

Management Plan 2025

Directorate-General for Enlargement
and Eastern Neighbourhood

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PART 1. Introduction and strategic outlook

Mission statement and operating context

The European Union's future is closely tied to the future of its neighbours and its partners. A stable, secure and prosperous region around our Union is of paramount importance.

The mission of the Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST) is to take forward the EU's Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood policies, which cover thirteen partner countries, including the ten candidate countries and potential candidates, as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus. It does so under the political steer of the Commissioner for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood, Marta Kos. DG ENEST works closely with the Commission services in charge of thematic priorities and with the European External Action Service (EEAS). DG ENEST started operating in February 2025 after the Directorate-General for Enlargement Negotiations and Neighbourhood was divided into DG ENEST and Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf.

DG ENEST plays a crucial role in implementing the von der Leyen Commission priority “**A global Europe: Leveraging our power and partnerships**”, and contributes towards other priorities related to ensuring Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness, its defence and security, and protecting democracy and EU values. DG ENEST's strategic outlook for 2025-2029 is articulated around seven specific objectives, which guide the DG's main policy initiatives and planned interventions.

In the **Enlargement** field, DG ENEST assists countries with a perspective to join the EU in their efforts to meet the EU membership criteria, as defined by the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the European Council ⁽¹⁾. Article 49 of TEU provides the legal framework guiding the work on the **enlargement policy**, noting in particular that “*Any European State which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union*”. DG ENEST closely monitors the progress made by candidate countries and potential candidates on their path towards EU membership, and supports accession negotiations as required by the Council ⁽²⁾.

In the **Eastern Neighbourhood**, DG ENEST supports reforms and democratic consolidation, thereby contributing to strengthening stability and security around Europe. DG ENEST helps to promote EU values, policies and interests in the region, and contributes to developing the special relationship of the EU with its neighbouring countries.

The DG is also delivering support for **Ukraine's** recovery and reconstruction and hosts the Brussels-based Secretariat of the Ukraine Donor Platform.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/european-council/>

⁽²⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/>

DG ENEST also manages several financing instruments and technical assistance in support of these policy objectives. The legal acts which guide the DG's financial assistance are provided through articles 209 and 212 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

DG ENEST has approximately 1200 staff, of whom 46% are located in headquarters, in Brussels, and 54% in the EU Delegations/Offices in the partner countries.

Strategic outlook 2025 - 2029

General Objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.1: Economic development and reforms in the partner countries are strengthened

In addition to the implementation of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), DG ENEST is responsible for implementing three tailor-made EU financing instruments specifically designed to boost ENEST partner countries' economic development: the Ukraine Facility, the Western Balkans Reform and Growth Facility, and the Moldova Reform and Growth Facility. Under these facilities, funds are disbursed conditional upon the fulfilment of a schedule of agreed reforms. By combining grants and loans, EU funds are also leveraged to unlock more public and private investment. Result indicator 1.1.1 "Amount of support channelled to Western Balkan partners" is selected as a key performance indicator (KPI) for this specific objective.

The **Western Balkans** Reform and Growth Facility supports the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans adopted in November 2023 to accelerate economic convergence with the EU and in the region itself.

Similarly, the **Moldova** Growth Plan is supported by a dedicated Reform and Growth Facility designed to accelerate socio-economic and fundamental reforms, enhance access to the EU single market and mobilise financial assistance. The facility will also support Moldova in its EU accession process.

In the **Eastern Partnership**, DG ENEST will continue ongoing support to economic development and regional trade, while placing stronger emphasis on enhanced transport, energy and digital connectivity. A new EU-**Armenia** Partnership Agenda, underpinned by the Resilience and Growth Plan, is expected to unlock the full potential of the existing cooperation under the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

Specific Objective 1.2: Ukraine's short-term recovery, and medium-term reconstruction and modernisation are supported

Since the formal launch of accession negotiations with Ukraine in June 2024, DG ENEST has continuously supported Ukraine on its European path, notably by combining work on the pre-accession process with recovery and reconstruction.

The **Ukraine Facility** will be fully mobilised to this end, contributing to Ukraine's macro-financial stability with a combination of non-repayable support and highly concessional loans disbursed against the fulfilment of pre-agreed conditionalities set out in the Ukraine Plan. At the same time, the Ukraine Investment Framework will contribute to unlocking Ukraine's investment potential and private sector engagement. Project-based assistance

will complement this architecture with technical assistance to the Ukrainian administration or direct support to civil society and independent media. Close coordination of economic support to Ukraine will continue to be ensured within the Ukraine Donor Platform, a unique forum bringing together international donors and the Ukrainian authorities to define, prioritise, and sequence strategic needs within the recovery process and with a particular focus on Ukraine's EU accession path.

