

## EVALUATION ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to share any relevant information that they may have.

<b>TITLE OF THE EVALUATION</b>	Evaluation of the EU's external action in the policy area of irregular migration, in particular on combating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling
<b>LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT</b>	DG NEAR A4 (Evaluation Sector) will be in the lead. DG DEVCO 04 (Evaluation Sector) will be associated.
<b>INDICATIVE PLANNING (PLANNED START DATE AND COMPLETION DATE)</b>	Q1– 2019 to Q3 - 2020
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/migration_en">https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/migration_en</a> <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/about/directorate-general_en">https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/about/directorate-general_en</a> <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/22_en">https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/22_en</a>

**The Roadmap is provided for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the document, including its timing, are subject to change.**

### A. Context, purpose and scope of the evaluation

#### Context

This evaluation is included in the multiannual strategic evaluation plan for 2018-2022 of DG NEAR — Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. After consultation with DG DEVCO — Directorate General for Development and Cooperation —, it has been agreed that this strategic evaluation will also cover activities in a selected number of partner countries under its geographical coverage.

This evaluation is in line with the [EU Better Regulation](#) which emphasises the need of systemic and timely evaluation of European Commission programmes, activities, instruments and non-spending activities in order to demonstrate accountability and to promote lesson learning to improve policy and practice.

Migration has become an increasingly complex phenomenon which cannot be addressed through a one-size-fits-all approach. In particular, while the migration crisis in the Mediterranean has put the spotlight on immediate needs, it has also revealed much about the structural limitations of EU migration policy and the tools at its disposal. The main objective of the European Agenda on Migration adopted in 2015 is to approach the issue of migration in a comprehensive way. Through the Agenda, the EU aims to mainstream migration into all its policy areas, both internal and external.

The European Agenda on Migration also defines a new strategic approach to manage better migration in the medium to long term, building on four pillars: 1) reducing the incentives for irregular migration; 2) saving lives and securing the external borders; 3) a strong common asylum policy; 4) a new policy on legal migration.

As two of its focus areas, the Agenda underlines that the EU remains committed to preventing and combating smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings and to protecting victims' rights, taking account, in particular, vulnerabilities of trafficked women and children.

#### *Smuggling of migrants.*

Smuggling of migrants affects all regions of the world, including the EU and its neighbouring regions. Smugglers make substantial gains while putting the migrants' lives at risk. The organisation and size of smuggling operations vary.

To prevent the exploitation of migrants by criminal networks and to reduce incentives for irregular migration, both the European Agenda on Migration and the European Agenda on Security identified the fight against migrant smuggling as a priority.

In May 2015, the Commission adopted an Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling (2015-2020) which sets out the specific actions necessary to implement the two Agendas in this area, and incorporates the key actions already identified therein. The Action Plan is designed to transform smuggling from a 'high profit, low risk' activity into a

'high risk, low profit' business, while ensuring the full respect and protection of migrants' human rights. The Action Plan emphasises the importance of: a) bilateral and regional cooperation frameworks; b) funding of projects to support third countries in setting up strategies on migrant smuggling, setting up police and judicial responses and developing integrated border management; c) setting up of EU cooperation platforms on migrant smuggling in relevant third countries and regions; d) optimising the use of EU funding through joint or coordinated planning; and foresees further EU actions in these areas.

The EU provides financial and technical assistance to support them to tackle migrant smuggling at source. This includes assistance in developing anti-smuggling strategies and legislation; building the capacity of law enforcement and judicial bodies to investigate and prosecute smugglers; and increasing the effectiveness of migration and border management.

#### *Trafficking in human beings.*

Trafficking in human beings remains a highly profitable form of serious and organised crime, explicitly prohibited in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The nature of this crime is extremely complex: it is rooted in vulnerability to poverty, lack of democratic cultures, gender inequality and violence against women, conflict and post-conflict situations, lack of social integration, lack of opportunities and employment, lack of access to education, child labour and discrimination. This specific multi-layer context suggests that no actor is placed well enough to counter this phenomenon alone. Therefore, the EU's approach to trafficking in human beings is inclusive and is based on involvement of various actors: EU Member States, partner countries, civil society and other relevant organisations and bodies. The EU policy on trafficking in human beings takes a holistic approach focusing on prevention, prosecution of criminals and protection of victims. This integrated view is consistent with a human rights- and victim-centred approach, while also taking into account the gender and child rights perspectives. It aims to prevent this crime and give people who have been reduced to a slavery-like condition an opportunity to recover and to be re-integrated into society.

### **Purpose and scope**

The generic purpose of the evaluation is to provide an overall independent assessment and evidence on the contribution of EU external action support to the achievement of the objectives and intended impacts in the policy area of fighting against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings in the period 2008-2018.

The specific objectives of this evaluation are:

1. To provide an assessment in both qualitative and quantitative terms on the relevance, conditions of implementation and performance of EU external action support to combating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, particularly its efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and added value. This assessment will be done as regards the coherence between the relevant EU policy framework and the financial assistance and the achievement by the EU and the candidate countries for EU membership, the potential candidates and the partner countries of their respective commitments in these policy areas.
2. To provide an assessment on how EU external action support to combating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling has changed in the aftermath of the 2015 structural shift and whether the EU's policy and operational response to the refugee crises triggered new approaches and rendered programmes and actions more effective, targeted and efficient.
3. To provide an assessment of the international cooperation in combating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, in particular the complementarity of EU external action support with that of other donors and actors, including EU Member States. Also, to assess whether the EU external action on these policy areas is in line with relevant international commitments.
4. To provide to the Commission lessons learned and recommendations to improve current support in combating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling.

