



The Director-General



Secretary General

## Gender Action Plan III – 2021-2025 Updated Country Level Implementation Plan – CLIP - *Tajikistan*

### 1. Context for EU action gender equality and women's empowerment in the country

Tajikistan ranks one of the lowest among group of countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia in the international rankings assessing gender equality. In the Gender Inequality Index (GII) Tajikistan ranks 68<sup>th</sup> out of 169 rankings showing low ratings in adolescent birth, female seats in the parliament and low participation of women in labour force.<sup>1</sup> Compared to other countries in Central Asia, Tajikistan rates higher only from Kyrgyzstan in GI ranking. In the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Index, Tajikistan ranks 111 out of 146 countries showing particularly low ranking in economic empowerment and opportunities followed by political empowerment and educational attainment.<sup>2</sup>

There is a positive political will in Tajikistan to tackle the gender inequality and to strengthen the role of women and girls as well as understanding of the necessity to improve the situation. It results in adoption of state programmes and strategies that are mentioned further in this chapter as well as in other political messaging. Tajikistan has a relatively good legal and policy framework on gender equality and positive ratification of key international human rights treaties related to gender equality. However, the capacity of the government to implement those programmes is rather weak with no adequate financing earmarked for this area and limited qualification of civil servants on gender mainstreaming in different sectors. The mentality of society in relation to gender matters, particularly in rural areas, is also an issue.

Despite having relatively good legal and political framework, women in Tajikistan still do not enjoy all the prescribed rights and state guarantees of gender equality on equal footing with men. In fact, the status of girls and women in the family, society, and public area is low, and current state efforts on empowerment of girls and women are not effective. As to significant achievements, some progress is evident in the representation of women in Parliament, the narrowing of gender disparities in education, and the reduction of maternal and child mortality rates. However, prevalent stereotypes about the roles of women and men, and traditional beliefs about subordinated positions are deeply rooted in society and cut across the government, legislation and policies, thereby hindering such progress in Tajikistan in political, economic and social spheres. The analysis below is based on the Gender Country Profile (GCP) for Tajikistan which EU Delegation to Tajikistan commissioned in 2021 prior to drafting the original CLIP same year. The 2021 GCP remains relevant as it reflects the current situation in the country. GCP was drafted based on review of secondary data and interviews with key actors, including civil society organisations working on gender equality and women's empowerment in Tajikistan.

Tajikistan has ratified several international human rights treaties relating to gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and numerous ILO Conventions. Current implementation of recommendations received through the UN

<sup>1</sup> UNDP (2021). Gender Inequality Index. 2021 data.: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GI>

<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum (2023), Global Gender Gap Report 2023: [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2023.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2023.pdf)

human rights monitoring mechanisms is not linked to national policies and strategies on gender equality and elimination of violence against women. The Beijing Platform for Actions (BPfA) is not used effectively as a guiding document for drafting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating gender equality in all sectors in Tajikistan. Tajikistan faces significant challenges in achieving SDG 5.<sup>3</sup> Legislation on gender equality has some discriminatory provisions and several critical gaps. Several targeted programmes were adopted: a National Strategy on the Advancement of the Role of Women in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021-2030; a State Programmes on Education, Selection and Appointment of Talented Women and Girls to Management Positions for 2017-2022; a State Programme on Prevention of Family Violence in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2014-2023. There is no comprehensive approach applying the intersectionality perspective and the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) inherent in SDGs. Tajikistan did not develop a strong mechanism to implement gender equality laws and policies across national development sectors. The Committee on Women's and Family Affairs (CWFA), a national gender machinery is underfunded and its status in the government does not correspond to its expected role of implementation of gender equality policy in the coordinated manner.

On the positive developments, in July 2022 Tajikistan adopted an anti-discrimination law "on equality and elimination of all forms of discrimination". In addition, in August 2023, the government of Tajikistan adopted a National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights until 2038, together with the relevant Action Plan for the period 2023-2025. The Strategy and Action Plan refer to women's rights and envisage many actions to improve gender equality, women's rights and the prevention of GBV and domestic violence. On 19 June 2023, by the decree of the Minister of Finance of Tajikistan, the Medium-term Action Plan for Introduction of Gender and Climate Change Budgeting was approved.

