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INFORMATION

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on Development cooperation and international partnerships
Subject:	Coordination group on migration under the NDICI - Global Europe and the Member States' bilateral cooperation instruments

In view of CODEV-PI (NDICI-GE subgroup) on 24 November, with invitation to the delegates of EMWP and the JHA Counsellors Moadem, please find enclosed, for information, a letter from the Commission and the EEAS to the Permanent Representatives of the EU Member States to the EU, concerning the Coordination group on migration and its terms of reference.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for International Partnerships
Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and
Enlargement Negotiations
Service for Foreign Policy Instruments



The Directors-General and Head of Service

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



The Secretary-General

Brussels
(2021)7557097

To the Permanent Representatives of the EU Member States to the European Union

Excellencies,

In line with the Commission's proposal for a new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, and the objective and principles in the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe), one key priority is to establish comprehensive migration partnerships with key countries of origin, transit and destination.

This overall objective should be pursued in a joined-up effort together with EU Member States, in a Team Europe spirit, as part of the framework of the Union's external cooperation.

The Commission services, together with the European External Action Service, intend to establish a dedicated "Coordination Group on Migration under the NDICI - Global Europe and the Member States bilateral cooperation instruments" (Coordination Group on Migration).

This informal group will exchange information on the implementation of the Global Europe (GE) funds related to migration and ensure coordination with EU Member States' bilateral funds, thus ensuring complementarities and synergies in the preparation of programmes and actions in the area of migration and forced displacement in partner countries. The terms of reference of the Coordination Group are in annex.

We would like to underline that this Coordination Group on Migration, established as a "Commission's informal special group", would have a different and distinct status and role compared to other existing entities dealing with migration or with the Global Europe instrument, most notably the External Migration Working Party, the NDICI-GE sub-group of CODEV-PI Working Party and the NDICI-GE Committee.

Its aim is to facilitate the exchange of information at an early stage between the Commission, the European External Action Service and Member States' services on new actions under consideration or preparation in the context of the NDICI-GE or the Member States' bilateral funds respectively.

This would ensure the best possible coordination, complementarity and synergy in line with the Team Europe approach and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our collective delivery on the objectives set at policy level by the Council and in the approved Multi-annual Indicative Programmes.

With this in mind, we are pleased to inform you that we plan to hold the first meeting of the new Coordination Group on 3 December 2021. The Group will subsequently meet as frequently as deemed necessary; as a minimum twice per year. The second meeting of the Group would take place already early 2022.

Initially, meetings will be organised in virtual format, but, when circumstances allow, we look forward to holding them in person.

On the EU side, meetings, will involve -normally at Head of Unit's level- representatives of the Commission's services in charge of NDICI-GE implementation, namely the Directorate-General "International Partnerships" (DG INTPA), the Directorate-General "Neighbourhood Policies and Enlargement Negotiations" (DG NEAR) and the "Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), together with representatives of the European External Action Service (EEAS). The Directorate General "Migration and Home Affairs" (DG HOME) will be associated. Other services may be invited also on *ad hoc* basis as appropriate.

In advance of each meeting, participants will receive an agenda and relevant background documents as a basis for the discussion. In the first two meetings of the Group, we tentatively plan to propose for discussion the actions that we intend to prepare and present to the NDICI-GE committee in 2021 and 2022. We expect that participating Member States will share similar information on their plans.

To participate to the work of this Group, we ask each Member State to nominate **two contact persons** in charge of attending the meetings, as well as their replacements in case of absence.

Given the Coordination Group's focus on projects related to migration and forced displacement in third countries, it would be important that your contact persons be representatives of all your constituencies involved, including the Home Affairs, the Foreign Affairs and the Development Cooperation, and be also informed and ready to share information on your planned bilateral cooperation actions in third countries on migration and forced displacement.

Kindly communicate by 19 November 2021 the names, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of your contact persons and their replacements to the Group's mailbox:

EC-GE-COORDINATION-GROUP-MIGRATION@ec.europa.eu

Invitations, agendas and background documents will be sent by e-mail directly to your contact persons ahead of the meetings.

We look forward to our collective work in support of partner countries in the area of migration and forced displacement.

Yours faithfully,

<i>[e-signed]</i>	<i>[e-signed]</i>	<i>[e-signed]</i>	<i>[e-signed]</i>
Koen DOENS	Hilde HARDEMAN	Maciej POPOWSKI	Stefano SANNINO

Contacts:

██████████ DG.INTPA.G.6 ██████████
██████████ DG.NEAR.DGA2.01 ██████████
██████████ FPI.2 ██████████
██████████ EEAS.GLOBAL.GI.4 ██████████

Enclosure: Terms of Reference of Coordination Group on Migration under the
NDICI - Global Europe and the Member States bilateral cooperation
instruments

c.c.:

