacy, awareness-raising, knowledge sharing, etc.)</p> <p>Number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU, disaggregated by sex and age (EURF)</p> <p>Number of people directly benefiting from legal aid interventions supported by the EU, disaggregated by sex and age (EURF)</p> <p>Number of people reached through Civil Society-led advocacy strategies and campaigns funded by the EU to raise awareness on unlawful restrictions on fundamental freedoms, disaggregated by sex and age (HR Results Chain)</p> <p>Number of people reached through civil society campaigns/events on access to information, freedom of expression, hate speech, extremism and disinformation in the use of media thanks to support of the EU intervention, disaggregated by sex, age and topic covered during training (HR Results Chain)</p>	<p>TBD in 2022-2023</p>		<p>intervention monitoring and reporting systems (including via OPSYS): annual and final reports from implementing organisations, ROM reviews, and evaluations 2</p>	<p>Project partners are able to undertake activities in the country or outside (or in another relevant geographical framework), and to adapt to evolving situations, throughout the project cycle.</p> <p>Project partners are able to maintain operational and financial management capacities despite restrictions and shrinking space contexts.</p> <p>INGO project partners are able to maintain access to target groups and beneficiaries in difficult situations.</p>
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<p><b>Output 1</b> <b>related to</b> <b>Outcome 2</b></p>	<p>2.1 capacity, effectiveness and resilience of relevant actors strengthened (CSOs, HRDs, media, activists) (corresponding to HR Results Chain output 2, as well as 8, 11, 18)</p>	<p>Number and nature of activities successfully and effectively undertaken, contributing to CSOs' and HRDs' <b>enhanced and improved skills and use of tools.</b></p> <p>2.1.2 Number and nature of activities successfully and effectively undertaken, contributing to CSOs' and HRDs' <b>adoption of mitigating methods to respond</b> to various threats and circumstances.</p> <p>Number of state and non-state actors (individuals) trained by the EU-funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skills on human rights principles and contemporary human rights challenges in regional, national or international context, , disaggregated by sex and age (HR ResultsChain)</p> <p>Number of grassroots civil society organisations active in the human rights field benefitting from (or reached by) EU support (EU RF)</p>	<p>TBD in 2022-2023</p>		<p>intervention monitoring and reporting systems: annual and final reports from implementing organisations, ROM reviews, and evaluations</p>	
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<b>Output 2</b>  <b>related to</b> <b>Outcome 2</b>	2.2 Space for human rights actors and their work, in particularly restricted environments, is defended and enabled (corresponding to HR Results Chain output 13, as well as 14)	<p>Number of people reached by civil society campaigns supported by the EU to counter shrinking of civic space, disaggregated by sex and age (HR results chain)</p> <p>Number of CSO and platforms working on freedom of assembly and association, supported by the EU (HR results chain)</p> <p>Design and implementation of gender sensitive activities. Participation in activities to be disaggregated by sex and any other category of relevance in particular geographic or thematic context.</p> <p>Number of grassroots civil society organizations active in the human rights field benefitting from or reached by EU support (EURF level 2, also valid for priority 1.2 and 1.3).</p>	TBD in 2022-2023	EU	interventions monitoring and reporting systems: annual and final reports from implementing organisations	
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## 4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1 Financing Agreement

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

### 4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision. Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

### 4.3 Implementation Modalities

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

#### 4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

##### **Grants: (direct management)**

##### **(a) Purpose of the grant(s)**

The purpose of grants under the Human Rights Crises Facility is to finance actions taking place in the most difficult conditions or situations referred to in Article 27(3)b of the Regulation (UE) 2021/947, where the publication of a call for proposals would be inappropriate, and, where appropriate, without the need for co-funding. Subject to review and negotiation on a rolling basis, the specific purpose of each grant cannot be pre-determined in the action document. The Crises Facility will complement other thematic and geographic instruments. It will prioritise actions in countries where there is an objective difficulty in funding organisations working for human rights and their defenders, and where there is a proven human rights crisis. As per article 27(3)b, the grants under this component should not exceed EUR 1 000 000 and should have a duration of up to 18 months.