Tajikistan is a male-dominated society. Women are perceived as playing a role of mothers within the families rather than as workers, leaders in public domain. Environment for the participation of women in decision-making is not conducive. Participation of women in the representative, executive and judicial branches of power has not reached even a 30 per cent representation of women. Against this background, the legislation of Tajikistan does not provide for temporary special measures to advance gender equality.<sup>4</sup>

Reliable national statistics on the prevalence of various forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) do not exist. GBV in Tajikistan, especially domestic violence, has deep-rooted structural causes of gender inequality and patriarchy. There is a high tolerance of GBV, especially domestic violence, in society, including among women. Not all forms of GBV are prohibited in Tajikistan. The response to GBV is weak in Tajikistan. Judges, police, lawyers, and prosecutors are not required to receive training on GBV, its prevention, and the protection of the survivors. There are very few state-funded services for victims of GBV, especially in rural and community levels. One of the most critical gaps in service provision is access to effective legal remedies.

Tajikistan has made significant progress in the reduction of maternal mortality, reaching 15.4 per 100,000 live births in 2019<sup>5</sup> compared to 53 per 100,000 live births in 2000,<sup>6</sup> with 99 per cent of births attended by qualified personnel.<sup>7</sup> The Health Code (2017), in Article 1, defines reproductive health and reproductive rights, with Chapter 13 explicitly dedicated to them. Education programs on a healthy lifestyle that were developed and piloted in some schools did not fully cover sexual and reproductive health and rights issues.<sup>8</sup> 45 of every 1,000 girls ages 15-19 gave birth in Tajikistan in 2021. This rate

---

<sup>3</sup> Sachs et al. (2020): The Sustainable Development Goals and Covid-19. Sustainable Development Report 2020, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., <https://dashboards.sdiindex.org/profiles/TJK/indicators>

<sup>4</sup> CEDAW Concluding observations 2018, CEDAW/C/TJK/CO/6, paragraphs 21 (b), (c); 32 (a).

<sup>5</sup> Agency of Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (forthcoming). Women and Men in the Republic of Tajikistan, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Agency of Statistics under the President of Tajikistan (2007). Women and Men in the Republic of Tajikistan, p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ketting, E and Ivanova, O (2018), Sexuality Education in Europe and Central Asia: State of the Art and Recent Developments, An Overview of 25 countries, p. 163.

of adolescent fertility has remained roughly the same since 2010<sup>9</sup>. In 2020, women made up 35.4 per cent of the estimated 14,565 People Living with HIV (PLHIV) in Tajikistan, but in recent years there has been an increase in the proportion of women among new HIV cases, from 20.5 per cent in 2010 to 41.4 per cent in 2019.<sup>10</sup>

Women lag behind men the most in economic and social rights in Tajikistan. The low percentage of ownership of assets among women results in limited economic opportunities for women. Young women are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market. Unemployment affects women, especially young women, disproportionately. Women bear a high burden of unpaid care work, resulting in their low participation in the labour force and employment. Women's labour is concentrated in the sectors of agriculture, education and health.<sup>11</sup> Some improvements were tracked in narrowing the gender wage gap. The shortage of affordable and quality childcare institutions, especially in rural areas, is one of the main impediments to improving the economic opportunities of women. Gender inequality at the school level remains persistent despite some improvements over the years. Professional education is male-dominated in Tajikistan with girls selecting traditional subjects of study like education, health and social care.

Tajikistan committed to implementing UN SCR 1325 and related WPS resolutions. It adopted two National Action Plans (NAPs): the NAP on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) No. 1325 and No. 2122 for 2014-2019, and the NAP on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions No. 1325 and No. 2242 for 2019-2022. Both NAPs do not fully reflect the content and approaches of the UN SCR on WPS. The main emphasis of the UN SCR on increased participation of women in decision-making, including through active participation of civil society, is not reflected in the NAP.