Result indicator 1.2.1 "EU contribution to Ukraine's macro-financial stability through the Ukraine Facility" has been selected as a KPI for this specific objective.

General Objective 2: A new era for European defence and security

Specific Objective 2.1: Resilience of partner countries is increased and migration is managed

Areas that have emerged as critical in the security field and where DG ENEST has increased its work include: critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, hybrid threats, disaster risk management and energy security. Such support is provided in complementarity with support for the rule of law, including fighting corruption and organised crime, economic development and ensuring a favourable investment climate. DG ENEST will also continue to support civil society, the protection of fundamental rights including media freedom, and safeguarding elections.

DG ENEST is also working with partners to ensure well managed migration, strengthened border controls and cooperation to stem illegal migration.

Result indicator 2.1.1 "Alignment of visa-free lists of the Western Balkan partner countries and Moldova" has been selected as a KPI for this specific objective.

General Objective 5: Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Specific Objective 5.1: Rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy in partner countries are strengthened

DG ENEST's work is guided by the EU values enshrined in the Treaty on European Union as well as the Copenhagen political criteria, which form the basis of the enlargement policy. This has been reinforced through the revised enlargement methodology, under which rule of law, fundamental rights and the functioning of democratic institutions determine the overall pace of negotiations. DG ENEST will pay particular attention to guiding partner countries to adopt and implement reforms aimed at improving the functioning and the independence of the judiciary, tackling corruption, serious and organised crime, strengthening the functioning of democratic institutions and the conduct of free and fair elections. It will also support partner countries in ensuring respect for fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, gender equality and the rights of persons belonging to minorities. In addition, DG ENEST will continue to encourage regional integration, good neighbourly relations, reconciliation, and the resolution of bilateral disputes, particularly through the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue.

Result indicator 5.1.1 “Level of preparation of enlargement partners on Chapter 23 of the *acquis* – Judiciary and fundamental rights” has been selected as a KPI for this specific objective.

General Objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.1: Countries with EU perspective are brought closer to the EU based on a credible, merit-based accession perspective and application of the enlargement methodology

DG ENEST will continue to follow the merit-based approach enshrined in the revised methodology for enlargement adopted in 2020, and implement the ‘fundamentals first’ principle, which puts rule of law and fundamental rights, the functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reforms at the heart of the process.

DG ENEST will support enlargement partners in the implementation of key reforms, with the aim of bringing them closer to European Union membership by the end of the current Commission mandate. The Commission will continue to monitor the progress of the enlargement partners and provide recommendations through its annual Enlargement Package, including a Communication and individual country reports. DG ENEST’s institution-building tools - TAIEX and Twinning - will continue prioritising activities to help candidate countries and potential candidates to align their legislative and regulatory frameworks to the EU *acquis*.

Result indicator 6.1.1 “Level of preparation of enlargement partners on EU approximation and *acquis*” has been selected as a KPI for this specific objective.

Specific Objective 6.2: A sustainable basis for improved relations with Türkiye is ensured

Against the background of broader geopolitical shifts, part of DG ENEST’s mission is to develop a closer and positive relationship with Türkiye as a key regional player and EU partner, notably in ensuring a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean, connectivity with the South Caucasus and cooperation in the Black Sea region. The overarching goal is to increase cooperation in all areas of mutual interest and to engage with Türkiye based on the European values and standards. Current efforts to re-engage with Türkiye focus on enhancing economic, trade and political relations as well as refugee assistance and support to migration management in a progressive, proportionate and reversible approach.

Result indicator 6.2.1 “High level engagement between the EU and Türkiye” has been selected as a KPI for this specific objective.

Specific Objective 6.3: The Eastern Neighbourhood countries are supported, including through regional connectivity and the Black Sea strategy

The **Eastern Partnership (EaP)** remains the overall policy framework for **regional cooperation**, aiming to bring partner countries closer to the EU. Its cooperation structures serve as the core platform for deepening engagement with strategic partners, fostering political agreement, and continuing to provide support for the EU membership perspectives of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia in line with the core principles of European integration.

Result indicator 6.3.1 “Number of key bilateral agreements in place with Eastern Neighbourhood partners” has been selected as a KPI for this specific objective.

Enhancing **regional connectivity** will be key to address the effects of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine which has significantly altered the geopolitical landscape in the EU’s immediate neighbourhood, highlighting the need for alternative trade routes and calling for a new Connectivity Agenda to improve links between Europe and Central Asia. This new reality offers an opportunity to renew the EU engagement towards South Caucasus partners and Türkiye with a view to reinforce mutual reliance, the resilience of value-chains and energy supply, trade integration and growth, through enhanced transport, energy and digital connectivity.

