

ANNEX I

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the Annual Action Programme 2014 in favour of Georgia

Action Document Support to the Justice Sector Reform in Georgia

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Support to the Justice Sector Reform in Georgia CRIS number: ENI/2014/037-376		
Total cost	Total estimated cost: EUR 51.1 million Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 50 million EUR 30 million for budget support EUR 20 million for complementary support This action is co-financed in joint co-financing by UNICEF for an amount of EUR 400 000 Estimated co-financing by grant beneficiaries: EUR 700 000		
Budget support			
Aid method / Method of implementation	Direct management Sector Reform Contract		
Type of aid code	A02 – Sector budget support	Markers	BSAR
DAC-code	15130	Sector	Legal and Judicial Development
Complementary support			
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach: 1. Direct management: grants (call for proposals) and procurement of services 2. Indirect management with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH 3. Indirect Management with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)		
DAC-code	15130	Sector	Legal and Judicial Development

2. RATIONALE AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

The action draws its objectives from key features of the current Georgia-EU policy dialogue which includes important areas of cooperation, notably justice, freedom and security and trade and trade related matters, as well as the Association Agreement (AA), expected to be signed in June 2014 and the Association Agenda. Georgia's relevant policy framework remains oriented strictly towards closer EU links, confirmed by the current Government Programme, which reaffirms stability-oriented macroeconomic policy as a dominant medium-term objective. The overall objective of this Programme is to improve the system of administration of justice, consolidate the rule of law and strengthen human rights protection in line with international and European standards. The specific objectives of this Programme are to consolidate independence, professionalism, impartiality and efficiency of the judiciary, access to justice and right to fair trial, enhance efficiency and fairness of the criminal justice system, and improve the private and administrative law system.

2.2. Country context

2.2.1. *Main challenges towards poverty reduction/inclusive and sustainable growth*

Georgia is a small developing economy with a population of about 4.5 million people and a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of USD 3,605 in 2013. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, one quarter of the population is living below the poverty line, with the higher levels in regions with high rural population rate. Poverty and unemployment (at about 22% and 15%, respectively) remain high, and there is an evident urban-rural gap. Nearly half of Georgia's population lives in rural areas, where low-intensity self-sufficient farming provides the principal source of livelihood. The average level of expenditures of one-fourth of the Georgian population - about 1 million people - is estimated to be equivalent to less than 60% of the (median) subsistence level. Poverty rates differ across regions and population groups. Income disparities are substantial with an estimated Gini coefficient of 0.42 in 2011⁶ (GEOSTAT, 2012). Georgia is placed among countries with High Human Development and is ranked 72 in the 2012 Human Development Index⁷. The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2013–2014 ranked Georgia 72 among 148 countries placing Georgia ahead of some EU Member States and other countries of Eastern Partnership. The report points to weaknesses notably in the area of protection of property rights, efficiency of corporate boards, protection of minority shareholders, judicial independence, efficiency of legal framework for challenging regulations and settling disputes, the effectiveness of anti-monopoly policy and quality of primary and higher education.

2.2.2. *Fundamental values*

Georgia is adherent to the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and the fundamental values pre-condition is met for Sector Reform Contracts. The latest report⁸ of Freedom House (2014) indicates that Georgia has a freedom status of “partially free”. However, the scores for political rights and civil liberties are “3”, which is the closest score to the “free” status, an assessment generally shared by other international observers.

The Rose Revolution of 2003 signalled the Georgian aspirations to democracy and a liberal market economy, free from corruption and organised crime. Important policy, legislative and institutional changes to improve the rule of law and administration were undertaken. However, progress was coupled with shortcomings, especially in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis and the war with Russia, and serious breaches of human rights. At the same time, it is notable that, following the Parliamentary elections in October 2012 and the Presidential election in October 2013, a peaceful transfer of power took place for the first time in Georgia's modern history.

⁶ UNDP Report – Economic and Social Vulnerability in Georgia 2012, issued in 2013

⁷ 2013 Human Development Report by UNDP:

http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2013_en_complete.pdf

⁸ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014>

Following the political transition, Thomas Hammarberg was appointed as EU Special Adviser on Constitutional and Legal Reform and Human Rights in Georgia. His report “Georgia in Transition: Report on the human rights dimension: background, steps taken and remaining challenges”⁹, issued in September 2013, identified ineffective investigations into torture, ill-treatment and various forms of abuse by former State officials, unlawful detention, lack of judicial independence, insufficient response of the State to increased incidents against religious minorities, societal violence against LGBT, children in poverty and domestic violence as main challenges. The US State Department Country Report for Human Rights Practices 2013¹⁰ identifies the dismissal of government employees from local government institutions allegedly for their association with the former ruling party, increased societal violence against members of the LGBT community, local government interference with religious minorities’ rights, and the government’s insufficient response as the most pressing human rights challenges of the year.

The Hammarberg Report, as well as Parliamentary and special reports by the Georgian Ombudsman and other international organisations, served as baselines for the National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan, approved by the Government of Georgia in March and May 2014 respectively. The First Progress Report on the implementation by Georgia of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation (VLAP) from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council issued in November 2013, the Commission noted good progress in the implementation of the first phase VLAP benchmarks relating to migration management, asylum, public order and security, and external relations and fundamental rights.

The current Government Programme undertakes to implement constitutional reforms, upgrade legislation, guarantee balanced operation of government institutions, establish efficient self-governance, reform the justice sector, strengthen the rule of law and the protection of human rights. Crime prevention, fight against corruption and elimination of poverty are also on the top of the agenda, intended to ensure a fair balance between growth and sustainability, development and responsibility, while seeking a closer relationship with EU.