Climate change, environment, and digitalisation are the areas where sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis are hardly available. Women are at higher risk of the effects of climate change due to the gender inequality in Tajikistan. Women make up the majority of the labour force in agriculture, but they have limited knowledge about agriculture and farming, new technologies, new crops, fertilisers and their utilisation. In 2019, Tajikistan adopted a National Strategy of Climate Change Adaptation until 2030 which mainstreams gender.<sup>12</sup> Tajikistan has adopted a Concept of Digital Economy in the RT,<sup>13</sup> Concept of Electronic Government in the RT,<sup>14</sup> and the State Programme on the Introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to General Educational Institutions of the RT for 2018-2022.<sup>15</sup> These documents are gender-blind.

## 2. Selected thematic areas of engagement and objectives

The EU Multi-annual Indicative Programme for 2021-2027 for Tajikistan is explicitly based on the national gender equality strategies and EU GAP III with gender-transformative approach to be used as one of the cross-cutting principles in implementation of the MIP. It has three priority areas: 1) inclusive green and digital economy; 2) human development (health and education); 3) natural resources management, efficiency and resilience. In addition to the MIP, EU Delegation to Tajikistan has ongoing projects which are funded by MIP envelope from the previous period, particularly in the area of health and education and rural development, all contributing to implementation of the EU GAP III. In addition to the MIP, EUD to Tajikistan oversees national implementation of the EU Regional Central Asian Programmes which also contribute to the implementation of the EU GAP III.

---

<sup>9</sup> Genderdata.worldbank.org

<sup>10</sup> UNDP (2020), Funding Request Form Allocation Period for 2020-2022, The Global Fund, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Agency of Statistics under the President of Tajikistan (2017), Situation in the Labour Market in the Republic of Tajikistan (Report on findings of the labour force survey conducted from 20 July to 20 August 2016), p. 154.

<sup>12</sup> Approved by the Resolution of the Government No. 482 on 2 October 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Approved by the Resolution of the Government of Tajikistan No. 642 on 30 December 2019.

<sup>14</sup> Approved by the Resolution of the Government of Tajikistan No. 643 on 30 December 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Approved by the Resolution of the Government of Tajikistan No. 443 on 29 September 2017.

Complexity of the gender equality situation in Tajikistan prioritised the focus of the EUD to Tajikistan on supporting targeted interventions on gender equality and women's empowerment (gender marker 2) and policy dialogue on implementation of international commitments of Tajikistan on gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender mainstreaming to MIP priority areas, and, respectively programmes will be ensured through collection of sex-disaggregated data where such data is available and having gender equality as a significant objective (gender marker 1).

As to the EU Member states, only Germany and France have residential presence with Germany being in the phasing out stage of its bilateral development assistance to Tajikistan. In case of France, it has no bilateral development assistance for Tajikistan. These EU MS along with like-minded donors - Switzerland and the UK - remain key partners of the EU in policy dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment in Tajikistan.

**The overall objective of the EU action in Tajikistan for gender equality and women's empowerment** is to support implementation of international commitments of Tajikistan on gender equality and women's rights through engagement in policy dialogue with both the government and the civil society, outreach and implementation of programmes targeting directly and indirectly strategic and practical needs of women.

The **selected areas** of engagement are:

- Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence;
- Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women;
- Promoting equal participation and leadership;
- Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation.

For each of these areas, the specific thematic objectives which will be pursued are:

- 1) **Women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity are better protected from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private spheres, in the work place and online through legislation and effective enforcement:**
  - Through the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme, and the CSO thematic programme the actions on supporting the legislative reforms and implementation of strategies that contribute to protection of women and girls from gender-based violence will be targeted.
- 2) **Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are agents of change regarding discriminatory social norms, gender stereotypes, and gender-drivers of conflict:**
  - Improving safeguards to at-risk women and women survivors of gender-based domestic violence through improved protection, access to justice and reintegration in Rasht Valley of Tajikistan: wide awareness raising campaigns will be conducted in the target region for community leaders, local authorities, CSOs, women and girls focusing on promotion of gender equality and fighting against gender-based and domestic violence.
- 3) **Women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity, who experience sexual and gender-based violence have increased access to essential services and protection:**
  - Mainstream actions on provision of services to victims of sexual and gender-based violence through call for proposals under the Thematic Programme on Human Rights and Democracy.
  - Improving safeguards to at-risk women and women survivors of gender-based domestic violence through improved protection, access to justice and reintegration in Rasht Valley of Tajikistan: The overall aim of the action is to promote women's rights and contribute to gender equality by strengthening the self-reliance of at-risk women and women survivors of gender-based domestic violence in remote rural areas. The women and girls victims of domestic violence are provided with support to enhance their access to basic services, including access to justice.

