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ANNEX 2

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the Annual Action Plan in favour of Georgia 2023

Action Document for “Advancing Human Security”

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

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

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

1. Title OPSYS Basic Act	Advancing Human Security Annual action plan in favour of Georgia for 2023 OPSYS business reference: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2023/ACT-61980 ABAC Commitment level 1 number: JAD.1202166 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
2. Economic and Investment Plan (EIP)	No
EIP Flagship	No
3. Team Europe Initiative	No
4. Beneficiar(y)/(ies) of the action	The action shall be carried out in Georgia.
5. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Programming Document (MIP) 2021-2027 ¹
6. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results	MIP Priorities 2 - Accountable institutions, the rule of law and security and 5 - Resilient, (gender) equal, fair and inclusive societies Expected results linked:

¹ Commission Implementing Decision C(2022)5658 of 09/08/2022 on adopting a multiannual indicative programme for Georgia for the period 2021-2027

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity of relevant state bodies, including on investigation and prosecution of corruption, money laundering, cybercrime and on supporting victims of discrimination; • Increased resilience and capacity to address national security threats, including hybrid threats, critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity issues and disinformation; • Fight against organised crime, including through establishing institutional, policy and legislative cybersecurity frameworks in line with EU legislation and guidelines; • Increased human security, peacebuilding and socio-economic development for conflict-affected people living in the breakaway regions as well as along the Administrative Boundary Lines. • Heightened public awareness of disinformation campaigns, including promotion of media literacy, and wider condemnation of hate speech, divisive language; • Implemented Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan; • Improved public awareness and implementation of anti-discrimination policies and legislation, at the central and local level; • Enhanced dialogue and cooperation between institutions and civil society organisations in promoting and protecting human rights; • Active and functioning human rights institutions, as well as equality bodies.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
7. Priority Area(s), sectors	151- Government and Society-General 152- Conflict, Peace & Security
8. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities SDG5: Gender Equality
9. DAC code(s) ²	15130 Legal and judicial development - 10% 15160 Human rights – 45% 15210 Security system management and reform – 45%
10. Main Delivery Channel	12000 – Recipient Government

² DAC sectors (codes and descriptions) are indicated in the first and fourth columns of the tab ‘purpose codes’ in the following document: [DAC and CRS code lists - OECD](#).

11. 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance ³			
not 12. Markers⁴ (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition ⁵	<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"/>
13. Internal markers⁶ and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	EIP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	EIP Flagship	YES <input type="checkbox"/>		NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

³ Thematic target for geographic programmes (at least 15%) in delegated act.

⁴ For guidance, see [Development finance standards - OECD](#) (go to “Data collection and resources for reporters”, select Addendum 2, annexes 18 (policy) and 19 (Rio) of the reporting directive). If an action is marked in the DAC form as contributing to one of the general policy objectives or to RIO principles as a principal objective or a significant objective, then this should be reflected in the logframe matrix (in the results chain and/or indicators).

⁵ Please check the [Handbook on the OECD-DAC Nutrition Policy Marker](#).

⁶ These markers have a different scope/rationale than the DAC codes. They are drawn from the level of budget allocation and emphasis given to the action in terms of main objective(s) selected. The definition of objectives and outputs in the description of the action should be in line with this section.

Tags ⁷	YES		NO
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
environment, climate resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
economic development (incl. private sector, trade and macroeconomic support)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
human development (incl. human capital and youth)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
health resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
migration and mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
agriculture, food security and rural development	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
rule of law, governance and public administration reform	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Digitalisation ⁸	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tags	YES		NO
digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital skills/literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tags	YES		NO
digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
health	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Migration ⁹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁷ When a marker is Significant or Principal Objective, please indicate the relevant tags by selecting “YES” or “NO”.

⁸ Please address the digitalisation marker in line with the note Ares(2019)7611708.

⁹ Please address the migration marker in line with the note Ares(2021)6077013.

BUDGET INFORMATION	
14. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.0201.11 Eastern Neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 20 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 20 000 000
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	
15. Implementation modalities (management mode and delivery methods)	Direct management through: - Grants - Procurement Indirect management with: the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.3; and with European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions (EMCDDA)

1.2. Summary of the Action

The Action will on the one hand support the implementation of obligations under the Association Agenda between the EU and Georgia 2021-2027 and the new obligations related to Georgia's European perspective including the implementation of the 12 priorities and the obligations under chapter 23 and 24 of the EU acquis identified in the European Commission Opinion on Georgia's application for membership to the EU¹⁰. Moreover, the action is in line with the Multiannual Indicative Framework 2021-2027 (priority 2 and 5), 2020 Joint Communication: "Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020"¹¹, the EU's Strategic Compass on Security and Defence¹², the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024, the EU Gender Action Plan 2021-2025 and the EU strategic approach to Women Peace and Security, the 2016 EU-wide strategic framework to support Security Sector Reform (SSR)¹³, as well as specific recommendations of the United Nations, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and other bodies.

On the other hand, this action will be grounded in the Government's policies and commitments including the National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan, the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration, the Code on the Rights of the Child and will assist in implementation of strategic documents in the security sector including the Cybersecurity Strategy for 2021-2024, the National Drug Policy Strategy 2023-2030, the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the National Action Plan on the Implementation of the United Nations Resolution on Women, Peace and Security for 2022-2024, amongst others.

The Overall Objective of this action is to increase human security and strengthen the enjoyment of human rights in Georgia. The Action builds on ongoing support under the Security, Accountability and Fight against Crime (SAFE) and EU4 Human Rights programmes (ending in 2023-2024). This will be done by strengthening the human rights framework, including protection systems at national and local levels and strengthening resilience and accountability of the national security system, including resilience against hybrid threats.

In the human rights sector the Action will mainly focus on improving the legislative and policy frameworks in the area of human rights and equality, including gender equality, in line with European standards and EU *acquis*, while at the same time supporting the capacities of authorities to implement a human rights-based

¹⁰ [Opinion on Georgia's application for membership of the European Union](#)

¹¹ [2020 Joint Communication: "Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020"](#)

¹² [A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence](#)

¹³ 2016 [Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – Elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform](#)

approach in respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights policies and actions and strengthening the human rights institutions and equality body. It will also support cooperation between institutions and civil society, including women's rights organisations, human rights defenders with the aim to improve enjoyment of human rights. The Action will have a specific focus on the rights of those in vulnerable situation and minorities and will aim to ensure implementation of the rights of the child in line with the Code on the Rights of the Child, the anti-discrimination policies and legislation as well as awareness raising and concrete actions to address the needs and rights of minority groups and persons in vulnerable situations including persons with disabilities, survivors of domestic violence and violence against women, girls and children, national and ethnic minorities and the LGBTI community. Moreover, the human security and socio-economic development for conflict-affected people living in the breakaway regions of Georgia will be addressed mainly through focus on access to essential services, including healthcare. In order to address the security challenges including hybrid threats, the Action will assist in ensuring that public policies/strategies on addressing hybrid threats, critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, crisis management, antidrug actions and drug-use prevention are developed and implemented in line with EU standards. At the same time, the Action aims at promoting dialogue between the relevant state administrations and civil society representatives, including academia for the development and implementation of the national security policies and promotion of women, peace and security agenda. The Action will also strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of core institutions to address security challenges and hybrid threats. The accountability of the security sector will be further reinforced by strengthening the oversight of the security sector institutions and engagement with civil society and broader population. Last but not least, the programme will focus on raising awareness of citizens on security and hybrid threats.