The results of the evaluation will:

- support the decision-making, both at strategic (planning) level, and at the level of the design of the interventions in the policy area of irregular migration, in particular fighting against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings;
- serve as a basis for the future development of the policy framework on migration, with specific regard to smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, indicating, among others, the challenges to be addressed in this policy area;
- feed into the reflection of future development policies in view of the recent adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda;
- provide recommendations for the Commission to improve its support to the development and migration

agenda in external action both in terms of policy dialogue and financial assistance;

- contribute to the preparation and fine-tuning of action programmes, namely for IPA II, ENI, DCI and EDF assistance to the extent possible..

The temporal scope is 2008-2018. The analysis will cover from a normative and policy point of view the entire period, whilst financial assistance and non-spending activities (ie. policy dialogue, multi-stakeholder dialogue) will cover the programming period since 2007.

The geographical scope includes all candidate countries, potential candidates and partner countries covered by DG NEAR where identified Commission activities are undertaken. For this evaluation the geographical scope was extended to cover selected DG DEVCO partner countries, as support to fighting against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asian (Central and South) countries could provide a number of interesting results and lessons for Commission interventions. A sample of countries will be selected during the course of the evaluation for more detailed analyses.

In accordance with the Better Regulation, the assessment will be made against the following evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence and EU added value. Furthermore, sustainability, coordination and complementarity will also be considered. The preliminary indicative list of evaluation questions, to be finalised later in the process, is:

1. To what extent have the **EU policy framework and strategies** related to fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling been, and are at present being, conducive for a responsive programming and implementation of EU external action in these areas?
2. To what extent has the EU external action support approach to fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling been, and is at present, designed and implemented so as to maximize the **European (i.e. EC's + Member States + EU agencies) cooperation potential and the EU added value**?
3. To what extent has the EU external action, in its support to fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, ensured, and is at present ensuring, **co-ordination and complementarity** with other key stakeholders at local, regional, national and international level (incl. UN agencies and international organisations, strategic partners and civil society) thus **ensuring effective cooperation**?
4. To what extent have the various aid **delivery methods, funding channels and instruments**, and their combinations as employed by the EU external action, been, and are at present being, appropriate in view of promoting responsive, cost-effective and timely interventions?
5. To what extent has EU external action contributed, and is at present contributing, **to transform smuggling networks from 'low risk, high return' operations for criminals into 'high risk, low return' ones**, thus disrupting and deterring migrant smuggling?
6. To what extent has EU external action support contributed, and is at present contributing, to transform the **knowledge of candidates to migration on the risks and consequences of irregular migration**, thus preventing them to become victims of trafficking and being exploited by smugglers?
7. To what extent has EU external action contributed, and is at present contributing, **to prevent and prosecute trafficking in human beings**?
8. To what extent has EU external action contributed, and is at present contributing, **to ensure a better protection for the victims of trafficking, with particular attention to women and children**?

## B. Better regulation

### Consultation of citizens and stakeholders

Not being an evaluation, in the sense of the Better Regulation guidelines, not referring to a major initiative, the present study will not develop an on-line open public consultation ([OPC](#)). Furthermore, this study not being linked to legislative and non-legislative initiatives, delegated acts or implementing measures, no impact assessment is required.

However, consultation activities will be undertaken to gather data, opinions and test hypotheses.

The main stakeholders to be consulted during the entire evaluation exercise from inception to final/reporting phase (either via interviews, workshops and/or surveys) include:

- National authorities and institutions in candidate countries, potential candidates and partner countries responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of EU external action support, beneficiaries of EU external action support and other national stakeholders;
- EU stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): EU Delegations/EU Offices in candidate countries, potential

candidates and partner countries, DG NEAR, DG DEVCO, the EC Secretariat General, DG HOME, DG JUST, the FPI, the JRC, the EEAS, National authorities from partner countries and EU Member States.

- International stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): relevant UN agencies and other relevant international organisations, the Council of Europe, relevant civil society organisations and research institutions.

The list will be further defined during Inception phase.

### **Data collection and methodology**

The evaluation process will be carried out in four phases: an Inception Phase, a Desk Phase, a Field Phase, and a Synthesis Phase. Among the pool of main methodological techniques, the following key elements can be already pinpointed:

- A. Evaluation Questions. A draft set will be presented in the Terms of Reference and the evaluation team, in consultation with the Interservice Steering Group, will finalise and complete it (with Judgement criteria (JC) and indicators for each JC and relevant data collection sources and tools) during the inception phase. When relevant, cross-cutting issues will be considered.

The indicators will need to allow cross-checking, triangulation and strengthening the evidence base on which the questions are answered. The information gathered for each indicator will need to be presented as an annex of the desk and final reports.

- B. Data collection tools. Several tools will be used for collecting, structuring, processing and/or analysing data throughout the evaluation process: Inventory of interventions, Literature review, Interviews, Case studies, Survey, Quantitative analysis. Up to 12 field visits are also foreseen.

Deliverables in the form of reports and/or slide presentations should be submitted at the end of the corresponding phases.

Key sources of information already available are (this list will be further detailed once a set of case studies are defined (see below):

1. EU policy and strategy documents towards partner regions;
2. EU and Enlargement and partner countries policy and strategy documents;
3. Enlargement and partner countries official documents;
4. EU support interventions related documents (incl. Results Orientated Monitoring reports);
5. Relevant performance audits of the European Court of Auditors;
6. Previous evaluations, studies, etc.

The Terms of reference will provide a non-exhaustive list.