- 4) **Women’s rights organisations, social movements and other civil society organisations are influential in ending gender-based violence:**
- Strengthening the capacity of CSOs and women’s organisations through actions under Human Rights and Democracy Thematic Programme and empower them in ending gender-based violence, provision of services to victims of gender-based violence, and advocacy efforts.
- 5) **Increased access for women in all their diversity to decent work in non-traditional, in particular science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), and female-dominated sectors, including women’s transition to the formal economy and coverage by non-discriminatory and inclusive social protection systems**
- In the context of Tajikistan’s application to the EU GSP+ scheme, the Government of Tajikistan has expressed willingness to work for a significant reduction of the professions prohibited to women. While the list of prohibited professions will not be abolished, the government has elaborated plans to halve the number of professions not accessible to women.
- 6) **Women in all their diversity have improved access to entrepreneurship opportunities, including social entrepreneurship, and alternative livelihoods and strengthened participation in the green and circular economy:**
- Integrated Rural Development Project II (IRDP)/ Towards Rural Inclusive Growth and Economic Resilience (TRIGGER), co-financed by EU/BMZ: overall goal is to improve livelihoods in rural areas and develop value chains. All the targets are sex-disaggregated and the project aims for 50% women beneficiaries. One of the components is gender-specific and focused on women’s empowerment through entrepreneurship, training women and supporting start-ups, including supporting them in development of business plan and providing them with small grants to implement them.
  - Strengthening Water and Irrigation Management project (SWIM) co-financed by EU/WB: objectives of the project are to strengthen capacity for water resources planning and irrigation management and improve performance of selected irrigation schemes in the Vakhsh and Zarafshon river basins. The project is designed to ensure proactive engagement of women and women’s group, ensuring equal benefit and addressing two main gender gaps: access to economic opportunities, and secondly, voice and agency.
  - Protecting the Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights of Prisoners and Ex-prisoners in Tajikistan: the project has the special focus on female prisoners and ex-prisoners to empower them before and upon release by providing trainings on vocational skills, personal growth, entrepreneurship, project design and consultations for social reintegration.
  - Technical Assistance package to support the energy sector reform in Tajikistan: the action, amongst others, aims at promoting women’s employment and enterprise development in the energy sector, amplifying women’s voices in energy and water planning and implementation, ensuring the application of gender mainstreaming into the energy sector, formation of a gender working group in each one of the unbundled companies.
  - A new envisaged action “Green Transition through the Cotton Value Chain” will start implementation in 2024 which will underpin capacity-development and gender-sensitive approaches by supporting political, safety, security and economic governance and developing human capital with the aim of bringing more equity between men and women and unleash the huge potential for economic contribution of women to society. Within the cotton value chain, women are involved mostly in sowing, weeding and harvesting, and they make of the bulk of the work force in the cotton processing sector where there are opportunities for further skills development. Under the Better Cotton Initiative, numerous activities are geared toward reducing the gender gap which will be mainstreamed through the Better Cotton Standard System. Gender Lead or Gender Committees will be designated to support concrete action toward equal participation and recognition of women. Moreover, sectoral analysis will be elaborated to understand the gender challenges in deep. The criteria on decent work also benefit women specifically, e.g., via

explicit non-discrimination against women and anti-harassment, training of women, equal pay and minimum wage etc.

**7) Improved policy, legal framework and access to care services enabling equal division of domestic and care work between women and men**

- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Housing and Industry: one of the components of the action will respond to challenges that women and girls face in providing energy in rural settings by collecting firewood and dried dung. This labour-intensive household activities will be reduced from the shoulders of women and girls that will enable them to dedicate more time for education and other productive activities.