2.3. Eligibility for budget support

2.3.1. Public policy

A) Main features

The Georgian justice sector comprises institutions in all three branches of power, including the *judiciary* (courts), *executive* (Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Ministry of Corrections, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Finance (criminal investigation services)) and *legislature* (Parliament, its Legal and Human Rights Committees). The sector also comprises various independent (Public Defender’s Office (Ombudsman, PDO), Legal Aid Service (LAS), Prosecutor’s Office (PO)) or semi-independent agencies (National Bureau of Enforcement, Public Registry), and professional associations (Georgian Bar Association, notaries). In addition, various justice-related cross-cutting issues are dealt with by a number of institutions, such as: legal education (High School of Justice, Police Academy, Penitentiary and Probation Training Centre, other professional training schools, higher educational institutions), governance and performance management (High Council of Justice and other professional governance bodies), anti-corruption (internal inspections within various sector bodies, parliamentary and civil society oversight mechanisms), and prevention of ill-treatment (police, civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in the penitentiary sub-sector and the protection of other fundamental rights).

Given the highly specialised and differentiated levels the current sector reform policy framework consists of a number of essential documents, such as: (a) Justice Chapter of the Government Programme; (b) Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) Strategy and Action Plan, with important chapters on reform of substantive and procedural criminal legislation, judiciary, prosecution, police, penitentiary, probation, legal aid, juvenile justice (transformed into a dedicated Strategy on Justice for Children in

⁹ http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/documents/virtual_library/cooperation_sectors/georgia_in_transition-hammarberg.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/220492.pdf>

2014), Code of Administrative Offences and legal education; (c) National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020; (d) Strategy on Fight against Organised Crime 2013-2015; (e) Land Management Strategy (in early elaboration process); and (f) Strategy on Fight Against Ill-Treatment.

These policy initiatives aim to increase the balance between competing priorities, such as: independence and accountability of courts, procedural fairness and efficiency, autonomy and effectiveness of the prosecution and criminal investigation services, effective crime detection/prevention and decriminalisation, accessible justice and application of alternative dispute resolution, protection of property rights and general interest, freedom of expression/information and privacy, business interests and social protection.

The above policy frameworks and the practice of their implementation attest effective sector management and coordination at the policy-setting and operational levels, in particular in the area of criminal justice.

In addition to sub-sectorial priorities, the CJR Strategy defines sector-wide priorities and objectives, including: (a) increasing judicial independence and public trust in the judiciary; (b) introducing individualised, prevention-oriented and evidence-based policy approaches in criminal justice; (c) substantial improvement of detention conditions and complete overhaul of the prison healthcare system; (d) reforming probation to ensure rehabilitation and reintegration; (e) bringing juvenile justice in line with international standards, while ensuring protection of the best interests of the child; (f) transforming PO into a more independent, fair, transparent, efficient and accountable institution; and (g) ensuring full independence of LAS and greater accessibility of legal aid.

The Criminal Justice Reform Council (CJR Council), co-chaired by the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Corrections, is mandated to steer criminal justice sector reform, consisting of all relevant institutions from across the justice sector, as well as the Ministry of Finance, Parliament and civil society organisations. The CJR Council is supported by a dedicated Secretariat which regularly updates the CJR Strategy and Action Plan and monitors its implementation by issuing annual progress reports. The last update, carried out in June 2013, aimed to reinforce balance between the interest of effective crime detection and prevention on the one hand, and protection of human rights on the other. The coordination mechanism is considered well balanced and benefits from a strong political leadership by use of the binding decision-making powers of the CJR Council, advisory powers of the Consultative Council on Private Law, as well as effective operational support by the CJR Council Secretariat and MOJ.

The criminal justice reform policy and coordination model was replicated in the area of human rights, for the development of the National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office and MOJ. In the area of administrative and private law, a reform policy and coordination framework exists, but is less developed. In April 2013, MOJ set up the *Consultative Council on Implementation of Private Law Reforms* mandated to develop a Private Law Strategy in a consultative process. However, being only a consultative body for the MOJ, it is not as formally structured as CJR Council. The Council is composed of six working groups with thematic competences in property law, civil procedure, company law and insolvency, law of obligations, personal rights and 'other' civil law areas. Operational support for this Council is also provided by MOJ.

As to monitoring and evaluation, experience in both the sector reform, as well as internal institutional performance management systems has shown that, although some progress was made, considerable efforts are still required. Development of capacity assessment, performance management, monitoring and evaluation systems should continue to take place both at stakeholder and reform coordination level. A set of comprehensive performance indicators to be used across the justice sector is particularly important as a tool of both greater efficiency in performance and protection of human rights (i.e. prevention of ill-treatment). Further development of analytical, research, strategic planning ('back office') capacities within each stakeholder is necessary.

In summary, some aspects of the policy development and implementation framework still need to be improved, especially regarding long-term planning, monitoring and evaluation capacity, awareness of stakeholders on EU policy making and programming. At the same time, the Government has shown a clear understanding of the remaining problems, and a willingness to address the issues identified, in order to improve the monitoring and evaluation systems. In addition, effective sector coordination,

inter-sector consultation, and broader justice sector planning will also be monitored through specific conditions under this Sector Reform Contract.

B) Policy relevance

The above policy has direct relevance as an essential precondition for poverty reduction, sustainable/inclusive growth and democratic governance.

The EU has consistently promoted the rule of law and justice sector reforms by various programmes in particular two consecutive Sector Reform Contracts in Criminal Justice since 2008 (for a total budget of EUR 40 million). With the EU and other donor support, the Georgian authorities have achieved marked progress in some areas, especially with regard to an improved juvenile justice system, increased independence of the judiciary, liberalisation of sentencing policies, introduction of diversion and mediation in criminal justice, injecting rehabilitation and re-socialisation approaches into the work of the probation service, improvement of the prison healthcare, establishment of independent LAS, and a significant reduction of the prison population.