In June 2024, the European Council invited the Commission and the High Representative to prepare a Joint Communication on building an **EU strategic approach to the Black Sea**, which will address the shifting landscape of the region, focusing on security and other core challenges. This Joint Communication is included in the Commission Work Programme 2025. Through the implementation of the strategic approach, DG ENEST will ensure transboundary and regional cooperation notably in the environmental, climate action, demining and maritime sectors.

Cross-cutting efforts – implementation and simplification agenda

In line with the Political Guidelines, the mission statements of all Commissioners, and the ‘Simpler and Faster Europe’ Communication, at least two **Implementation Dialogues** will be organised with key stakeholders to assess progress towards DG ENEST’s political and policy objectives, to identify obstacles to implementation, and to source suggestions for simplification. DG ENEST will build on ongoing dialogues with key partners, and its efforts to improve delivery on the ground in a context of greatly restrained resources. The groups of stakeholders provisionally identified for Implementation Dialogues with Commissioner Kos include private sector representatives, European and International Financial Institutions, EU Member States’ development cooperation agencies, civil society organisations, and strategic partners. DG ENEST will also draft an **Annual Progress Report** on implementation and enforcement addressed to the European Parliament and the Council.

DG ENEST carries out its mission in the context of the Union's external relations and, as such, exercises no competencies related to the EU's internal market. However, DG ENEST will continue to review how the legal **reporting obligations** arising from the Financial Regulation for the instruments under its responsibility are implemented with a view to ensure they remain as targeted and simple as possible to minimise **administrative burden** for economic operators and stakeholders, including within the Union, implementing projects managed by DG ENEST.

DG ENEST intends to build a stronger **evaluation** culture at all levels. To this end, DG ENEST has developed a more strategic approach to evaluations, with the aim of establishing a more targeted scope to the commissioned studies and ensuring the delivery of user-friendly and to-the-point products. Evaluations will notably focus on learning lessons from the implementation of policy priorities, tools and working processes, with staff to be consulted on the most strategic areas for evaluation.

Public support is crucial for the success of the enlargement process, and effective **communication and outreach** can help address concerns and misconceptions about enlargement. To that end, over the next five years, DG ENEST, in close cooperation with relevant Commission services, Commission Representations and EU Delegations, will pursue several avenues of action, including:

- Outreach and engagement **within the EU**: DG ENEST, in cooperation with the Directorate-General for Communication, will seek to inform and engage EU citizens about the benefits of enlargement, promote understanding and awareness of candidate countries, and address concerns about the impact of enlargement on employment, freedom of movement, and economic competition;
- Outreach and engagement **in candidate countries and potential candidates**: DG ENEST will promote the benefits of EU membership and engage with civil society and local authorities to build support for the enlargement process.

These actions will be underpinned by dissemination of targeted content, including social media campaigns and human-interest stories. The narratives will respond to key concerns of citizens and stakeholder groups, as defined through opinion polls, focus groups and citizens' panels, and address manipulated, misleading or misguided information.

In addition, the estimated overall risk at payment has been selected as KPI for the year 2025 with the target of remaining < 2 % of the relevant cost-based expenditure. Finally, in 2025, DG ENEST has introduced a new target of low risk performance-based expenditure at 80%. The performance-based expenditure is implemented under the Western Balkans Facility, Moldova Facility and the Ukraine Facility, through payments released upon fulfilment of pre-agreed steps.

PART 2. Delivering on the Commission's priorities in 2025

This second part lists the main outputs and deliverables that each department plans to deliver (or has delivered) in 2025.

General Objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.1: Economic development and reforms in the partner countries are strengthened

In 2025, DG ENEST will continue implementing all four pillars of the Growth Plan for the **Western Balkans**: 1) integration into the EU's single market; 2) improving regional cooperation through the Western Balkans Common Regional Market; 3) facilitating fundamental reforms necessary for EU accession; and 4) providing financial assistance through the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans to support these initiatives. Specifically, work will continue aimed at integrating the Western Balkans into the EU single market, for example with additional support to make border crossings faster, more efficient, safe and secure through the EU-Western Balkans Green Lanes – as agreed during the EU-Western Balkans Summit of December 2024. As regards regional integration, DG ENEST will continue to deliver technical and financial support towards the implementation of the newly adopted Common Regional Action Plan 2025-2028. As regards the Reform and Growth Facility, the disbursement of the prefinancing has already started. With the support of other Commission services, DG ENEST aims to conduct the assessment of the reform steps (reported by partner countries in mid-March and mid-July) and disburse funds accordingly.