**8) Reduction in gender disparities in enrolment and retention at all levels of education and lifelong learning for women, men, girls and boys:**

- Quality Education Support Programme II (UNESCO, UNICEF, KfW and TA working with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment): the programme has several components targeting general education, vocational education and training, employment policies with focus on youth (pupils and students), including vulnerable groups (poor, disabilities, rural areas, low income, children of migrant families, NEETs); curricula for STEM subjects, participation in international assessment PISA and ICT and development of models of financing for VET and higher education. One of the components targets schools' building and rehabilitation with special focus on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). This programme applies gender mainstreaming approach through collection of sex-disaggregated data; reaching gender targets; gender-responsiveness of training and education materials that will be developed; gender analysis in planned surveys and studies (e.g. LFS, school-to-work transition survey; tracer studies).
- Technical/vocational education and training (TVET) and employment sector budget support programme in Tajikistan: amongst others, the programme aims at improving governance through policy based and gender sensitive budgeting and monitoring of the TVET and employment sectors.

**9) Improved access to safe water and sanitation facilities:**

- Integration of principle of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) in the water sector reform Programme in Tajikistan: under the Project IRDP/TRIGGER, and particularly Output 1.5 (Water output), technical assistance is provided to the MEWR for the implementation of the reform process targets the national as well as the river basin levels. Specific attention is paid to the participation of women under all work packages in order to make them visible in water-related decision making. Most notably, ensure the participation of women during River Basin Council meetings, make visible and empower female River Basing Organisation staff, ensure equitable access of women to the training initiatives carried under Output 1.5, work with female farmers at the grass-root level to ensure that basin interventions are conducted in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner.
- The Government is also assisted to continue reform on drinking water supply and sanitation and hygiene services. The Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Project, financed by the EU, aims to narrow a critical gender gap in human endowments by providing access to drinking water supply and better sanitation and hygiene, freeing up time for productive and care activities. Water fetching places a huge and disproportional time and physical burden on women and girls, percent taking over one hour a day, mostly on foot. The project continues to be raising knowledge and acceptance of the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM). Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) is essential for the fulfilment of girls' and women's rights, particularly women and girls with disabilities, a key objective of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**10) Public health systems have sufficient and sustained financing to address the health needs of women and girls in all their diversity:**

- The Health Development Programme is currently supporting the Tajik health system towards Universal Health Coverage with focus on primary health care (PHC). The programme is especially contributing to SDG 3.1.1, Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000

live births, and it targets: 1. Policy level, health care governance and financing; 2. Better quality and access to primary health care (PHC); 3. Infection prevention and control.

- 1: At policy level, the action is strengthening, among other priorities, the policy framework for PHC services. Gender equality is going to be reinforced through integration of maternal health and sexual and reproductive health programmes into PHC and through training community health workers, to ensure women have access to essential health services.
- 2: In addition to inadequate medical care, in Tajikistan health impairments are also due to gender-specific, sociocultural and economic inequalities. For this, the HDP is addressing multiple discrimination of women accessing PHC services. Furthermore, the action is specifically geared to improving the competencies of nurses, midwives and administrative professionals, who are mostly women.
- 3: The infection prevention and control part is focusing on maternity, neonatal, paediatric and surgical wards. Main beneficiaries are pregnant women and their new-borns, children under age of 5 and health workers (who are mostly women). So far, specifically for the gender related part, the project has rehabilitated and provided equipment for 15 Health Care Facilities (maternity and paediatric, as well as surgical).

**11) Women and girls, in all their diversity, have improved access to justice to safeguard their civil and political rights:**

- Support to Civil Registry System Reform in Tajikistan: the overall objective is to improve accessibility of basic public services for all rights holders. The project will, among other tasks, support gender equality and women's empowerment by aiming to remove some of the many financial, and legal barriers women and girls face during the civil registrations. As a result, women's access to education, health, formal labour market and social protection will be improved.

**12) Women, men, girls and boys are equally provide with and using equally public digital literacy.**

- The digital literacy of women, man, girls and boys will be improved by mainstreaming actions on this subject through calls for proposals under the Thematic Programme for Civil Society Organisations
- Technical/vocational education and training (TVET) and employment sector budget support programme in Tajikistan: within this programme, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Tajikistan will be developing educational standards and curricula for at least 20 high-priority PVET professions. The standards and curricula of 5 of those professions will be digitalised in 2024, so that in 2025 a full digital provision is achieved. The digital skills of 90% of the teachers teaching those professions will be improved that will eventually benefit girls and boys studying in schools.