However, a number of regulatory and capacity gaps remain in the justice sector which need to be addressed, including: (a) lack of mechanisms and skills to ensure *uniformity of practice* of the courts; (b) *legislative 'inflation'* undermining attempts for more coherence, clarity and foreseeability of law and practice; (c) judiciary and prosecutorial systems unable to ensure the principle of *independence*; (d) weak quality control and *performance management* systems in most sector stakeholders; (e) under-financed and under-resourced *legal aid system*, against the background of the weak capacity of the Bar at all levels of governance and management; (f) lack of individualised, *evidence-based approach* in criminal enforcement system; (g) prevalence of *repression-based approaches* in criminal justice, resulting in ill-treatment, abuse of intrusive investigation methods, overuse of detention on remand and confessions etc.; (h) criminal procedure with no *streamlining between adversarial and inquisitorial* approaches, resulting in poor victim protection, witness interviewing, defence rights etc.; (i) underperforming *civil enforcement* system; (j) lack of *interoperability* of various information systems, underuse of e-justice, and lack of *analysis and research* capabilities for definition of targets, identification of risks and threats, in order to guide the policy development and implementation.

C) Policy credibility

The sector policy implementation track record has so far been positive, *inter alia* attested by the evaluation of the aforementioned EU-financed Sector Reform Contracts in Criminal Justice.

As to budgeting, the Medium-Term Budget Framework is an integral part of the budgeting process in Georgia *inter alia* through application of the Government's *Basic Data and Directions* (BDD) document, which links cross-sectorial policy priorities with financial projections. The BDD is renewed annually in November, and has covered justice sector institutions since 2012. The latest BDD was published in November 2013 for the period of 2014-2017¹¹, based on the Government Programme.

In its justice chapter, priorities are given to the following relevant reforms: a) constitutional court; b) judiciary (with special emphasis on strengthening financial independence of the judiciary); c) criminal justice, including reform of PO, Ministry of Internal Affairs, penitentiary, probation and LAS; d) protection of human rights, including those of minorities. Notably, the BDD foresees sensible *increases during the period 2014 to 2017* for the PO (forecast of a 16% increase), the Ministry of Corrections (+10%), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (+9%), a *stagnant* budgetary allocation over the same period for the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, High Council of Justice, courts of general jurisdiction, and a slight *decrease* for MOJ (-2%). In addition, the BDD also includes a financial framework for spending on various justice-sector related programmes coordinated by the MOJ (worth almost EUR 80 million each year from 2014 to 2017). This includes major programmes, such as for the development of services of the Public and the Civil Registry, the National Bureau of Enforcement or strengthening capacities in investigation of crime and several smaller programmes (such as development of policy-making and legislative capacities, e-governance and integrated information systems). Finally, the Ministry of Corrections also coordinates some budget for the implementation of the CJR Strategy and Action Plan, the costs of which are expected to rise until 2017 (+10% over 4 years).

In general, the BDD can be considered as a proper sector expenditure plan for justice, consolidating institutional spending components and programme-based provisions in a medium-term framework,

¹¹ 2014-2017 BDD is available at <http://www.mof.ge/en/4618>

even though some non-executive institutions in the justice sector, such as the judiciary, appear to have lesser capacity in programme budgeting and more fragmented budgeting procedures than executive agencies.

Against the above background, a sound and relevant sector reform policy is in place, including strategies and action plans with output and outcome-type indicators, budgeting and defined timelines. A part of this policy framework (CJR Strategy and Action Plan) has already been successfully tested. It is thus confirmed that the Government has a credible and relevant policy, supporting the objectives of poverty reduction, sustainable and inclusive growth, and democratic governance.

2.3.2. *Macroeconomic framework*

Over the past 10 years, Georgia undertook significant economic, social and governance reforms resulting in sound fiscal and monetary policies. Despite shocks caused by the 2008 conflict with Russia and the global financial crisis, Georgia was able to maintain macroeconomic stability and recover progressively.

Georgia's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown at a rate of 6.2% in 2012 and 3.2% in 2013, while the budget deficit has been reduced from 6.6% of GDP in 2010 to approximately 3.0% in 2013. Current forecasts for GDP growth according to the Ministry of Finance is 5% in 2014.

The current account deficit remains high (13.8% of GDP in 2013), and its medium-term outlook may represent a challenge to fiscal stability. The Government Programme reaffirms stability-oriented macroeconomic policy as a dominant medium-term objective. Improvement of the rule of law and the administration of justice are key preconditions for further increase in foreign and domestic investments and improvement of the economic situation.

Relevant credit facility agreements with IMF have remained on track in order to be successfully implemented.

In view *inter alia* of the previous successful application of sector budget support in Georgia, it is confirmed that Georgia's macroeconomic policy is conducive to maintaining macroeconomic stability, and is not expected to put at risk sector objectives.

2.3.3. *Public financial management (PFM)*

In the World Bank's Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment from September 2013, Georgia has been noted for significant advancement in its budgetary and financial managements systems. The budget classification system captures all administrative, economic and functional elements. There are no unreported government operations, and all programmes funded by major donors are part of budget appropriations and fiscal reports. Georgia scores among the highest PEFA marks on inter-governmental fiscal discipline. The basic set of systems is in place for strategic budget planning, budget formulation and execution. The introduction of international good practice in the budget cycle of the Government is well advanced, including robust systems for budget preparation, adequate chart of accounts, reliable execution (including accounting and reporting,) and sufficient controls. Important progress has been achieved on programme-based budgeting, furthering the Government's objective of greater results-focus in fiscal planning. The concept of programme-based budgeting was adopted in the 2009 Budget Code, and significant advances have been made since then - reaching all the way to the full presentation of the 2012 draft budget in programme forms to Parliament. The legal framework governing public procurement was further amended, Electronic Government Procurement was introduced in 2011, and linked to the Treasury's information system thus providing for full information sharing. All the above reform initiatives were implemented to address the weaknesses identified by the 2008 PEFA assessment in such areas as external control system, personnel and payroll, public procurement, and reporting of high quality consolidated financial statements.

Against the above background, Georgia has established a credible and relevant programme of improvement of PFM confirmed by the PEFA assessments, showing that trends in PFM justify the choice of budget support with respect to the legal requirements concerning this eligibility criterion.