DG ENEST will continue the implementation of the **Moldova** Growth Plan which is underpinned by a Reform Agenda setting out socio-economic and fundamental reforms to be undertaken by Moldova to accelerate growth and convergence with the EU. It is supported by a Reform and Growth Facility adopted in early 2025, which will provide the country with financing worth almost EUR 1.9 billion for the 2025-2027 period. The disbursement of pre-financing is expected by July 2025. In parallel, continued progress in advancing Moldova's accession process will also contribute to economic development and reforms in the country.

DG ENEST will continue implementing the **Armenia** Resilience and Growth Plan announced by President von der Leyen in April 2024. Under the Plan, grant assistance to support a socio-economic reform agenda and closer sectoral cooperation, and investment grants aimed at mobilising public and private investments in trade, energy and transport connectivity, and strengthening the private sector, will be provided.

Across the Eastern Neighbourhood, DG ENEST will continue to mobilise its financial instruments (blending and guarantees) to support investments with a view to supporting

the economic resilience and prosperity of our partners, as well as increased trade and connectivity. In parallel, DG ENEST will continue to stimulate cooperation, exchange of good practices and know-how as well as encourage alignment with EU regulations, standards and policies through its regional programmes.

Specific Objective 1.2: Ukraine's short-term recovery, and medium-term reconstruction and modernization are supported

DG ENEST will lead, in close coordination with other Commission departments, the quarterly assessment of progress made by the Government of Ukraine in meeting the agreed conditionalities set out in the Ukraine Plan. Four payments to the state budget are planned in 2025 in line with this progress, combining non-repayable support and highly concessional loans under the Ukraine Facility. Also in 2025, DG ENEST will continue to deploy the Ukraine Investment Framework as a de-risking mechanism available to investors through international financial institutions and aimed at scaling up public and private sector investment in Ukraine.

Under the Ukraine Facility, DG ENEST will deliver inter alia technical assistance related to EU acquis or structural reforms as well as support capacity building of the authorities at national, regional and local level. Civil society will also benefit from assistance under this pillar.

DG ENEST will continue to represent the Commission in the Steering Committee of the Ukraine Donor Platform. Established in 2023, the Platform focuses on Ukraine's financing needs and future economic recovery and reconstruction. DG ENEST will continue to host the Brussels office of the Platform's secretariat, while also ensuring information-sharing and coordination with EU Member States in a Team Europe approach to supporting Ukraine.

Finally, DG ENEST will coordinate the EU's input to the Fourth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, prepared together with the World Bank and the Government of Ukraine.

General Objective 2: A new era for European defence and security

Specific Objective 2.1: Resilience of partner countries is increased and migration is managed

DG ENEST will further support efforts to strengthen the preparedness and resilience of partner countries, including with regard to addressing cyber threats, hybrid threats and foreign information manipulation and interference. With a view to an accelerated integration of enlargement countries, DG ENEST will also promote integration of partner countries in new policy and initiatives in this area (e.g. Preparedness Union Strategy) as well as further pursue tighter cooperation with EU agencies in the security and migration field. Work to ensure access by ENEST partner countries to tools and instruments to address cyber and hybrid threats will continue, such as the Cyber Reserve, and synergies with activities of other players in this area, such as EEAS and NATO, will be sought, including

through the EU-NATO staff-to-staff talks on security and defence capacity building for partner countries.

DG ENEST will support the visa liberalisation dialogue launched with **Armenia** in 2024, which will require the delivery of reforms on border management, migration and asylum, via the Resilience and Growth Plan.

In **Georgia**, DG ENEST will continue cooperating in areas directly pertaining to EU security interests through its bilateral and regional assistance portfolios on a case-by-case basis.

The EU is supporting **Moldova** through the energy crisis brought about by Russia's weaponisation of energy supplies. In 2025, DG ENEST will provide assistance to allow Moldova to purchase electricity on the European markets to lower consumer prices and purchase gas to cover the basic needs of the population in the Transnistrian region. The first two disbursements of EUR 50 million, each under the two-year Comprehensive Strategy for the Energy Independence and Resilience of Moldova, are planned to be disbursed in the first half of 2025 subject to fulfilment of agreed conditions. As part of the EU's support for Moldova's resilience to foreign interference and disinformation campaigns, DG ENEST will mobilise short-term expertise and long-term programmes to fight disinformation notably aimed at protecting democratic processes, including in view of the parliamentary elections in autumn 2025.