As to cooperation with the EU actors, EUD will implement the above-mentioned objectives with EBRD, KfW, GIZ and EU international and non-governmental organisations (ETF, Hilswerk, DVV International, ACTED and others). Other international organisations such as UN agencies, World Bank, OSCE are also engaged in the implementation of the aforementioned actions.

Women's NGOs, women human rights defenders and informal networks working on gender equality and women's empowerment were consulted in drafting of GCP and identification of entry points for policy dialogue, coordination and targeted interventions on gender equality.

**3. Targeted action(s) supporting gender equality and women's empowerment**

The EU Delegation is at planning phase of its G2 action that will be focused on abovementioned selected priority areas. Also, through the human rights and democracy, and CSO thematic programmes the EU Delegation will continue to prioritise actions on gender equality and women's rights with focus on vulnerable groups of women.

#### **4. Engage in dialogue for gender equality and women empowerment**

EU engages extensively in the policy dialogue with Tajikistan and gender equality issues will be addressed at all levels of policy dialogue.

The gender equality and women's empowerment issues from perspective of international commitments are raised by the EU at the following forums of the policy dialogues:

- Cooperation Council between Tajikistan and the EU, yearly, at the ministerial level;
- Cooperation Committee and Sub-Committee on Development Cooperation between Tajikistan and the EU, yearly, at the level of senior officials;
- Human Rights Dialogue, yearly, senior officials from variety of Ministries and State bodies, including Ombudsperson and specialised thematic committees
- Bilateral meetings between EU officials and officials of the Government of Tajikistan;
- Bilateral meetings between EU Ambassador and Ministers, sometimes in EU HoMs or like-minded formats.
- High level visits of EU and MS officials (EUSR for Central Asia, EU officials, MS delegations).

In 2021, EU has adopted a new Human Rights Strategy for years 2021-2025. Human Rights Strategy outlines five strategic thematic areas of engagement, with gender equality and women's empowerment as one of these key areas. In the annual EU-Tajikistan Human Rights Dialogues, gender equality and women's empowerment is included as a specific agenda item. Prior to Human Rights Dialogues, the EU conducts consultations with CSO both in Brussels and locally, including with NGOs working on gender equality and women's rights. Priority topics that the EU addresses during the Human Rights Dialogues, and more generally in contacts with Tajik authorities, include advocacy for criminalisation of domestic violence; women's empowerment through access to education and decent work, as well as other issues based on consultation with the CSOs.

In 2023, Tajikistan and the EU entered negotiations of an Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA). In addition, the government of Tajikistan has submitted its application to become a beneficiary of the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preference Plus (GSP+). These two processes provide important opportunities to advance compliance of Tajikistan with international commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. The process of GSP+ accession is used for careful screening of labour rights, including equality and non-discrimination. It also constitutes an important platform to advocate for inclusion of a specific article or norm in the criminal code that would clearly declare the domestic violence as an act of crime.

#### **5. Outreach and other communication / public diplomacy activities**

In the last few years, EUD has become one of the leaders among the diplomatic missions in pushing the topic of gender equality and women empowerment into the public communication space. Whilst the public diplomacy plan is drafted by the EUD on the annual basis, several activities are conducted on recurrent basis:

- Supporting the 16 days campaign against gender-based violence, including launching the tradition of lighting of EU delegation building in orange during the 16 days – joined gradually by increasing number of embassies and international organisations.
- Civil society seminars drawing attention to thematic issues and proposing concrete recommendations, including on promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.
- Social media outreach – engagement with influencers, organisation of thematic challenges competitions and other forms of communication outreach on gender equality topics.
- Regular organisation of awareness rising activities on gender issues among population in the framework of the individual projects.



**6. Technical Facility and/or financial resources allocated to support GAP III implementation**

Under item 3.2 *Cooperation Facility* of the MIP EUR 1,82 million have been set aside for a number of support measures, among them also support to the implementation of GAP III at country level (technical assistance for Gender sector analyses, gender mainstreaming, trainings). No specific amount, however, has been earmarked for the aforementioned activities.

Date: ..... 30/11/2023 .....

Signature by Head of Delegation: .....  .....