The Action will also directly contribute to the sustainable implementation and monitoring of eight out of the 12 priorities stressed in the European Commission's Opinion on Georgia's application to EU membership (anticorruption, fight against organised crime, media, human rights, gender, ECtHR judgments, Public Defender), and support the governance pillar of the EIP. The action will also contribute to the SDG 16 on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

1.3. Beneficiary of the action

The Action shall be carried out in Georgia which is included in the list of ODA recipients.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Georgia is a small developing country with a population of about 3.7 million people (52% are women and 48% are men) and a gross national income (GNI) per capita of USD 5,023.2¹⁴. Over the last decade, Georgia undertook significant social and economic reforms resulting, inter alia, in progress in reforming the role of the state vis-à-vis the private sector, in reducing corruption, and in developing a more favourable environment for business. Sound fiscal and monetary policies also contributed to foster economic growth particularly in large cities (Tbilisi, Batumi). The pace of reforms has slowed down since 2019, partially due to global pandemic and partially due to high political polarisation that distracted the attention of authorities.

Despite reforms and growth over the last decade, the unemployment rate remains relatively high - at 17.3% (19.3% among men and 14.6% among women) in 2022 that has slightly decreased compared to pre-pandemic level. The real unemployment rate is presumably much lower as it also covers the non-declared work-force, mainly working in households and subsistence economy. Georgia's inequality of income, as measured both

¹⁴ Source: Geostat 2021

by the income quintile share ratio and the Gini coefficient, declined considerably from 2011 to 2021 but was still greater than in the EU in 2021¹⁵.

The economy of Georgia was strongly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, notably due to a sharp decrease in the tourism sector and remittances. However, Georgia registered a strong rebound starting from the second quarter of 2021 with a real GDP growth of 10.4% in 2021 and estimated 10.1% in 2022. Inflation eased in January 2023 to 9.4%, but food prices remained elevated. Building resilience and ensuring that this growth is structural is a key priority for the government. The impact on the economy of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine was minimal, and even positive, but it has exacerbated tensions in the country due to a large influx of Russian citizens fleeing mobilisation.

On 3 March 2022, Georgia submitted its application for EU membership, ahead of the schedule previously established by its Government (initially planned for 2024), following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. On 23 June 2022 the European Council endorsed the European Commission Opinion and granted a European perspective to Georgia. The European Council also stressed that Georgia could be granted candidate status once the 12 policy priorities identified in the European Commission Opinion on Georgia's membership application will have been addressed¹⁶. Since June the Georgian Parliament has moved to implement the reforms to address the 12 priorities. Overall, in this context, it is expected that the pace of reforms will be accelerated, to bring Georgia closer to the EU in terms of alignment with the EU *acquis*. This has been proved partially true only, as lingering polarisation has hampered the pace of reform implementation.

The proposed action is in line with main EU policies for the Eastern Partnership. The Action responds to the objectives of the 2020 Joint Communication: "Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020: Reinforcing Resilience – an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all" by addressing two of the five policy objectives namely: together for accountable institutions, the rule of law and security; and together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies. The action is aligned with the objectives of the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, adopted in March 2022, which stresses the need for a more tailored and integrated approach to capacity building of partners. It also responds to the priorities of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024, the key principles expressed in the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council "Elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security reform" (2016), also main priorities defined in the EU Security Union Strategy 2020.

On 2 July 2021, the EU published its Joint Staff Working Document "Recovery, resilience and reform: post 2020 EaP priorities", which includes an Economic and Investment Plan for the Eastern Partnership countries. Overall, the Economic and Investment plan, will mobilise EUR 2.3 billion from the EU budget for the whole EaP to stimulate jobs and growth, as well as connectivity and the green and digital transition. For Georgia six flagship initiatives have been identified. While most flagships are on track and their implementation requires a long-term perspective, the localisation of EIP priorities will ensure its sustainability. This action supports the governance pillar of the EIP.

Georgia has made significant progress in promoting respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in recent years. However, in the last couple of years there have been challenges when it comes to implementation of obligations under international human rights law and commitments made under the Association Agreement. Many issues still persist, particularly with regards to the rights of persons belonging to minorities, women and girls and people with disabilities. There is an extensive legislative and policy framework including strong human rights provisions in the Constitution. Moreover, in the last years many important laws have been adopted including the Law on Gender Equality (2010), the Law on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (2014), the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2014), the Code on the Rights of the Child (2020). However, the implementation of the legal framework remains a challenge. Furthermore, in 2014 Georgia has

¹⁵ [European Neighbourhood Policy – East – living conditions statistics – Income Distribution](#)

¹⁶ [Opinion on Georgia's application for membership of the European Union](#)

adopted its first National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights 2014-2020 – a strategic document that outlines the government's priorities and objectives with respect to human rights in Georgia. The adoption of the second Strategy was delayed and the document has been approved by the Government only in September 2022 and by Parliament in March 2023. The Strategy provides main directions for Government for the next years to come. Nevertheless, in comparison to the previous Strategy it unfortunately does not address some key issues, such as LGBTI rights and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

These policies and legislation reflect Georgia's commitment to implement its obligations under a number of international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention). These treaties set minimum standards for human rights and specific obligations for the State vis-à-vis their implementation and require the government to report on progress in their implement.

Georgia's national security system has been developing for years now, with some significant changes in the architecture of the system in 2015 (separation of security services from the Ministry of Internal Affairs) and creation of a new National Security Council and its Office in 2019 with mandate of a consultative body to the Prime Minister and in charge of crisis management. The present setup of the national security system of Georgia is complex; coordination between the security sector administrations is mostly designed around thematic strategies operating in the sector.

There are no up-to-date strategic security documents in Georgia. Indeed, the 2011 National Security Concept, the 2010 Threat Assessment Document of Georgia and the classified Threat Assessment Report (2015-2018) have not been revisited and resulted in new strategic documents yet. The National Security Council (NSC) Office has been working on updating the mentioned documents for several years now and the final review is still in progress to reflect latest developments in the region, most importantly Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The NSC Office has been also working on a strategic document on addressing hybrid threats, which has not been discussed outside the Office until now.

The Strategy on fighting Organised Crime for 2021-2024 and its Action Plan 2021-2022 was adopted in September 2021. Also, in September 2021, the government approved the Cybersecurity Strategy for 2021-2024. The National Drug Policy Strategy 2023-2030 and the Action Plan for 2023-24 was adopted in February 2023, and in parallel Georgia has a National Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy for 2021-26. The National Security Service of Georgia is in charge of developing and implementation of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the latest Strategy covers period from 2021-2026. Also, in November 2022, the National Action Plan (NAP) for Combating Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Ensuring Protection of Survivors for 2022-2024, the National Action Plan (NAP) on the Implementation of the United Nations Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR) for 2022-2024. The NAP on UNSCR 1325 is the fourth consecutive NAP in this realm adopted and implemented by Georgia.