DG ENEST will continue to provide support to the **EU Border Assistance Mission** (EUBAM) to **Moldova and Ukraine** to strengthen internal security at the administrative line and for border management, including through the provision of training in the areas of customs control, document security and through the provision of technical equipment.

In the **Western Balkans**, DG ENEST will address security threats such as organised crime and terrorism, promoting regional and cross-border cooperation, including criminal investigations, transfer of judicial cases, and exchanges of best practices. Additionally, DG ENEST will enhance gradual integration with the work of the EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies to combat cross-border crime and terrorism. On cybersecurity, DG ENEST will foster the Western Balkans' cyber resilience, build cybersecurity capabilities, and strengthen capacities to counter cybercrime, while supporting alignment with EU cybersecurity legislation. Regarding migration, DG ENEST will assist beneficiaries in developing systems and institutions for the identification and registration of migrants upon arrival at the borders, as well as referral, protection, and returns. Furthermore, it will strengthen the technical capacities of partners to conduct border checks and surveillance through specialised training, provision of equipment, and building of regional networks.

DG ENEST will continue to cooperate with **Türkiye** on the basis of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement on migration, decreasing irregular migration flows. DG ENEST helps to provide support to millions of refugees in Türkiye for basic needs, health care, education, protection, as well as to facilitate their socio-economic integration. EUR 1.5 billion of financial assistance is programmed for the period of 2025-27. DG ENEST will also ensure support to

efforts to enhance Türkiye's border management capacity at air, land and sea border crossing points.

General Objective 5: Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Specific Objective 5.1: Rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy in partner countries are strengthened

DG ENEST will continue to work in 2025 with partner countries in the Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood regions to strengthen the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy.

In the context of the enlargement policy, the continued provision of **targeted policy guidance, financial and technical support and monitoring**, notably on the rule of law, fundamental rights, functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reform, will enable progress to be made towards the strategic objective of entrenching reforms and enabling partners to gradually meet the benchmarks set in the context of accession negotiations. This will also allow enlargement partners to progress on other chapters of the EU *acquis*.

Country chapters for Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia within the **Rule of Law Report** will provide a clear assessment of the state of play of the rule of law, comparable to that conducted for EU Member States. This will complement the annual Enlargement Package reports, which remain the primary reference point for monitoring progress and identifying gaps and reform recommendations for the coming year.

DG ENEST will continue to monitor the enlargement partners' **track record** of investigations, prosecutions and convictions in corruption, as well as serious and organised crime cases. These are key elements for assessing the capacities of the respective criminal justice systems, including in the context of accession negotiations. To this end, DG ENEST will enhance data collection through the e-platform for the enlargement countries' track record against criminality, in close cooperation with partners, and mobilise other tools such as peer reviews.

DG ENEST will also continue to support all its partners in both the Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood regions through **financial support** to fundamental reforms, cooperation with strategic partners such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, or support to civil society (notably through the Civil Society Facilities and the NDICI thematic programmes on human rights and democracy, and on civil society organisations). Working with framework partners and financial support to third parties will be crucial for the delivery of funding to independent media and civil society organisations in constrained contexts, notably the freeze of U.S. assistance introduced by the Trump Administration in early 2025.

DG ENEST will also **contribute to Commission initiatives** in this regard, including on democracy, rule of law, civil society, media freedom, and on the external dimension of the

equality agenda. DG ENEST will notably continue to be guided by the Gender Action Plan III (GAP III) for the design and implementation of gender responsive actions.

DG ENEST will also continue to support partner countries to tackle **corruption and organised crime**. DG ENEST will use the EU's enlargement policy to support EU candidate countries' and potential candidates' capacities to respond to threats, to increase operational cooperation and information exchange, and to ensure alignment with EU principles, legislation, and tools. With a view to an accelerated integration of enlargement countries, DG ENEST will also promote integration of partner countries in new security policy and initiatives (e.g. the European Internal Security Strategy, new EU Agenda on preventing and countering terrorism, EU Action Plan against drug trafficking) as well as the EU's security architecture. The coordination of the external dimension of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) will continue, together with other Commission services in order to support active and qualitative engagement by our partner countries in EMPACT. For 2025, this involves taking an active role in the renewal of the EMPACT cycle, where enlargement countries will collaborate closely with EU Member States to address shared security challenges.

General Objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.1: Countries with EU perspective are brought closer to the EU based on a credible, merit-based accession perspective and application of the enlargement methodology

Over the course of 2025, DG ENEST will work on reaching several milestones, in line with Council Conclusions, bringing enlargement partners closer to the EU. With **Montenegro**, DG ENEST's objective is to support the provisional closure of a number of chapters. With **Albania**, DG ENEST's objective is to support the opening of all remaining clusters by the end of 2025. With **Serbia**, DG ENEST's objective is to support the opening of cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth over the course of 2025. With **Moldova** and **Ukraine**, DG ENEST intends to have completed the analytical examination of the EU *acquis* ("screening") with Ukraine and Moldova by the end of 2025. DG ENEST's objective is to support the opening of cluster 1: Fundamentals as soon as possible and subsequently all remaining clusters by the end of 2025. With **North Macedonia**, DG ENEST's objective is to support the opening of cluster 1: Fundamentals once the conditions set by the Council have been met. With **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, DG ENEST's objective is to continue supporting the country in adopting the reforms necessary for the organisation of the first intergovernmental conference opening accession negotiations. DG ENEST will also continue to encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to submit its Reform Agenda under the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans. With **Kosovo** (*), DG ENEST's objective is to continue supporting the implementation of its Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The Commission and

(*) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

the EEAS are reflecting jointly on the best approach to take forward the Council conclusions on lifting the measures vis-à-vis Kosovo and will revert to the Council.

Regarding **Georgia**, the European Council's June 2024 conclusions note that the course of action undertaken by the Georgian authorities leads to a de facto halt of the accession process. DG ENEST and the EU have halted assistance directly benefitting the Georgian authorities but are ready to engage should Georgia reverse course and resume its European path. The support provided by DG ENEST in 2025 will be directed towards civil society, independent media and other non-state actors.

Accession negotiations with **Türkiye** have remained at a standstill since 2018 in line with the European Council conclusions, re-confirmed in December 2024. No chapters are considered for opening or closing. DG ENEST monitors developments in Türkiye and the country's alignment with the fundamentals of the accession process and the *acquis*, and the assessment is presented in the annual Enlargement package. Pre-accession assistance focuses on support to civil society, people-to-people contacts, and key EU priorities.

Enlargement partners will also be brought closer to the EU through measures of **gradual integration** foreseen in the Growth Plans for the Western Balkans and Moldova, of which integration into the EU's Single Market is an important pillar, as well as in the Ukraine Plan. Such gradual integration measures include integrating partners into the Single Euro Payments Area, completing agreements to facilitate single market integration for industrial goods, and developing the Green Lanes so that goods can pass more easily through European Union and Western Balkans border crossing points. In so doing, socio-economic convergence is boosted, alignment with the *acquis* accelerated and business and citizens enjoy some of the benefits of integration with the EU already in advance of accession.

DG ENEST's **institution-building tools** - TAIEX and Twinning - will continue in 2025 prioritising activities to help accelerate accession of candidate countries including in the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine. The two instruments will focus on enlargement priority areas, covering all EU *acquis* chapters and Reform Agendas.

Specific Objective 6.2: A sustainable basis for improved relations with Türkiye is ensured

DG ENEST will work towards ensuring a sustainable basis for improved relations with Türkiye by continued re-engagement with the country in all areas of joint interest, in line with Council guidance. To achieve this, DG ENEST plans to support high-level engagement, in particular the high-level dialogues on economy, on climate, on migration as well as research and innovation. DG ENEST will work with Turkish authorities and other Turkish stakeholders to promote and implement the connectivity agenda with the South Caucasus. DG ENEST will enhance cooperation in key thematic areas, contribute to the implementation of the Customs Union and to monitor the implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement on migration. DG ENEST will continue following closely the developments in the area of the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, and will raise concerns with the Turkish authorities at all appropriate occasions. In terms of financial assistance, DG ENEST will also

continue to provide pre-accession support in EU priority areas in a multi-annual approach for 2025-27. It will support refugees and host communities in Türkiye by programming EUR 1.5 billion of financial assistance for 2025-27. An important strand of DG ENEST work will be to boost investments by the roll-out of the Turkey Investment Platform (TIP).

Specific Objective 6.3: The Eastern Neighbourhood countries are supported, including through regional connectivity and the Black Sea strategy

To enhance regional connectivity, DG ENEST will support projects of shared interest in the areas of transport, energy, digital, border crossing points, trade, digitalisation, and customs harmonisation. It will align connectivity investments with the Global Gateway strategy, advocating for sustainable and secure connectivity. DG ENEST will ensure that the Connectivity Agenda is implemented in synergy with other core Commission initiatives such as the Solidarity Lanes and the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor with Central Asia. In addition, the partner countries will be supported in aligning their regulations in this area with the relevant EU regulations and standards.

In June 2024, the European Council invited the Commission and the High Representative to prepare a Joint Communication on building an **EU strategic approach to the Black Sea**. DG ENEST will develop the political and forward-looking Joint Communication which will address the evolving situation in the region. It will focus on security, as well as other key region-wide challenges and opportunities, including maritime issues, environmental and climate action, and demining, among others.