2.3.4. Budget transparency and oversight

The basic requirements for budgetary transparency are in place in Georgia. In the last few years Georgia received relatively good marks from evaluations carried out in various independent surveys related to budget transparency¹². The government publishes budget forecasts as well as execution reports on a regular basis. The Annual Budget Law for 2014 has been approved and published. In order to strengthen the performance orientation of the budget, the government is in the process of introducing programme-based budgeting. Basic budget scrutiny and oversight of financial statements are in place but needs further strengthening. In Georgia, traditionally the Parliament and its structures are institutionally weaker than the executive branch. The Budget and Finance Committee acknowledges the need to further improve the quality and the timeliness of analysis related to its public finance oversight functions as well as internal capacity for providing more user-friendly information. The State Audit Office of Georgia, that is accountable to the Parliament, has improved its services by applying more advanced financial and performance audits.

2.4. Lessons learnt

Reform of the justice sector is a long-term process that requires continuous policy dialogue and consistent engagement with relevant partners from State and non-State actors.

The EU has directed its previous and ongoing support at the liberalisation of criminal policies, protection of children's rights in criminal justice, improvement of detention conditions, promotion of rehabilitation and re-socialisation, improved access to justice, protection of the rights of prisoners and other vulnerable groups, capacity development of the internal and external oversight and monitoring mechanisms, including PDO.

Lessons were learnt in the context of sector reform and management. For instance, the successful experience of a dedicated CJR Council Secretariat for the day-to-day management of the reform process embedded at the analytical department of MOJ could be replicated with regard to the private and administrative law reform. Moreover, stronger leadership of CJR Council, Consultative Council on Private Law and the general coordination mechanism in driving the sector reform should be ensured, while enhancing the role of each stakeholder in the reform policy-making and implementation process. More supportive and development-oriented, rather than prescriptive and inspection-oriented, management and regulation should be encouraged within the public administration in general. Statutory duties and powers of each actor should be described clearer, alongside institutional or organisational competences and accountabilities within each body – this being particularly relevant in such a complex and fragmented sector as justice.

Experience of two consecutive Sector Reform Contracts in Criminal Justice in Georgia has demonstrated the comparative advantage of the use of sector budget support complemented by targeted technical assistance¹³. To sustain and reinforce results in the core justice areas - and taking into consideration the Aid Effectiveness Agenda and programmes of the other major donors in the sector – the proposed Sector Reform Contract will continue to focus on *access to justice, penitentiary,*

¹² Georgia scored 55 out of 100 in the Open Budget Index (OBI) 2012, which is higher than the average score of 43 for all 100 countries surveyed. Based on the findings, Georgia is consistent in publishing four of the eight key budget documents measured by the OBI: Pre-Budget Statement, Executive's Budget Proposal, Enacted Budget, and Audit Report

¹³ A team of legal experts, led by an international Judge with relevant experience at High Courts of Justice, provides in-country high-level support to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Corrections

probation and juvenile justice. In addition, the scope of the current Programme will cover areas, which have previously lacked demonstrated political will to achieve notable changes (i.e. the judiciary) or were still under preparation (i.e. administrative and civil law). These new reform areas will be addressed by project approach, owing to the early stage of the development of relevant reform policies. The support will be provided to build on and reinforce the achievements under previous Programmes through supporting implementation of new legislation - including the Criminal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, Imprisonment Code, Juvenile Code and Civil Enforcement Code – while strengthening institutional capacities of key stakeholders in all aspects of governance and management.

2.5. Complementary actions

This Programme builds on the experience of the two previous Sector Reform Contracts in criminal justice, alongside other EU-financed interventions. Actions by other donors, most notably USAID, have also been taken into account in its design. Moreover, the Programme promotes synergies with various other on-going or planned EU activities in Georgia, including the Human Rights Programme (designed and launched simultaneously with this Programme under the 2014 Special Measures for Georgia and Moldova), Public Administration Reform Programme (e-justice and e-Government, anti-corruption), European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (land registration), project on legislative development, impact assessment and EU-law approximation system (currently being launched), and other activities undertaken to support the EU-Georgia visa dialogue (capacities to fight organised crime and corruption), DCFTA¹⁴ (property rights and labour disputes), and other EU-Georgia policy initiatives.

2.6. Risk management framework

The following risks have been taken into account: (a) political instability - mitigated by the overwhelming political consensus as to the general objectives of further justice sector reform, as a core precondition for Georgia's economic and social development and pathway towards closer EU integration; (b) lack of a single policy document, the Sector Programme consisting of a number of wider and narrower policy papers - mitigated by the demonstrated leadership of MOJ in the sector and the functional coordination mechanism (in the criminal justice sphere) able to channel and streamline the policy choices, if needed; (c) absence of common policy priorities within the complex justice sector mitigated by Government-led functional sector coordination with involvement of other actors from the outset, such as Judiciary, Parliament, Ombudsman, the legal profession as well as CSO; (d) increased crime-rates jeopardising Government's will to apply more tolerant approach in the criminal justice sector; (e) polarisation within the society and deterioration of human rights protection - mitigated by fostering the culture of consensus and tolerance by the Government and promoting CSO engagement as service providers and watchdogs, notably via the EU-Georgia roadmap towards CSO engagement.

The following assumptions have been made with regard to the above risks: (a) Georgia remains on its path of manifest and real commitment to cooperate with and, eventually, integrate into EU; (b) drastic reshuffling of the current political forces and their current positions (favourable to EU integration) is avoided; (c) continuing support of EU and other donors to the justice sector, including by way of sector budget support and project-approach modalities, extending support to all branches of power (Parliament, executive, judiciary) and non-state actors; (d) Close dialogue between EU and Government on common values and specific policies to work out a clear, foreseeable, ambitious, realistic and measurable Policy Matrix; (e) formal or informal veto right of any stakeholder is avoided on either 'what' is to be achieved or 'how', to preserve the current leadership of MOJ and the executive-led coordination mechanism in the justice sector reform process.

¹⁴ Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE BUDGET SUPPORT CONTRACT

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of this Programme is to improve the system of administration of justice, consolidate the rule of law and strengthen human rights protection in line with international and European standards.