In line with the EU non-recognition and engagement policy towards Georgia's breakaway regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, the European Union has been engaged to the extent possible in assisting the populations of the regions, in particular in confidence building and socio-economic development of conflict-affected populations. This Action when implemented in Abkhazia will be in line with the Law on Occupied Territories and the State Strategy on Occupied Regions "Engagement through Cooperation".

Assistance will build on achievements of the ongoing key assistance on human rights implemented through the EU4Human Rights under the Annual Action Plan (AAP) 2019 and the EU4 Security, Accountability and Fight against Crime in Georgia (SAFE) under the AAP 2018.

To the extent possible, it will also build complementarities with the support provided by other donors. In the area of Human Rights, the most relevant initiatives include:

- Norway’s support to the “Leadership, Equality, Advocacy and Democracy” initiative implemented by UNDP which supports changes needed to protect minority rights and combat discrimination;
- Dutch and Swedish support to NGOs working on human rights and democracy (IDFI, Social Justice Center);
- USAID programs, such as Civil Society Engagement, Independent Living, Unity through Diversity.

Building on the experience of ongoing fight against organised crime, CyberEast and EU4DigitalCyberSecurity initiatives, EU funded regional programmes addressing fight against organised crime, cyber-crime and cybersecurity capacity building are in preparation; Georgia is also an active participant in the European Multi-disciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), including in the operational action plan dealing with cyber-attacks as well as the one dealing with High Risk Criminal Networks. II phase of the regional EU4Monitoring Drugs has been launched recently. Under the bilateral cooperation the EU4Security Accountability and Crime Prevention (SAFE) Programme is still ongoing by mid-2025 latest. EU4Gender Equality has Georgia as one of the focus countries and the government is getting support through the HelpDesk to integrate a gender perspective in laws, policies and through gender budgeting. An upcoming EU technical assistance project on Advancing reforms in Justice sector will support some of the security sector administrations (MIA, MoJ and PSG) in fighting organised crime, cybercrime, trafficking in human beings through strengthening institutional capacities.

The proposed programme is also complementary to activities implemented or planned by other donors supporting security sector:

- EU funded NATO Building Integrity Programme;
- the United Kingdom remains very active in all areas of cyber security developments;
- USAID is also covering sectoral cybersecurity capacity building, mostly in energy sector;
- the US Department of Justice provides continuous assistance to the Prosecutor's Office and to judiciary institutions in the criminal law area, while the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) provides targeted assistance in the prosecution, police, and penitentiary sectors as well as in Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) investigations, cybercrime and fight against illegal drugs.

Donor coordination in the security sector is mostly happening on bilateral level, is fragmented and lacks consolidation. There are some good examples of donor coordination per sector, for example on cybersecurity, led by the UK embassy in close coordination with the National Security Council Office. Also there are some practices of coordination on fight against drugs, on actions implemented by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on implementation of Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Lack of consolidated practices of donor-coordination remains to be a challenge and therefore the present action proposes as one of the activity strengthening overall coordination mechanisms under the security sector.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis

Georgia has made significant progress over the last years when it comes to security, human rights and equality, including gender equality. It has undertaken numerous legislative and institutional reforms aimed at strengthening the rule of law, non-discrimination, human rights and security. A lot of these reforms have been associated with Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Since 2014, Georgia is implementing the EU-Georgia

Association Agreement, including its commitments in the areas of democracy, human rights, gender equality, the rule of law and security. A number of reforms were also implemented in order for Georgia to benefit from visa liberalisation in line with the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan. However, many issues still need to be addressed and there have been negative trends in the last couple of years with increased challenges in human rights and backsliding on rule of law, including a number of rushed legislative changes and appointments contrary to European standards, which did not fully take into account Venice Commission recommendations. These challenges have been clearly outlined in the European Commission Opinion on Georgia's application for membership of the European Union of 17 June 2022 and there are number of priorities recommended by the Commission that are related to human rights and security.

Human Rights

The new National Strategy for Human Rights Protection 2022-2030, despite some weaknesses, provides for an elaborate framework for the implementation of Georgia's national human rights agenda. Several of these commitments align with Georgia's international obligations and if implemented would also help Georgia in its progress towards European integration. The implementation of human rights policies will need to be supported particularly on local levels where citizens are in direct contact with local duty bearers. There needs to be further engagement with civil society, including women's rights organisations, and awareness raising about rights. The institutions tasked with protecting and fulfilling human rights have improved their capacities, also through support provided via the ongoing EU4Human Rights and previous Human Rights for All programmes, but there is still a need to enhance coordination between the responsible institutions (including via improved functioning of the Inter-Agency Council on Human Rights). More capacity building is still required due to staff turnover, changes in leadership (e.g. Public Defender), developments in legal and policy frameworks as well as new obligations linked to the European perspective.

There is a strong legislative framework in place, including the Law on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and the Code of the Rights of the Child. Implementation is, however, still relatively weak, in particular at local level and when it comes to rights of persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities and LGBTI persons and other persons in vulnerable situations. Further efforts are required to ensure non-discrimination, including in access to services, both through awareness raising with respect to rights and ensuring alignment of legislation with EU and international standards. Women and girls in vulnerable situations, including women and girls with disabilities, ethnic minorities, LGBTI persons, as well as women and girls living in rural areas and below the poverty line, face particular challenges and additional barriers in accessing services, participation in public life and increased risk of domestic violence. Violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence (DV) remain a prevalent problem in Georgia. Women and girls experience different forms of violence, and data shows that the prevalence of VAW is especially higher among women and girls with disabilities. Another related problem is son preference at birth, which is still quite strong. This translates into a sex imbalance, with the sex ratio at birth (109.3 male births per 100 female births) higher than the biological norm (104-106). In addition to this, women and girls from marginalized groups often face additional barriers in accessing justice in cases of sexual violence due to the existing stigma, lack of reasonable accommodation for women and girls with disabilities and language barriers for ethnic minorities.

Important progress is being made in the realisation of children's rights in Georgia but there are still important challenges when it comes to child poverty – which also increases the risk of child labour, violence against children, access to justice and social services amongst others. The 2020 Code on the Rights of the Child, supported by the EU, as well as other legislative acts substantially increased responsibilities of the local governments but necessary financial resources, institutional arrangements and capacity building to the local governments and proper coordination was not put in place. There has been a lot of progress on juvenile justice, but other areas of justice are lagging behind and therefore there is a need to expand and implement the concept of child friendly justice. The EU with UNICEF is providing ongoing support to the development of child

friendly justice, however, more efforts will be needed to implement this approach, particularly in administrative and civil cases. Additionally, the newly adopted State Strategy for the Children on the Streets should also be supported to address this important challenge. Girls face particular challenges. Even though Georgia took significant steps towards the elimination of child marriage, the phenomenon continues to disproportionately affect the lives of girls in the country. Women residing in rural areas, Azerbaijani women and women with a lower level of education are more likely to get married at an early age. Furthermore, violence against children (VAC) remains a serious concern. Children in Abkhazia face additional difficulties and can be considered multi-dimensionally poor – they do not enjoy their rights to quality education, health, housing, nutrition, sanitation, or water.