DG ENEST will continue to support the Global Gateway initiative, as well as governance reforms on a wide range of issues related to democracy, rule of law, anti-corruption, human rights, gender equality, civil society, youth engagement and independent media which are crucial for increasing the resilience of partners and for bringing them closer to the EU. These reforms will be particularly important for Ukraine and Moldova on their path towards EU membership.

DG ENEST will continue supporting **Armenia** on its ambitious reform agenda and the implementation of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA). DG ENEST will continue the implementation of the Armenia Resilience and Growth Plan to unlock the full potential of the existing cooperation under CEPA. DG ENEST will also provide assistance for the implementation of the support programmes adopted by the government to enable Karabakh Armenian refugees to resettle in Armenia, in line with the government's Action Plan. This assistance will strengthen the government's ability to deliver financial help to refugees. DG ENEST will continue to support the visa liberalisation dialogue which was launched in September 2024.

DG ENEST's engagement with **Azerbaijan** is focused on pursuing a positive cooperation agenda in areas of mutual interest, including renewable energy, transport connectivity, and mine action, and supporting Azerbaijan's further transition to a resilient, sustainable, inclusive, and climate-neutral economy. Cooperation will continue in the field of energy, in

the context of the Memorandum of Understanding of July 2022. DG ENEST will continue to support civil society.

While there is no engagement with the **Belarusian** authorities, DG ENEST will continue to provide support to the people of Belarus inside and outside of the country, contributing to the long-term objective of democratisation. DG ENEST will continue to support civil society, human rights, mobility, independent media and education.

PART 3. A modern and sustainable public administration: outputs in 2025

In 2025, DG ENEST will continue to be at the forefront of the EU's external policy priorities as laid out in PART 1 and PART 2. To support the delivery of outputs in line with its mandate, in a rapidly evolving environment, DG ENEST will focus on the allocation of the necessary human and financial resources in a flexible and efficient manner, and continue with the process of digital transformation and modernisation of its administration.

Through its actions in 2025, DG ENEST will contribute to the implementation of the relevant corporate policies and strategies, notably the European Commission's Human Resources Strategy, the Internal Control Framework, the Anti-Fraud Strategy, and the Digital Strategy and reflect them in its own local strategies where relevant. In line with the target of the Commission to become climate neutral as an employer by 2030, DG ENEST will also continue to deliver a set of actions aiming at reducing its environmental impact.

The internal control framework supports sound management and decision-making. In particular, it ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are addressed and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls.

The Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of this internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and will be subject to an annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

A. Human resource management

DG ENEST's staff work in a highly political and demanding work environment. The HR actions for 2025 aim at supporting the DG to deliver on the increasingly ambitious agenda. DG ENEST staff in HQ and Delegations needs to be resilient, versatile, and embrace new ways of cooperation with partner countries. DG ENEST is a DG with 73% of non-permanent staff (mainly Contract and Local Agents) as well as 54% of staff in Delegations, creating a particular need to offer HR solutions tailored to this particular workforce. Staff engagement levels should increase to reach the Commission's average (73% in 2023), and the tailored actions below should contribute to this effort. In this context, DG ENEST will continue to finalise the implementation of the four strands of the former DG NEAR 2023-2025 HR Strategy "Working as one" – leadership, coordination and collaboration; a reinforced focus on working conditions in Delegations; enhanced and pro-active talent management; and an inclusive workplace and focus on well-being. 94% of actions have been started and / or completed. 2025 should see a revision and adaptation of this HR Strategy after the reorganisation of DG ENEST, to cater for the above-mentioned work context. An inclusive process to review the strategy will be launched in this sense.

A key action for 2025 will be to roll-out the Future Skills Lab, an innovative and tailor-made training package for DG ENEST staff in HQ and Delegations to re- and upskill in line with the new Commission's priorities. This follows the work done under DG NEAR skill lab, and it contains already several learning offers in the field of enlargement process and negotiations, the programming and investments toolbox as well as thematic expertise in key themes such economics, trade and energy. Security should be added to this list given the focus of our work in this area. DG ENEST will also develop more in-depth "deep dive" sessions to allow colleagues to master these themes in view of potential new career opportunities.

DG ENEST will also focus on talent management, implementing a comprehensive Contract Agent Strategy with career development sessions, proactive management of the end of career and potential upgrades of colleagues in the interest of the service, and rolling out a tailor-made talent management programme.