##### **(b) Type of applicants targeted**

Potential applicants are independent, non-governmental CSOs as defined in article 2(7) of Regulation (UE) 2021/947, including international CSOs working with local partners, local or regional CSOs based in or near the targeted country. As per Article 28(12) of Regulation 947 [O](EU,)] organisations without legal personality may be eligible should this be necessary to pursue the programme's intervention areas. In view of the specialised and urgent nature of response needed for most human rights crises, no nationality restriction on the eligibility of the applicant/implementing partner shall apply.<sup>9</sup> In view of the phenomenon of shrinking space for CSOs targeted by this Action, unregistered organisations may also be eligible, provided they meet necessary administrative and financial criteria for the sound management of the project.

##### **(c) Justification of a direct grant**

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, grants may be awarded without

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

<sup>9</sup> With regard to Israeli entities: follow Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJ C 205, 19.7.2013, p. 9)

a call for proposals to applicants based on presence and expertise and capacity to implement projects under human rights crisis situations.

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 as the projects to be funded under human rights crises situations will fall under one of the cases foreseen in Article 27(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947: *grants, where appropriate without the need for co-financing, to finance actions in the most difficult conditions where the publication of a call for proposals would be inappropriate, including situations where there is a serious lack of fundamental freedoms, including violation of human rights, threats to democratic institutions, escalation of crisis or armed conflict, where human security is most at risk or where human rights organisations and defenders, mediators and other civil society actors involved in crisis and armed conflict related dialogue, reconciliation and peacebuilding operate under the most difficult conditions;*

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

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

#### 4.5 Indicative Budget

<b>Indicative Budget components<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR)</b>
<b>Implementation modalities</b> – cf. section 4.3	
<b>Grants</b> – total envelope under section 4.3.1.	14,000,000
<b>Evaluation</b> – cf. section 5.2 <b>Audit</b> – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another Decision
<b>Totals</b>	14,000,000

#### 4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The action will be coordinated by the European Commission Headquarters.

The Crises Facility allows demand-driven grants for short-term activities to react quickly to human rights emergencies, deployed when and where calls for proposals are not possible. It is essential to complement operations conducted under other actions of this thematic programme or under other EU programmes, depending on the geographical and political context. To this end, each grant will be subject to consultation with the relevant Commission departments and confirmed in a negotiation report prior to contracting. The gravity of the situation and the effectiveness of the action are the key considerations for assessing and prioritising project proposals. The relevant Commission departments set up inter-service working methods and operating arrangements for the EIDHR Human Rights Crises Facility in 2015 that may be revised and updated for the new financial framework.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission will lead and coordinate the above negotiated procedure to identify viable project grants.

## 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).

Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex. 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).

### 5.2 Evaluation

Considering the nature of the action, final evaluations may exceptionally be carried out by independent consultants contracted by the Commission for individual projects funded under this action or will be embedded in individual grant contracts. The overall Action will be evaluated as part of the thematic programme's midterm review, for accountability and learning purposes at various levels.

All evaluations shall assess to what extent the action is taking into account human rights based approach as well as how it contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. Expertise on human rights and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation team.

The evaluation reports, if any, should be handled according to the agreed security measures established for the individual projects. The implementing partner and the Commission should analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and (only 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 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.

As per Article 47 of Regulation (UE) 2021/947 on derogations from visibility requirements, security issues or political sensitivities may make it preferable or necessary to limit communication and visibility activities in certain countries or areas or during certain periods. In such cases, the target audience and the visibility tools, products and channels to be used to promote a given action will be determined on a case-by-case basis, in consultation and agreement with the EU.

## Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention<sup>11</sup> (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

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

The present Action identifies as

Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	This action will be implemented by several contracts which each will be individual PINTV

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<sup>11</sup> [ARES \(2021\)4204912](#) - For the purpose of consistency between terms in OPSYS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI have harmonised 5 key terms, including ‘action’ and ‘Intervention’ where an ‘action’ is the content (or part of the content) of a Commission Financing Decision and ‘Intervention’ is a coherent set of activities and results which constitutes an effective level for the operational follow-up by the EC of its operations on the ground. See more on the [concept of intervention](#).