The specific objectives of this Programme have been defined as follows:

1. Consolidate independence, professionalism, impartiality and efficiency of the judiciary, access to justice and right to fair trial;
2. Enhance efficiency and fairness of the criminal justice system; and
3. Improved private and administrative law system.

This Programme will directly contribute to good governance by improving the work of public institutions and management of public resources. It will also directly contribute to ensuring respect for human rights, rule of law and fundamental freedoms. In addition, in preparation of activities, attention will be paid to ensure gender equality and sustainable development.

3.2. Expected results

The list below describes expected results linked to the three specific objectives of the Programme.

Specific Objective 1 – Consolidate independence, professionalism, impartiality and efficiency of the judiciary, access to justice and right to fair trial

Result 1.1: More independent, accountable, effective and efficient judiciary and High School of Justice through improved governance and management.

Result 1.2: Improved institutional capacities of MOJ (including reform coordination and management) and other major justice sector stakeholders (including higher legal education institutions to train justice sector professionals).

Result 1.3: More accessible justice through more independent and effective legal profession, legal aid system, greater application of alternative dispute resolution and improved system of enforcement of court judgments in civil and administrative matters.

Result 1.4: Effective system of justice for children by dedicated regulatory framework and implementation mechanisms.

Specific Objective 2 – Enhance efficiency and fairness of the criminal justice system

Result 2.1: Improved compliance of substantive and procedural criminal and administrative violations legislation/framework (including on Juvenile Justice) with international and European standards.

Result 2.2: Improved effectiveness and efficiency in detection and prevention of crime, including organised crime, by more professional investigation capacities and stronger European and international law-enforcement cooperation. Improved capacities for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

Result 2.3: Increased independence, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency of PO.

Result 2.4: Consolidated rehabilitation and re-socialisation policies, and increased use of non-custodial measures, by effective legislative instruments and their implementation mechanisms.

Result 2.5: Improved detention conditions, especially the prison healthcare, based upon policy, legislative and management changes in the penitentiary system, with notable focus on improved standards/conditions for children in the justice sector.

Result 2.6: Greater accountability of the criminal justice system by increased independence and effectiveness of the investigation mechanisms for law-enforcement ill-treatment and other abuse.

Specific Objective 3 – Improved private and administrative law system

Result 3.1: Compliance of legislative initiatives in the area of private (including Civil Code and Company Law) and administrative law with European standards and best practices.

Result 3.2: Improved capacities for European and international judicial cooperation in private and administrative law.

Result 3.3: Greater protection of property rights by more transparent, clear and foreseeable system of registration of titles to land and improved capacities of justice sector stakeholders.

Result 3.4: Improved legal framework on bankruptcy proceedings through promotion of balance between the interests of rehabilitation of businesses and legality.

3.3. Rationale for the amounts allocated for budget support

The total amount allocated for budget support under this contract is EUR 30 million (60%). The rationale for this amount is based on a broad qualitative assessment that took into account, inter alia, an analysis of the following elements:

- Financing needs of the partner country;
- Commitment of the partner country to allocate national budget resources in line with development strategy and objectives and to follow standard national budget procedures;
- Track record and absorption capacity of past disbursements and how effectively agreed objectives were achieved with budget support operations.

More specifically, sector budget support is proposed with regard to those components of the Programme where a sound level of policy quality, coordination, budgetary and financial management, monitoring and evaluation, institutional capacity, and, sufficient ownership of the relevant initiatives and sector stakeholders by the Government have been shown, in order to produce tangible results. Hence, budget support is proposed in the areas of *access to justice, justice for children, criminal justice, penitentiary and probation reform, protection of land and other property rights*.

A significant portion of the Action is in the form of complementary assistance (project-approach). It is justified by the lower absorption capacity in some of the key actors in the sector (i.e. courts), as well as the limitations inherent in the limited control by the Government (executive branch) of some components of the justice sector. Within the Project-approach modalities, preference has been given to technical assistance rather than twinning, linked to the specificities of the justice sector. The Ministry of Internal Affairs/Police Academy has been established as having the required level of capacities and will be supported with a twinning contract. Grants will be awarded to CSOs and other non-state or public actors. Collaboration with a Member State Agency and with international organisations will also be used. The total amount allocated for complementary assistance under this programme is EUR 20 million (40%).

3.4. Main activities

3.4.1. Budget Support

The main activities to implement the budget support package are ongoing and directed policy dialogue, financial transfer against specific performance, ongoing monitoring and periodic assessment of performance against targets and indicators, reporting on progress and issues arising in the implementation of reforms, and Government empowerment and capacity development through the obligation and commitment to fulfil specific reform requirements through compliance with disbursement conditions.

3.4.2. Complementary support

Complementary assistance will include technical assistance and twinning support to strengthen the Government's capacity to implement its justice sector reform policy, to monitor and report on performance and ensure transparency. Detailed terms of reference will be developed in consultation with the Government and relevant stakeholders following signature of the Financing Agreement.

Key elements will include:

- Two calls for proposals to provide grants to CSOs and other non-state or public actors to promote: (1) the engagement of CSOs in the justice sector reforms by supporting the development of their capacity for advocacy, networking, policy making and monitoring of reforms; and (2) the provision of services, particularly to the most vulnerable, to broaden access to legal advice and to rehabilitation and re-socialisation programmes, as well as to design and implement crime prevention programmes;
- Technical assistance to support achievement of programme objectives with respect to (1) an Independent and Accountable Judiciary; and (2) Justice Sector Reform;
- Capacity Building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs will be provided through technical assistance and a Twinning Project to support further development of the Police Academy;
- Indirect management with GIZ to improve (1) the private and administrative law system through greater compliance of legislative initiatives in line with international and European standards; (2) capacities for European and international judicial cooperation; (3) protection of property rights as a result of a more transparent and predictable system for the registration of titles; (4) the legal framework for bankruptcy proceedings; and (5) the Government's capacity for evidence-based policy development, strategic planning, research and analysis; and
- Indirect management with UNICEF to (1) promote an effective system of justice for children by dedicated regulatory framework and implementation mechanisms (2) to strengthen access to justice by (a) improving the independence and effectiveness of the legal profession and legal aid system; (b) promoting application of alternative dispute resolution and (c) enhancing the system of enforcement of court judgments in civil and administrative matters. Measures relating to access to justice will be implemented by UNDP as implementing partner.
- The project-approach interventions will include contracts for audit, monitoring and evaluation, and visibility.