Socio-economic development of the two breakaway regions remains challenging and particularly affects persons in vulnerable situations. The Covid-19 crisis exacerbated inequalities in Abkhazia and the Russian invasion in Ukraine has further impacted the economy and availability and access to quality essential services. One of the main challenges faced in Abkhazia is the availability and access to quality health services. The referral system with Tbilisi Administered territories exists but it is not sufficient to address the primary health care, therefore there is a need to enhance the availability and access to basic services in Abkhazia.

Youth in Abkhazia is faced with little opportunities for education and employment. Due to the lack of life skills and competency based general education and the low quality of vocational education, there is a mismatch between the needs of the labour market and the actual skills of school and vocational education graduates. This results in a low quality of many private economy activities and public services, e.g. in the health sectors. The EU together with partners from UN (UNDP, UNICEF and FAO) and international NGOs has engaged already in support in the VET sector which has yielded good results since 2019 and there is a good momentum to continue this work that would help to empower the underprivileged youth and provide for better achievement of socio-economic rights.

Security and hybrid threats

Implementation of the EU4 Security, Accountability and Fight against Crime in Georgia (SAFE) identified specific fields of interventions in the security sector with the potential for further development and reinforcement. Experience showed that although individual administrations are demonstrating good technical capacities and operate effectively, the overall coordination and exchange between the institutions and with oversight bodies and civil society needs further reinforcement. The core national security related policy documents are outdated and drafting, and revision of those documents have been ongoing for years now. Although core national security administrations have been demonstrating vast interest towards defining hybrid threats and ways for addressing the threats, concrete actions were not taken. On the contrary, the recent attempt of the Georgian Parliament to adopt laws on transparency of foreign influence in the civil society proves the need for more qualified discussions on hybrid threats and ways of addressing hybrid threats in line with European human rights and EU standards. Although Georgian Government has a system for strategic communication with defined strategies and working arrangements, addressing disinformation, more specifically anti-western and anti-EU narratives, remains to be one of the biggest challenges in the country. The country's high exposure to disinformation combined with the high level of polarisation of the society and of the political scene makes Georgia a vulnerable actor to foreign interference and information manipulation that may exacerbate further tensions, manipulating or undermining Georgia's European path. The current situation in the region following the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, shows that there is further need to strengthen the security sector and address the hybrid threats in particular when it comes to cybersecurity and disinformation. The EU and Georgia conducted a Hybrid Risk Survey to identify key vulnerabilities and agreed a set of recommendations in 2019. Several EU-funded activities have already been implemented to assist Georgia in addressing these recommendations. Future EU support to Georgia in countering hybrid threats should also be guided by these recommendations.

The representation of women in the security sector, as well as women's participation in conflict resolution efforts and peace dialogues, is extremely low, excluding the experiences and contributions of women in peace processes. Women are also underrepresented in people-to-people diplomacy initiatives. COVID-19 became an additional barrier to women's participation in the decision-making and formal peace processes.

The Association Agreement and Association Agenda 2021-2027 (also the scope of the enlargement reporting), covers important pieces of the EU acquis that Georgia is committed to comply with on cybersecurity, anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing, on personal data protection. The National Security Council Office expressed interest in developing legislative framework for critical infrastructure protection in line with respective EU acquis. Fighting organised crime, cybercrime, drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings, corruption are the priorities defined in thematic strategy papers of Georgia and confirmed as commitments under the EU-Georgia association agenda. Progress in these domains is to be assessed under the enlargement reporting exercise on an annual basis. Therefore, the capacity building of relevant institutions and practitioners remains a priority, including technological capacity development to address needs for increased use of digital solutions, analytical tools and cybersecurity related solutions. The first precedent of the technological capacity building interventions under the SAFE programme showed that the need for further advancements, especially in the civil protection domain remains high and this type of assistance closely combined with technical assistance are a good incentive in the reform process.

Stakeholders:

Given the complex and cross-cutting nature of human rights, there are various duty-bearer stakeholders involved in the sector:

The Human Rights Secretariat, which is part of the Government Administration (AoG) and funded by the state budget. It coordinates overall human rights policies from respective line ministries and other bodies. The Secretariat is capacitated but will require some strategic guidance in supporting the further reforms.

Along with the Human Rights Secretariat of the AoG, **the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Human Rights** acts as the government's key interlocutor on human rights, coordinating a wide spectrum of policy-making on human rights and representing government in various inter-agency dialogue formats (e.g. chairing the Interagency Coordination Committee on Implementing UN CRPD).

The Public Defender's Office (PDO) is the national human rights institution under the Constitution of Georgia tasked to oversee the observance of human rights in the country.

The **Ministry of Internal Affairs** is one of the stakeholders involved in the administration of criminal justice. Especially, the **Human Rights Protection and Quality Control Department** of the MIA which has a mandate to monitor investigation of crimes committed by and against juveniles, domestic violence crimes, sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking and hate crimes.

The **Special Investigative Service (SIS)** is an independent investigation unit with mandate to investigate violent crimes and ill-treatment committed by the representatives of the law enforcement agencies and other officials. In 2022, the SIS was also tasked with conducting/reinvigorating investigations related to all crimes indicated in the legally binding decision of the European Court of Human Rights. Therefore, SIS, will require some assistance in implementing its new mandate.

The **Ministry of Justice** is the leading institution in the area of policy-making on justice, including juvenile justice and children in the streets situation.

The **Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia** is spearheading the social policy, provision of social programmes and social services, including to children, persons with disabilities, and victims of violence. Its legal entities **Social Service Agency (SSA)** and the **Agency for State Care and Assistance for the (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking** have the legal functions to manage the state programmes in the social sphere, as well as the cases of children at risk and victims of violence, and to provide social services for vulnerable families with children. Capacity at local level requires enhancement.

Office of the State Ministry for Reconciliation and Civic Equality of Georgia (SMR) is responsible for policy making and coordination pertaining to peacekeeping and the rights of persons living in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and the former South Ossetia Autonomous Region. As well as ensuring equality and non-discrimination, including for national minority groups. SMR is the lead government authority in ensuring the implementation of the 2021-2030 State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration.

Various other agencies and interagency councils address human rights through separate strategies and action plans, such as the **Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, Persons with Disabilities Council, the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament (GEC) and the Interagency Commission on the Implementation of Convention on the Rights of the Child (CICRC). The Parliament, and in particular its Parliamentary Committees on Human Rights and Civic Integration as well as on Legal Affairs**, play an important role not only in legislative initiatives and legal control, but also in holding the Government accountable for the implementation of human rights actions.

The Ministry of Education and Science, manages educational policies, including for pre-school education, inclusive education and introduction of social work in the educational system. More capacity building is needed especially at local level.

The Legal Aid Service is a state authority which provides mandatory legal representation, as well as free legal assistance for socially vulnerable citizens who would not be able to pay for attorney's services otherwise (e.g. juveniles, persons with disabilities, asylum seekers, victims of domestic violence, etc.).