Ms I.Juhansone, Secretary-General of the European Commission
Ms M.Pariat, Director General of DG HOME
Mr J.Watson, Deputy Secretary-General of the European Commission
Mr M.Luchner and Ms B.Gminder, Deputy Directors General DG HOME
Ms M.Jager, Ms M.Ferran and Mr M.Seychell Deputy Directors General DG INTPA
Ms K. Mathernova, Deputy Director General DG NEAR
Ms H. Konig and Mr E.Mora, Deputy Secretary General EEAS
Ms B. Martinez Carbonell Managing Director EEAS.Global and Multilateral Issues
Mr W. Sleath and M. Karnitschnig Directors SG.E and SG.G
Ms S. Kramer, M. J.Butkeviciene and M. F.Fernandez Shaw, Directors INTPA.A, B and D
Mr. J.L. Ville and Ms C.Adamo, Acting Directors INTPA.C and INTPA.G
Mr. L. Meredith and Ms H.Trautman, Director NEAR. C and Acting Director NEAR.B
Mr O. Bailly, Director EEAS.Global Issues
Mr H. Nielsen, Director HOME.A
██████████, Head of Unit INTPA.G.6
██████████ Head of Unit DG.NEAR.DGA2.01
Ms C. Grau Head of Division EEAS.GLOBAL.GI.4
██████████ Head of Unit FPI.2
██████████, Head of Unit HOME.A.3
██████████ Head of Unit SG.E.2
Mr M. Cervone Head of Division EEAS.ECO.FIIC
██████████, Head of Unit INTPA.D.3
██████████ Head of Unit NEAR.A.4
██████████, SG.F.4

Coordination group on migration under the NDICI - Global Europe and the Member States' bilateral cooperation instruments

Background

Recital 50 of the Regulation establishing NDICI-GE establishes that migration-related actions *“should contribute to the effective implementation of EU agreements and dialogues on migration with third countries by encouraging cooperation relying on a flexible incitative approach and supported by a coordination mechanism within this Instrument. This mechanism should enable to address ongoing and emerging migration challenges within this Regulation using all appropriate components through flexible funding while respecting its financial envelopes and relying on their flexible implementation”*.

As a reflection of the approach described in this recital, the related Commission declaration sets out that *“in order to ensure the most efficient and impactful use of these funds, in line with the Union’s and partner countries’ policy priorities, the European Commission will actively implement these priorities using all relevant Union instruments and participate in the coordination with the Member States in a synchronised and efficient manner”* and that the European Commission will *“ensure that the European Parliament and the Council are closely and regularly informed, allowing for exchanges of views”*.

Composition

To enact the approach presented by recital 50 and the related Commission’s declaration, and in view of establishing a place and mechanism allowing for a coordination between the European Commission and EU Member States, it is appropriate to set up a coordination group.

This group will be an informal special group created by the Commission.

This group would be composed of the relevant European Commission’s services and the EEAS, and the relevant EU Member States’ authorities. Each Member State would nominate two representatives.

Objectives

The objective of such a group would be to exchange information and views to ensure coordination and coherence between the use of NDICI – Global Europe funds to support external migration-related actions and Member States’ migration-related actions.

This would help ensure consistency and effectiveness of Union actions in the use of these funds, in line with the strategic discussions taking place in the Working Party on External Aspects of Asylum and Migration (EMWP) and the subgroup on NDICI-Global Europe of the Working Party on development cooperation and international partnerships (CODEV-PI NDICI-GE sub group).

This would:

- meet Member States’ expectations to have migration-related actions under the NDICI – Global Europe supported by a coordination mechanism (recital 50);
- ensure maximum synergies and coherence within NDICI migration-related actions as well as with Member States own related actions, notably through Team Europe Initiatives;
- contribute to the governance of the EU external action on migration, in an operational and balanced manner, in line both with policy priorities and the NDICI-GE.

More specifically, three types of items could be discussed in this coordination group:

- ***Exchange on the implementation orientations:*** The members of the group would exchange upstream on the use of NDICI-GE in the area of migration and forced displacement.
- ***Coordination discussions in view of future projects:*** The Commission services and the EEAS could present ideas for possible new actions on migration and forced displacement and seek Member States' reactions and information on their own ongoing or planned bilateral projects, as well as possible synergies in line with the Team Europe approach.
 - This would allow for testing possible new actions in an indicative manner at an early stage.
 - Member States would be invited to proactively provide information on projects they may have under consideration for possible financing under their bilateral cooperation, in particular under Team Europe Initiatives.
 - Participants would contribute to the discussion by updating the group
 - a) on the technical cooperation projects on migration ongoing with targeted third countries,
 - b) on the specific challenges to be addressed in this technical cooperation and the improvements possibly sought,
 - c) on the planned next steps to accompany related negotiations with operational actions
 - d) on the projects to be considered - at EU and bilateral level - in view of better engaging the relevant third countries, on the basis of the political and strategic discussions taking place in the Council on migration cooperation as well as on incentives and leverages (notably in EMWP and CODEV-PI NDICI-GE subgroup).

Discussions in this coordination group would help understand how the specific projects under consideration under NDICI-GE and Member States' bilateral funds may be synchronised with – and bring their contribution to- the common efforts.
 - The discussions would contribute to inform the Commission's decision as regards the initiatives it would subsequently submit to the NDICI Committee for formal opinion as relevant.
- ***Information on approved projects:*** As the instrument is progressively implemented, the Commission services and the EEAS could use coordination meetings to present, in a synthetic manner, information on multiannual indicative programmes and actions and measures documents specifically related to migration and forced displacement having been approved to date, through the NDICI Committee, in the various countries and regions. The information shared with the Member States on the state of play would also be made available to the Council and in a written form to the European Parliament.
 - This would allow to inform on the overall NDICI – GE contribution (including through any of its geographic or thematic programmes or rapid response actions) in the field of migration and forced displacement.
 - Participants would receive an update on the progress being made towards reaching the related 10 % spending target of the NDICI-GE.

Practical aspects

This Coordination group could meet either in presence or virtually two times a year or, if needed, more frequently. The Commission could cover the participant fees of Member States' representatives up to twice per year.