3.5. Donor coordination

Coordination of donor activities in the justice sector takes place at several levels. Donors are closely incorporated by the Government in various policy-setting coordination and monitoring bodies (and their working groups) covering specific sector and subsector issues, including the CJR Council and the Consultative Council on Private Law, as well as through the dedicated donor coordination unit within the Government Chancellery which covers all sectors. The EU Delegation also periodically hosts a Rule of Law roundtable that includes local CSOs and international NGOs and agencies involved in the justice sector.

Coordination between EU Member States is ensured through bi-monthly development counsellors meetings and *ad hoc* working groups. Some EU Member States also directly participate in the wider policy dialogue, including through annual meetings with donors and CSOs organised by CJR Council, in Rule of Law roundtables, and EU human rights focal point meetings. Some EU Member States have also contributed to the development of this and earlier EU justice programmes.

3.6. Stakeholders

The list of justice sector stakeholders is very broad. It comprises institutions covered by all three branches of power: the judiciary (including various levels of courts, the High Council of Justice), the Government or the executive (MoJ, including the Civil and Public Registries), Ministry of Corrections (including the Penitentiary Department and National Probation Agency), Ministry of Internal Affairs (including the Police), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education and Science, and the Prosecutor's Office) and Parliament or the legislature (Parliamentary Legal and Human Rights Committees, the Public Defender's Office or Ombudsman, and the Legal Aid Service), as well as private corporations and professional associations such as the Georgian Bar Association, bailiffs and notaries. Legal education is covered by sector specific institutions (High School of Justice, Police Academy, Penitentiary and Probation Training Centre, as well as private professional training schools and higher educational institutions. Further a wide range of national CSOs are active in the sector, as are a number of international NGOs and agencies and donor organisations.

3.7. Conclusion on the balance between risks (Section 2.6) and expected benefits/results (Section 3.2)

EU support to Georgia's justice sector reform focuses on results-orientation, local ownership, greater use of country systems, performance-based achievement and capacity building through budget support and targeted technical assistance.

Without the suggested intervention there is the critical risk that not only the reform momentum generated through the previous interventions in the fields of criminal justice and judiciary would be lost but also that the reform incentives that are now spinning over to the civil and administrative law fields would not materialize as envisaged. The earlier risk is closely linked to important fields of EU approximation where the EU is committed to support Georgia in its reform agenda. The latter risk can have a bearing on the socio-economic development of Georgia, where positive signs are visible and within which the EU has already invested notably through the European Neighbourhood Programme on Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD). Notably the land reform agenda is crucial to remove one of the major investment and growth obstacles in Georgia far beyond the agricultural sector. Therefore an absence of the suggested intervention would jeopardize the continuation of the approximation agenda with the EU as well as the further socio-economic development of Georgia.

Thus the expected benefits/results outweigh the imminent risks by far, notably given the risk management and mitigation framework applied overall and specifically in the frames of this programme.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country, referred to in Article 184(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

4.2. Indicative operational implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in sections 3.4. and 4.4. will be carried out, is 60 months, from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement or, where none is concluded, from the adoption of this Action Document, subject to modifications to be agreed by the responsible authorising officer in the relevant agreements. The European Parliament and the relevant Committee shall be informed of the extension of the operational implementation period within one month of that extension being granted.

4.3. Criteria and indicative schedule of disbursement of budget support

A total of EUR 30 million is allocated in four instalments, to be disbursed on the basis of performance against general and specific conditions that will be detailed in the financing agreement.

A first fixed instalment of EUR 3 million will be disbursed on compliance with the general conditions during 2015. Three subsequent mixed (fixed and variable) instalments, each of up to EUR 9 million are to be disbursed in 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively, subject to continuing compliance with the general conditions and an assessment of the extent to which the specific conditions applicable to each tranche have been met.

The four general conditions apply to disbursement of all instalments and reflect the eligibility criteria for budget support. They are:

- satisfactory progress in the implementation of the Government's justice sector reform policy (as described in the Criminal Justice Reform Strategy and Action Plan, the Strategy on Justice for Children, and other justice sector related strategies and action plans), and the continued credibility and relevance of that or any other successor policy;
- maintenance of a credible stability-orientated macroeconomic policy;
- satisfactory progress in the implementation of the Government's programme to improve public financial management; and
- satisfactory progress with regard to the public availability of accessible, timely, comprehensive, and sound budgetary information.

Compliance with these general conditions is a precondition for the release of the fixed component of each instalment, and for consideration of compliance with the specific conditions for the release of the variable component of the second, third and fourth instalments. The specific conditions reflect results listed under section 3.2 covering improvements in (1) access to justice including further development of child friendly justice system; (2) fairness and efficiency in the administration of criminal justice; (3) application of rehabilitation and re-socialisation policies in the penitentiary and probation system to reduce re-offending; and (4) improved system of land registration and management. These specific conditions and the indicators used for assessing compliance are based upon justice sector strategies and action plans. The degree to which the requirements for compliance have been fulfilled at the time of the assessment for each instalment will determine the level of variable component funds associated with each specific condition to be released (100% for full compliance, 50% for partial but substantial compliance, nil for less than substantial compliance).

Funds withheld as a result of incomplete compliance with the specific conditions may be kept available for disbursement subject to reassessment at the time of assessment for subsequent instalments.

The indicative schedule for assessment and disbursement of each instalment is shown in the table below. Fiscal and calendar years are the same in Georgia.