The **Public Defender** that monitors and oversees the efforts for the elimination of discrimination, collects and analyses statistical data, drafts opinions on relevant legislative amendments and carries out various activities to raise public awareness on discrimination issues.

Local authorities in the country currently have functions related to education, health and social protection. The strategy for de-centralisation, as well as recent reforms in social policy envisaged delegation of state social functions, including in childcare to local authorities. However, resources and experience are lacking, therefore local authorities need significant capacity building and strengthening in order to become key agents in child welfare and children's rights and in promoting inclusive societies.

Civil Society will represent rights-holders of different groups, including women's rights, LGBTI and youth organisations particularly those living in vulnerable situation.

The security sector is inherently complex and composed of a variety of actors who are active across a number of areas. With citizens representing the key right holders of the programme, the following entities are essential stakeholders to develop the proposed actions, although the list is not exhaustive and can be extended per individual project, depending on the specific institutional setup and/or any possible institutional setup changes in the course of the action implementation:

The National Security Council (NSC) Office - the NSC is a consultative body directly subordinated to the Prime-Minister of Georgia in order to make highest level decisions on national security issues. The NSC Office provides information-analytical and organizational support to the NSC coordinating in planning and coordinating the national security policies; the NSC Office hosts the National Crisis Management Center (Department) being in charge of crisis management on policy level and ensuring the functioning of the National Situation Room.

Ministry of Internal Affairs with its core mandate of crime investigation (being in charge of the Strategy on Fight Against Organised Crime and involved in international police cooperation), also covering civil protection through the Emergency Management Service and emergency response and operative response through 112 Service, therefore has an important role in crisis management;

The **Prosecutors Service of Georgia (PSG)** conducts investigation in selected cases, exercises procedural guidance over the investigation of all crimes, follows up on violations of rights of imprisoned, detained or arrested persons, undertakes criminal prosecution, participates in criminal law cases at courts, coordinates the fight against crime, takes measures to ensure respect and protect human rights and carries out international judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is in charge of crime prevention, probation and penitentiary systems, also manages the National Drug Observatory and Anti-Drug Inter-Agency coordination Council, as well as Anti-Trafficking inter-agency mechanisms and policy documents. The Digital Governance Agency (DGA) having significant role in the national cybersecurity architecture falls under the structural organisation of the MoJ.

The Ministry of Defence ensures the implementation of the state policy in the defence sector, including in the area of civil protection and emergency management, cyber security and strategic communication.

The **State Security Service of Georgia (SSSG)** defines its mandate as protecting constitutional order, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the military potential of Georgia from illegal acts of certain individuals and special services of foreign countries; fight against terrorism; fight against transnational organised crime and international crime, containing threats to state security; protecting state secrets and protecting the country from foreign threats. The Operational Technical Agency in charge of the core covert investigative functions and also cybersecurity of the public critical information infrastructure subjects is operating under the SSSG.

The core **oversight bodies** in the Georgian security sector are the Parliament Defence and Security Committee and the Group of Trustees, Ombudsman office, State Audit Office, Special Investigation Service and the Personal Data Protection Service. **Civil Society** as a whole is very active in Georgia but would benefit from further support and resources in order to be able to continue playing its role in policy formulation and acting as a watchdog over the reform of the security sector.

2.3. Lessons Learned

Overall, the lessons learned from support to human rights and security in Georgia highlight the importance of a comprehensive approach that addresses the complex and interrelated challenges and very fluid political situation. Programmes covering human rights and security are very volatile to any political changes and clear political commitment is necessary for their implementation. Regional events also play a significant role in particular in the area of addressing hybrid threats and security sector reform. Therefore, there is a need for close follow-up on the developments and the flexibility to adapt actions depending on the situation. This also requires having a deep understanding of the complex politico-economic dynamics underpinning the security sector. The action needs to be combined with strengthened policy dialogue accompanying the programme to

ensure actions, including those addressing technological capacity building needs, match political priorities and obligations.

Apart from intensified political and policy dialogue there is an increased need to strengthen national ownership and enhance awareness of citizens in the areas of human security, human rights, equality, including gender equality, and non-discrimination, hybrid threats and security system reform combined with improved oversight over the implementation of the commitments undertaken by government in the areas of the programme. The ongoing support shows that the oversight institutions and civil society still need more capacity and empowerment to perform their roles in particular when it comes to security. At the same time the state institutions in charge of security sector still need to improve their accountability mechanisms and ensure more transparency.

Coordination both in the field of human rights and security sector needs to be further strengthened as a lack of coordination hampers implementation of legislations and policies. There is a clear need to create effective communication between central and local institutions for improved human rights, especially with respect to the human rights, including the right not to be discriminated against, of persons belonging to minorities - and persons in vulnerable situations. Coordination among donors is also key to ensure effective implementation and to build synergies.

The Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and equality, including gender equality, needs to be infused into every activity, with full attention to the working principles of the approach: understanding the linkages between state policies, actions and programming with human rights obligations; undertaking to address (gender) inequality and discrimination; empowering rights-holders and duty-bearers (including knowledge of human rights, including the right not to be discriminated against, and how to claim/deliver them); ensuring active, free and meaningful participation in decisions and processes; as well as transparency and accountability (“rule of law”). Additional support to particular gender mainstreaming is needed to ensure that it is well reflected in the documents and practices developed by the security sector institutions.

It is crucial to continue EU's policy of engagement (while respecting the principle of non-recognition) towards Georgia's breakaway regions and to promote confidence building and realisation of human rights of the persons living in the regions, as well as to mainstream this engagement throughout the different programmes where relevant.

Findings from the 2022 Result Oriented Monitoring report on EU's support to NATO's Building Integrity Programme highlighted that coordination could be further strengthened to avoid overlaps. There is thus a need to further explore synergies when engaging with the Security Sector in Georgia, and particularly on issues related to the fight against corruption.

The present action is mostly based on the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the projects still under implementation under both the HR4All and SAFE programmes. The ROMs of individual contracts are planned to be implemented during the programming year and the results will be taken into consideration in the course of preparation of the respective follow up projects.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION¹⁷

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective/Impact of this action is to increase human security and strengthen the enjoyment of human rights in Georgia.

The Specific Objectives (Outcomes) of this action are to:

1. Further strengthen human rights framework and delivery, both on the national and local levels.
2. Further strengthen resilience and accountability of the national security system, including resilience against hybrid threats, notably, at local and citizen's level.

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

Contributing to Specific Objective 1

- 1.1 Strengthened human rights framework for the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights and non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality, and enhanced capacity of institutions, including the national equality body, and protection mechanisms to deliver on their respective mandates;
- 1.2 Effective implementation and monitoring of human rights and non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality with particular focus on the rights of persons in vulnerable situations, including ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, children and LGBTI;
- 1.3 Increased human security and socio-economic development for conflict-affected people living in the breakaway regions of Georgia.

Contributing to Specific Objective 2

- 2.1 The National Security related public policies/strategies further developed and implemented in line with EU standards (including Security Sector Reform Framework) and EU *acquis*;
- 2.2 Improved capacity and effectiveness of the core sector institutions to address national security related challenges and hybrid threats;
- 2.3 Enhanced accountability and oversight within the security sector, leading to increased public trust and respect for human rights and non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality.

3.2. Indicative Activities

Activities related to

Output 1.1

- Strengthening of legislative and policy frameworks in the area of human rights and non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality, in line with European standards and EU *acquis* through to legislative drafting processes at different stages and with relevant stakeholders, including line ministries, parliamentary committees and the national equality body, as well as activities for the effective implementation of new legislation, including for judges, authorities and also for rights holders.
- Support the capacities of authorities to implement a rights-based approach, and mainstream equality, including gender equality, in protecting and promoting human rights policies and actions (notably the Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan and the Civic Equality and Integration strategy).

¹⁷ From section 3 onwards, no cross-references should be made with section 2, because section 2 is not included in the Technical and Administrative Provisions of the future Financing Agreement.

- Assistance to and strengthening of the Public Defender’s Office to effectively implement its mandate;
- Fostering dialogue and cooperation between institutions and civil society organisations, including women’s rights and feminist organisations, in promoting and protecting human rights, including the right not to be discriminated against;

Output 1.2

- Support to implementation of child rights in line with the Code on the Rights of the Child is further advanced, including in social protection, further de-institutionalisation, and promotion of child friendly justice
- Support implementation of non-discrimination and equality policies and legislation through capacity building, revision of policies and awareness raising;
- Protection and strengthening of the rights of minority groups and people in vulnerable situations including persons with disabilities, national and ethnic minorities and LGBTI persons;

Output 1.3

- Support provision of basic services, including health services, for conflict-affected people living in the breakaway regions of Georgia.

Activities related to

Output 2.1

- Development and implementation of the national security related strategies/policy documents and legislation – on addressing hybrid threats, critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, crisis management, antidrug actions and drug-use prevention, and others, in line with relevant European standards (including SSR Framework) and EU *acquis*;
- Strengthen coordination mechanisms, including donor coordination mechanisms, for the development and implementation of the national security related policies and action plans;
- Raise awareness amongst general public on national security (including on human security) and hybrid threats in general, including cybersecurity, disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI). These can be done through different actions, namely building societal resilience and whole-of-society approach across public administration, empowering fact-checkers, researchers, scholars and media monitors, supporting academia, credible media outlets and investigative journalists, working with relevant state and non-state actors, and promoting media literacy and critical thinking among target groups.
- Promote dialogue between the relevant state administrations and civil society representatives, women’s rights and feminists organisations and academia for the development and implementation of the national security policies;
- Promote women, peace and security agenda by supporting the Government in implementing the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security,” empowering women in security and defence sectors and addressing issues facing women in these sectors;
- Increase availability of reliable sex-disaggregated data for evidence-based policy making.

Output 2.2

- Build capacities to address national security challenges and hybrid threats, including capacities for strategic communication and combating disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI);
- Support further development of national crisis management system (including strengthening civil protection capabilities, setting up early warning systems, building state material reserves);

- Further support building critical infrastructure resilience system (including through legal approximation to the relevant EU acquis) and mitigate risks related to cybersecurity¹⁸;
- further support capacity building of the National Drug Observatory and implementation of the National Anti-Drug and Drug use prevention strategy;
- Provide support in advancing technological capabilities (through provision of both software and hardware) of the security sector administrations and oversight bodies for the implementation of the core reform commitments in line with the European standards;

Output 2.3

- Further enhance the understanding of the role and value of oversight;
- Support further capacity building of independent institutions with oversight functions.
- Strengthen the understanding and role of citizens and civil society in the oversight of the security sector.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

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

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

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

The 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 G1¹⁹. This implies that Along with the EU's Gender Action Plan III²⁰ for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action and the Country Level Implementation Plan (CLIP) for Georgia, this Action Document shall consider the conclusions and recommendations provided in the UN Women Country Gender Equality Profile Report for Georgia, published in November 2021, and Gender Equality and Post-2020 Eastern Partnership Priorities: A Guide on how to Promote Gender Equality in Policy, Programming and Reform Work, published in February 2022.

In recent years, Georgia has adopted important gender related strategies/action plans /concept aimed at ensuring gender equality and strengthening participation of women in political, economic and social domains. These include, 1) National action plan on combatting violence against women and domestic violence and measures to be implemented for the protection of victims (survivors) (2022-2024); 2) National action plan of Georgia for the Implementation of the UN Security Council resolution on Women, peace and Security (2022-2024); and 3) Gender Equality Concept of Georgia. Gender equality and women empowerment are also embodied in the National Human Rights Strategy 2022-2030 which was adopted by the Parliament in March 2023.

¹⁸ When implementing activities related to critical infrastructure resilience building, not only public sector institutions are to be addressed but private sector critical infrastructure subjects as well.

¹⁹ significant objective.

²⁰ SWD(2020) 284 final 25.11.2020

The Action will build on the activities/principles enshrined in these documents to fill any remaining gaps and maximise the benefits for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in Georgia.

In line with EU cross-cutting priorities, this Action will ensure that a gender responsive results-based approach is systematically applied and built into the design of all individual projects. As well as ensuring gender-mainstreaming in outlining the individual projects. These shall address issues that contribute to greater gender equality and non-discrimination in line with the EU-Georgia cooperation agreements and EU Membership application. In addition, efforts will be made to support Georgian authorities in improvement of collection and use of sex-disaggregated data for policy-making as currently in many fields also of the EU intervention such data is missing or is relatively outdated.

Human Rights

One out of the main specific objectives of the action is dedicated to addressing challenges of the human rights system in Georgia, respective outputs and activities are designed accordingly directly contributing to promoting respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights countrywide.

The second specific objective of the action is dedicated to the building of capacities in the national security system, while ensuring the human rights based approach both on policy development and operational levels - in conducting investigations, prosecutions and judicial trials. The projects developed under the Action will refer to the international human rights standards enshrined in the EU *acquis*, conventions of the Council of Europe, jurisdiction of the European Court for Human Rights and other relevant sources such as UN treaty-based and charter-based monitoring mechanisms. The activities will include the implementation of the human rights aspects in specific areas of fighting crime in Georgia.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that some elements of this Action directly addresses needs of persons with disabilities (under outcome 1), also targets the inclusion of people with disabilities as a cross-cutting element of all activities foreseen, since all components have a direct impact on the social life in the country.

Democracy

The common values on which the EU is built, namely democracy, human rights and freedoms, and the rule of law, lie also at the heart of political association and economic integration as envisaged in the EU-Georgia Association Agreement; all interventions proposed under this Action are designed for and shall serve the purpose of implementation of general principles of democracy and rule of law.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Georgia is a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country. Many remote areas are home to ethnic and/or religious minorities. In order to contribute to peaceful inter-communities relations, it is necessary to address the needs of these minorities, and enhancing their human rights and social integration initiatives at both central and local level. Contributions to the development of the national security related policies/strategies shall be addressing targets of conflict prevention and local conflict resolution, including gender-specific concerns related to security, as well as addressing emerging hybrid threats, by ensuring women's meaningful participation in peace process. It is particularly important to tackle issues related to disinformation as the latter adds to the political and societal polarisation of the country, and further exacerbates tensions. Tackling this issue will

allow to strengthen the overall resilience of the society in the face of growing hybrid threats and disinformation campaigns.

Consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine are yet to be analysed. In the short term, influx of Ukrainian, Russian and Belorussian citizens, has kept reasonable proportion and can be felt mostly in the capital real estate market. Due to strong interlinkages between Russian and Georgian business and economy, the situation has increasingly been affecting Georgian economy and livelihoods. The proposed Action has a potential to provide support directly to implementation of general or specific government measures to address the impact on Georgia of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine and/or sanctions against Russia, to support Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and/or International Organisations (IOs) dealing with the flux of migrants coming from the conflict zones.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Many regions of Georgia are prone to natural disaster, even more in times of climate change. Georgia has the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for 2022-24 and as a signatory country of many international treaties, ensures the implementation of the goals of three global framework documents of the United Nations: Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (March, 2015), Sustainable Development Goals (September, 2015; SDGs) and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (June, 1992; UNFCCC) in the Strategy. The Strategy also covers the implementation of Georgia’s obligations taken under the above documents and the EU-Georgia Association Agreement in the sphere of prevention, preparedness and effective response to natural disasters. The second objective of the action will support strengthening capacities to manage crisis in a gender-responsive way, including institutional and technological capacities for disaster management and civil protection, and taking into consideration specific needs of women and girls during disasters.

3.4. Risks and Assumptions

Category ²¹	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1	Security risks derived from Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine	M	H	Continuous dialogue with the Georgian Authorities, monitoring of the developments
1	Shift of Georgia’s foreign policy away from declared Euro-Atlantic integration goals and widespread anti-EU/anti-Western	M	H	Continuous dialogue with the Georgian Authorities, close cooperation with relevant state and non-state actors, monitoring of the developments

²¹ The risk (category) can be related 1-to the external environment; 2-to planning, processes and systems; 3-to people and the organisation; 4-to legality and regularity aspects; 5-to communication and information. See pp44-48 of [Implementation Guide of the Risk management in the Commission](#). [\[EC internal link\]](#)

	disinformation narratives			
1	External political tensions, social or economic problems in Georgia or a further recession in the global economy divert the Government's attention and resources away from the reform agenda	M	M	Continued policy dialogue with the Georgian authorities; Support to the implementation of EU-Georgia bilateral and regional agreements
2 and 4	Weakening of Government's commitment to reforms related to the EU-Georgia agreements	H	H	Continued political and policy dialogue with the authorities; built in flexibility of the programme to allow to adapt to evolving to political developments; Information and awareness campaigns to the institutions and to the general public
2 and 3	High turnover of civil servants in beneficiary institutions involved in Programme implementation; insufficient technical capacity/experience	M	M	Continuous policy dialogue with the government; Efforts aimed at sustainable institution building instead of short-sighted and short-term measures

External Assumptions

- Commitment and focus of national and local authorities is sustained and further strengthened
- The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine does not extend to neighbouring countries
- No economic recession affects the country over the medium term
- Commodity prices on international markets are stabilised

3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is the following:

Delivery of all three outputs under the first specific objective of the action – (i) strengthened human rights framework for the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights and equality, including gender equality, and enhanced capacity of institutions and protection mechanisms to deliver on their respective mandates, (ii)

effective implementation and monitoring of human rights and equality, including gender equality, with particular focus on the rights of persons in vulnerable situations, including (ethnic) minorities, persons with disabilities, children and LGBTI and (iii) increased human security and socio-economic development for the people living in the breakaway regions of Georgia - conditional to full functioning of human rights and (gender) equality institutions and relevant civil society actors, along with openness for cooperation and stability in the region, shall result into delivery of the first outcome of the action strengthening of the human right framework and delivery on national and local levels.

Delivery of the other three outputs under the specific objective 2 of the action – (i) national security policy development and implementation in line with EU standards, (ii) improving capacities and effectiveness of the core sector institutions to address national security related challenges and hybrid threats and (iii) enhance accountability and oversight mechanisms - shall lead to delivery of the second outcome: further strengthening resilience and accountability of the national security system, including resilience against hybrid threats, notably at local and citizens level. Delivery of the outputs and therefore of the respective outcome depends on the level of commitment and openness of relevant state administrations, maintenance of the environment for efficient operation of the oversight bodies and civil society and stability in the region.

Strong human rights framework and delivery both on national and local levels and strengthened resilience and accountability of the national security sector as such are key preconditions for increasing human security and strengthening enjoyment of human rights in Georgia, all conditional to the level of commitment of the relevant stakeholders and stability in the region.

3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Increased human security and strengthened enjoyment of human rights in Georgia	1. Level of safety and security measured by Global Peace Index ²² 2. Level of citizens' perception of safety and security measured by Gallup's Law and Order Index ²³ 3. World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) Rule of Law score ^{24**25} 4. Georgia score in Women, Peace and Security Index (published biannually by Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security)	1 – year 2022 - 2.065 2 – year 2021 – 88 3 – year 2021 – 56.7 4 – year 2021/22 – 0.808	1 – year 2028 – 2.00 2 – year 2028 – 88 3 – year 2028 - 62 4 – year 2027/28 – 0.850	1 – GPI report 2 – Gallup report 3 - WGI report 4 – WPS Index	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	1. human rights framework and delivery, both on the national and local levels, are further strengthened	1.1 Number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU sex-disaggregated ** 1.2 Number of laws or policies adopted or revised by the State, aligned with ratified International Human Rights Treaties, disaggregated by category of document **	1.1 – 0 1.2 - 0	1.1 – 600 1.2 - 3	1.1 - reports of the EU funded projects 1.2 – enlargement reports	The EU and the Government maintain their high level of cooperation and continue to communicate and coordinate reform efforts.
Outcome 2	2. Resilience and accountability of the national security system, including resilience against hybrid threats, notably, at local and	2.1 Number of state institutions and non-state actors supported by the EU on security, border management, countering violent extremism, conflict prevention, protection of	2.1 - 16 2.2 - 1	2.1 - 16 2.2 - 5	2.1 – reports of the EU funded projects 2.2 – respective policy	The EU and the Government maintain their high level of

²² <https://countryeconomy.com/demography/global-peace-index/georgia>

²³ <https://www.gallup.com/analytics/356963/gallup-global-law-and-order-report.aspx>

²⁴ <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>

²⁵ Indicators marked with ** are from [@ Global Europe Results Framework and SDG indicators \[EC internal link\]](#).