	First Instalment	Second Instalment	Third Instalment	Fourth Instalment
Indicative dates for				
a) Assessment	1 st quarter 2015	1st quarter 2016	1 st quarter 2017	1 st quarter 2018

b) Disbursement	2 nd quarter 2015	2 nd quarter 2016	2 nd quarter 2017	2 nd quarter 2018
Component Value				
a) Fixed	EUR 3.0 million	EUR 2.0 million	EUR 2.0 million	EUR 2.0 million
b) Variable (up to)		EUR 7.0 million	EUR 7.0 million	EUR 7.0 million
Total: (up to)	EUR 3.0 million	EUR 9.0 million	EUR 9.0 million	EUR 9.0 million

4.4. Details on complementary support

A total of EUR 20 million is allocated to complementary actions delivered through projects. Proposed project-approach interventions include EUR 15 million in technical assistance, (service contracts), grants to CSOs and other non-state or public actors, and twinning support as well as EUR 5 million in collaboration with a Member State agency and with international organisations.

4.4.1 Grants: Call for Proposals (direct centralised management)

Two calls for proposals will be launched.

(1) Promoting the Role of Civil Society in the protection of Rule of Law, Justice and Human Rights

- (a) Objectives of the grants, fields of intervention, priorities of the year and expected results

The objective of the programme will be to promote the role of CSOs and their engagement in the justice sector reforms by supporting their capacity for policy dialogue, advocacy and monitoring of reforms.

- (b) Eligibility Conditions

Eligibility will be limited to national and international non-governmental organisations with a proven track-record of relevant support to justice sector reforms.

- (c) Essential Selection and award criteria

The essential selection criteria are financial and operational capacity of the applicant.

The essential award criteria are relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the call; design, effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

- (d) Maximum rate of co-financing

The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants under this call is 90 %.

The maximum possible rate of co-financing may be up to 100% in accordance with Article 192 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No. 966/2012 if full funding is essential for the action to be carried out. The essentiality of full funding will be justified by the responsible authorising officer in the award decision, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

- (e) Indicative trimester to launch the call

Call for Proposals is to be launched in the 2nd trimester of 2015.

(2) Complementary Rehabilitation and Re-socialisation Services in the Criminal Justice Sector

- (a) Objectives of the grants, fields of intervention, priorities of the year and expected results

The objective of the programme will be to promote restorative justice and contribute to rehabilitation and re-socialisation of inmates, former inmates, probationers and children in conflict with the law. The call will aim to increase access of prisoners, former inmates, probationers and children in conflict with the law to vocational training, education and other types of rehabilitation and re-socialisation services as well as to design and implement secondary crime prevention programmes for children and rehabilitation/re-socialisation programmes/services for diverted juveniles.

(b) Eligibility Conditions

Eligibility will be limited to national and international non-governmental organisations, to national public sector operators (legal entities of public law) and to local authorities, with a proven track-record of relevant support to justice sector reforms or provision of services.

(c) Essential Selection and award criteria

The essential selection criteria are financial and operational capacity of the applicant.

The essential award criteria are relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the call; design, effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

(d) Maximum rate of co-financing

The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants under this call is 90 %.

The maximum possible rate of co-financing may be up to 100% in accordance with Article 192 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No. 966/2012 if full funding is essential for the action to be carried out. The essentiality of full funding will be justified by the responsible authorising officer in the award decision, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

(e) Indicative trimester to launch the call

The Call for Proposals is to be launched in the 3rd trimester of 2015.

4.4.2. Grant: call for proposals for a Twinning project

(a) Objectives

The Twinning calls for proposals modality will be used for implementing activities under specific objective 2 by providing assistance to the Ministry of Internal Affairs Police Academy.

(b) Eligibility conditions

In line with Article 5(10)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014, participation in Twinning calls for proposals is limited to public administrations of the EU member States, being understood as central or regional authorities of a Member State as well as their bodies and administrative structures and private law bodies entrusted with a public service mission under their control provided they act for the account and under the responsibility of that member State.

(c) Essential selection and award criteria

The essential selection criterion is the operational capacity of the applicant.

The essential award criteria are the technical expertise of the applicant and the relevant methodology and sustainability of the proposed action.

(d) Maximum rate of co-financing

The rate of co-financing for the twinning grant contracts is 100%¹⁵.

(e) Indicative trimester to launch the calls

3rd trimester of 2015.

(f) Use of lump sums/flat rates/unit costs

¹⁵ As provided for in the Twinning Manual.

Twinning contracts include a system of unit costs and flat rate financing, defined in the Twinning Manual, for the reimbursement of the public sector expertise provided by the selected Member States administrations. This system of unit costs and flat rate financing exceeds the amount of EUR 60 000 per beneficiary of a Twinning contract.

4.4.3 Procurement (direct management)

Subject	Type	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative launch of the procedure
Technical assistance to support achievement of programme objectives with respect to (1) Independent and Accountable Judiciary – (specific objective 1, results 1.1 and 1.2); (2) Justice Sector Reform (specific objective 1, results 1.2 and objective 2, results 2.1-2.6); and (3) Capacity Building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) (specific objective 2, results 2.2 and 2.6)*.	services	3	third quarter 2015
Evaluation and audit	Services	up to 3	throughout the duration of the programme
Communication and visibility	Services	up to 2	throughout the duration of the programme

* Capacity building for MIA is also pursued both through a Twinning Project to support further development of the Police Academy (see section 4.4.2).

4.4.4 Indirect Management with a Member State agency

This action is to support achievement of Specific Objective 3 to improve the private and administrative law system through greater compliance of legislative initiatives with European standards and best practices (Result 3.1); improved capacities for mutual legal assistance and European and international judicial cooperation (Result 3.2); greater protection of property rights as a result of a more transparent and predictable system for the registration of titles and improved capacities of justice sector stakeholders (Result 3.3); an improved legal framework for bankruptcy proceedings (Result 3.4); and an enhanced capacity for evidence-based policy development, strategic planning, research and analysis for private and administrative law reforms (Result 3.5). For part of these tasks GIZ will conclude and manage contracts.