	citizens' level is further strengthened	civilian population and human rights** 2.2 Number of government policies developed or revised with participation of civil society organisations, including women's rights organisations, participation through EU support**			documents and reports of the EU funded projects	cooperation and continue to communicate and coordinate reform efforts.
Outcome 1 - Human rights framework and delivery, both on the national and local levels, are further strengthened						
Output 1	1.1 Strengthened human rights framework for the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights and equality and enhanced capacity of institutions and protection mechanisms to deliver on their respective mandates	1.1.1 Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society organisation participation (+ participation of the national equality body) through EU support **	1.1.1 - 0	1.1.1 - 3	1.1.1 - reports of the EU funded projects	Authorities in Georgia remain dedicated to cooperation and reforms for equality and human rights enjoyment.
Output 2	1.2 Effective implementation and monitoring of human rights and equality with particular focus on the rights of persons in vulnerable situations, including ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, children and LGBTI	1.2.1 Number of people directly benefiting from EU supported interventions, sex-disaggregated	1.2.1 - 0	1.2.1 - 1500	1.2.1- reports of the EU funded projects	Authorities in Georgia remain dedicated to cooperation and reforms for equality and human rights enjoyment.
Output 3	1.3 Increased human security and socio-economic development for conflict-	1.3.1 Number of people directly benefiting from EU supported interventions, sex-disaggregated	1.3.1 - 0	1.3.1 - 900	1.3.1- reports of the EU funded projects	There is ongoing

	affected people living in the breakaway regions of Georgia.					dialogue on engagement in the breakaway regions and physical access to Abkhazia for implementing partners
Outcome 2 - Resilience and accountability of the national security system, including resilience against hybrid threats, notably, at local and citizens' level is further strengthened						
Output 1	2.1 The National Security related public policies/strategies further developed and implemented in line with EU standards	2.1.1 Number of public policies developed and/or revised in line with EU standards with internal and external consultations with EU support**	2.1.1 - 1	2.1.1 - 4	2.1.1 - 2.1.2 Government reports/reports of the EU funded projects	The EU and the Government maintain their high level of cooperation and continue to communicate and coordinate reform efforts.
Output 2	2.2 Improved capacity and effectiveness of the core sector institutions to address national security related challenges and hybrid threats;	2.2.1 Number of the security sector administrations benefiting from the programme** 2.2.2 Number of practitioners, men and women proportionally, trained with EU support on European standards and EU acquis** and EU and its Member States best practices.	2.2.1 - 0 2.2.2 - 0 2.2.3 - 2021 - police: 14%, armed forces - 8%	2.2.1 - 6 2.2.2 - 1500 2.2.3 - the percentage increases by the end of the programme implementation	2.2.1 - 2.2.3 reports of the EU funded projects/reports of the security sector oversight institutions and CSOs	Government of Georgia remains committed to implement security sector reform programmes

		2.2.3 Percentage of women in security and defence institutions				
Output 3	2.3 Enhanced accountability and oversight within the security sector, leading to increased public trust and respect for human rights and gender equality.	<p>2.3.1 Proportion of cases/recommendation that are resolved by the independent oversight bodies within 12 months, out of the number of new complaint cases relating to a security sector institution</p> <p>2.3.2 Number of initiatives led by civil society and supported by the EU</p> <p>2.3.3. Number of initiatives led by women’s rights organisations and supported by the EU</p>	<p>2.3.1 –30%</p> <p>2.3.2 – 2</p> <p>2.3.3 - 0</p>	<p>2.3.1 – 50%</p> <p>2.3.2. - 2</p> <p>2.3.3 - 1</p>	2.3.1 – 2.3.3 Reports of the EU funded projects	Authorities in Georgia remain dedicated to cooperation and reform in the security sector.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer in duly justified cases.

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 measures²⁶.

4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)

4.3.1.1. Grants

a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grants will contribute to the implementation of the SO1 - Further strengthen human rights framework and delivery, both on the national and local levels, output 1.2 and SO2 - Further strengthen resilience and accountability of the national security system, including resilience against hybrid threats, notably, at local and citizen's level, outputs 2.1 and 2.3.

b) Type of applicants targeted

The potential applicants eligible for funding will be: non-profit-making legal entities.

4.3.2. Direct Management (Procurement)

The procurement will contribute to achieving the Specific Objective 1 (output 1.1).

4.3.3. Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity

4.3.3.1 Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity

A part of this Action may be implemented in indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Specific expertise and experience in areas specified at the selection stage.

²⁶ [EU Sanctions Map](#). 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.

- Experience and presence in the country. In depth understanding of the situation, its strengths and weaknesses in Georgia in respective field of operation.
- Available necessary organisational, human and management capacity also to mobilise specific expertise in short time.

The implementation by this entity entails the implementation of the SO 1 (outputs 1.1-1.3) and the SO 2 (outputs 2.1 - 2.3).

4.3.3.2 Indirect management with Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with the **European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)**. This implementation entails second phase of the bilateral project between the EMCDDA and the EU Delegation to Georgia ‘Stepwise strengthening of the Georgian responses to health and security threats posed by contemporary drug markets’ for the benefit of the National Drug Monitoring Observatory (NDO) under the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, under the SO 2. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: EMCDDA has unique knowledge, technical competence, and high degree of specialisation in drug monitoring and improving the availability of reliable drug information. EMCDDA has been implementing the first bilateral project for the newly established Georgian NDO to help with building basic capacities. For the full functioning of the Georgian NDO it is essential that their capacities are further developed through direct support from the EMCDDA.

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entity fail, that part of this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section or 4.3.2.

4.3.4. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances

The alternative option for implementing Action or part of the Action described in sections 4.3.1, and 4.3.2 is Indirect Management with entrusted entity(ies), if the preferred implementation modality (direct management) cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control. Selection Criteria described in section 4.3.3.1 shall be applied in this case.

The alternative option for implementing Action or part of the Action described in section 4.3.3.1 is procurement as described under section 4.3.2, if the preferred modality (indirect management) cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control.

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)
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Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Outcome 1 - composed of	9 850 000.00
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	NA
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.2	NA
Indirect management with pillar assessed entities – cf. section 4.3.3	7 300 000.00
Outcome 2 composed of	10 000 000.00
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	NA
Indirect management with pillar assessed entities – cf. section 4.3.3	7 000 000.00
Indirect management with EMCDDA – cf. section 4.3.3	1 000 000.00
Grants – total envelope under section 4.3.1	3 800 000.00
Procurement – total envelope under section 4.3.2	750 000.00
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2	150 000.00
Audit – cf. section 5.3	
Totals	20 000 000.00

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The Delegation of the European Union to Georgia will be responsible for the management of the programme and will monitor its overall implementation. It will also be the focal point for any communication with the contractors or the beneficiary institutions. The Commission and the partner country will regularly review progress made in the overall implementation of the Action through regular working meetings. Each project under the programme establishes governing structures – steering committees for the regular overview and discussion of the progress and/or challenges of implementation. Apart from steering the overall process the PSCs also aggregates information about progress in implementation which will be made available to relevant stakeholders.

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

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

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).

Arrangements for monitoring and reporting, including roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

Each individual contract under the programme will have its own dedicated logical framework which will include clear indicators with baselines and targets. These individual logical frameworks will be aligned with the general logical framework of the programme and it will serve as a basis for the projects' ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The reports (narrative and financial) will be drafted in accordance with the relevant templates.

The 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 reports, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the Action implementation.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports 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.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

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

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation 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. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the 2022 guidance document [*Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions*](#) (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and contribution agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.