The action may be implemented in indirect management with GIZ in accordance with Article 58(1)(c) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. This implementation is justified because of GIZ's technical and management capacity, its extensive experience in developing private¹⁶ and administrative legal framework in Georgia, the scope of its on-going actions in Georgia and its ability to rapidly mobilise and manage (including financially) high level specialised expertise needed for further development of the sector.

¹⁶ Georgian Civil Code, adopted in 1997, has been modelled after German Civil Code and has benefitted from extensive technical assistance and expertise from the German Government

The entrusted entity is currently undergoing an ex ante assessment in accordance with Article 61(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. In anticipation of the results of this review, the responsible authorising officer deems that, based on a preliminary evaluation and on the long-standing and problem-free cooperation with this entity, it can be entrusted with budget-implementation tasks under indirect management.

The change of management mode from indirect to direct management, whether partially or entirely is not considered a substantial change.

4.4.5 Indirect Management with UNICEF

This action is to support achievement of the Specific Objective 1 to consolidate the independence, professionalism and efficiency of the judiciary and strengthen access to justice. This shall be achieved through the creation of a more effective system of justice for children based on a dedicated regulatory framework and implementation mechanism (Result 1.4); improved institutional capacities of MOJ and other major justice sector stakeholders (Result 1.2); and the greater independence and effectiveness of the legal profession and legal aid system with greater application of alternative dispute resolution and improved system of enforcement of court judgments in civil and administrative matters (Result 1.3). For part of these tasks UNICEF will conclude and manage contracts.

This action may be implemented in indirect management with UNICEF in accordance with Article 58(1)(c) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

This implementation is justified because of UNICEF's strong capacity and experience in this area, its mandate to advocate for the protection of children's rights, its engagement in policy developments, demonstrated ability to steer policy-making in the area of justice for children, its track record of cooperation with relevant justice sector stakeholders and its past and on-going successful actions in Georgia. While UNICEF is expected to take overall management of this action, and specifically deliver the results associated with juvenile justice (Result 1.4, partly also result 1.2 and result 2.1, 2.4 and 2.5), UNICEF is expected to be supported by UNDP as implementing partner, for the component on Access to Justice as regards the effectiveness of legal representation and the enforcement of judgements (Result 1.3).

The entrusted entity is currently undergoing an ex ante assessment in accordance with Article 61(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. In anticipation of the results of this review, the responsible authorising officer deems that, based on a preliminary evaluation and on the long-standing and problem-free cooperation with this entity, it can be entrusted with budget-implementation tasks under indirect management.

The change of management mode from indirect to direct management, whether partially or entirely, is not considered a substantial change.

4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement

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 shall apply. The responsible authorising officer may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with Article 9(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No. 232/2014 on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries concerned, or other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

4.6. Indicative budget

Module	Amount in EUR thousands	Third party contribution (indicative)

3.3. – Budget support Sector Reform Contract	30,000	N.A.
4.4.1. – Calls for proposals (direct management)	6,000	700
4.4.1.1 <i>Promoting the Role of Civil Society in the protection of Rule of Law, Justice and Human Rights (EUR 2 million)</i>		
4.4.1.2 <i>Complementary Rehabilitation and Re-socialisation Services in the Criminal Justice Sector (EUR 4 million)</i>		
4.4.2. – Procurement (direct management)	7,200	N.A.
4.4.3 – Twinning (direct management)	800	N.A.
4.4.4. – Indirect management with GIZ	2,000	N.A.
4.4.5. – Indirect management with UNICEF	3,000	400
4.8. – Evaluation and audit	500	N.A.
4.9. – Communication and visibility	500	N.A.
Total	50,000	1,100

4.7. Performance monitoring

Review (verification) missions will take place at the end of each financial year to review the progress of the reform, and the achievement of compliance with the conditions for disbursement specified in the Annex 1 of the Financing Agreement. Independent reviews for the second, third and fourth instalments will make recommendations on the level of disbursement in line with conclusions on the extent to which compliance with the general and specific conditions has been achieved. For the first instalment, assessment will be made by the EU Delegation.

Independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission will carry out external Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) missions on specifically established terms of reference. The missions are expected to start from the sixth month of the Programme activities, and end, at the latest, 6 months before the end of the operational implementation phase.

4.8. Evaluation and audit

Day-to-day technical and financial monitoring will be responsibility of the Government, and a continuous process. To this aim, the Government shall establish a monitoring and reporting system for regular reporting on implementation of reforms specified in the Government's sector policy and, *inter alia*, compliance with EU policy reform (Sector Reform Contract) disbursement conditions.

The Programme will undergo mid-term and final evaluation in 2016 and 2018, respectively. The evaluation will cover all interventions under this programme. The European Commission may also launch a full ex-post evaluation at a later date.

Complementary support activities may be subject to external audit by the Commission, financed according to Section 4.6.

4.9. Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

The action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated before the start of the implementation and supported *inter alia* with the budget indicated in section 4.5.

The measures shall be implemented either (a) by the Commission, and/or (b) by the partner country, contractors, and entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, financing agreements, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

As part of the Financing Agreement, the Government undertakes to ensure that the visibility of the EU contribution to the state reform contract is given appropriate coverage in the various publicity media. The Action will endeavour to further enhance the positive image of EU in the context of its work in Georgia. Public diplomacy and awareness-raising actions are crucial to advance human rights in the prioritised areas. The intervention activities and public diplomacy actions will feed into the communication campaign on AA/ DCFTA/VLAP and serve to mitigate potential socio-economic imbalances which might be caused in the short or medium term by the implementation of agreements, especially affecting groups in more vulnerable situations (e.g. victims of domestic violence or children in extreme poverty).

At appropriate milestones during the Programme and after appropriate events, press releases will be issued, in co-operation with the EU Delegation in Tbilisi.