Finally, ENEST will contribute to the Commission's efforts in the field of gender balance in management, including to the target set by HR in appointing one additional female manager before the end of 2025.

B. Digital transformation and data management

In 2025, DG ENEST will continue to contribute to the implementation of the European Commission's Digital Strategy. In alignment with the main objectives of this strategy, DG ENEST's action in 2025 will foster a digital culture, empower business-driven digital transformation, help to move towards a seamless digital landscape and sustain a green, secure and resilient infrastructure. DG ENEST will also continue to actively promote information and knowledge management activities and data protection.

In support of the Commission's objective towards business-driven digital transformation and moving towards a seamless digital landscape, DG ENEST will continue focusing on the progressive roll-out and improvement of the OPSYS ecosystem, the set of external relations family's operational systems, with the purpose of facilitating and modernising the delivery of financial assistance of DG ENEST in partner countries. A particular focus of OPSYS developments in 2025 will be the optimisation of its interoperability with SUMMA.

Regarding new **local systems**, DG ENEST plans to develop a new low code/no code system for the planning of accession negotiations. The tool will present an overview of opening/closing of clusters and chapters with related benchmarks. DG ENEST plans to phase-out the local information system MIS (Management Information System), and equivalent functionalities will be available in OPSYS/MAP. DG ENEST also plans to use AI to map gaps between legislation in candidate countries and the EU Acquis, developing a tool in the context of the 'EU4Digital facility' project, in collaboration with DG CONNECT and DGT. Following a successful pilot in Moldova, the aim is to move the tool to the DIGIT Cloud infrastructure and make it an approved EC Information System. DG ENEST will continue enhancing existing local systems such as IESAq (Information Exchange System on the EU Acquis) and IPA-APP (Pre-accession application), in light of their possible use in new candidate countries. In particular, the focus will be placed on the cloudification of these information systems, conducted in collaboration with DIGIT. At the same time DG ENEST will continue developing the E-platform on track record on organised crime and corruption and prepare its transfer from JRC to DIGIT infrastructure.

In recognition of the increasing importance of fostering a digital culture for delivering on the DG's mission, DG ENEST's 2025 learning and development plan recognises digital skills, data analytics, digital-ready policymaking, cybersecurity as important areas to be developed. Hence, DG ENEST will promote relevant training courses based on the training opportunities provided by DG HR and continuously monitor their uptake. DG ENEST will also promote the use of modern collaboration tools, such as Teams and SharePoint online, within HQ and in delegations. It will ensure active participation to communities of practice such as DSF (Digital Stakeholder Forum), Digital Workplace Working Group, Cybersecurity and IT Portfolio Managers communities.

Regarding data management, DG ENEST, whose current data maturity level can be identified as "developing", will firstly promote data-related trainings to upskill employees and foster a culture of data stewardship. Secondly, will maintain an exhaustive, up-to-date inventory of its data assets encoded in the EC data catalogue. This will involve clearly identifying and recording data owners and stewards for each asset and making sure the assets are easily discoverable, accessible, and reusable.

Under the guidance of its Local Information Security Officer (LISO), DG ENEST is committed to aligning with the strategic objectives outlined in the EC Cybersecurity Strategy for 2025-2026, fostering a strong cybersecurity culture, continuously monitoring and enhancing the security of its information systems and maintaining a comprehensive risk and compliance management framework.

With regard to the implementation of **data protection rules**, and in accordance with the Commission's Data Protection Action Plan as reviewed in 2020, DG ENEST will continue to ensure and document compliance with data protection legal framework, including by reviewing the specific records of processing operations (at least every two years) and ensure that all staff is aware of the data protection requirements. The main engagements that will be carried on are the reinforcement of the accountability and the ownership of the management for the processing operations of personal data and embedding the respect of the data protection rules in the daily activities of all staff.

The Data Protection Coordinator of DG ENEST will continue to assist the management and staff to safeguard that data protection rules are respected by: (1) providing information and advice on the rules, procedures and practical guidance delivered by the central services and specific guidance on the processing of personal data related to ENEST's specific activities through a dedicated ENEST sharepoint; (2) informing staff about centrally organised training activities and local awareness campaigns on data protection; (3) participating in unit meetings and organising bilateral discussions with operational controllers on their specific processing of personal data activities; (4) providing data protection introductory trainings for staff and newcomers as part of induction trainings.

Reporting on the progress on the implementation of these activities will be included in DG ENEST annual activity reports.

C. Sound financial management

The internal control framework supports sound management and decision-making. In particular, it ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are addressed and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls. The Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood has established an internal control system tailored to its characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of this internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and will be subject to an annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

DG ENEST strives to achieve the highest standards of financial management to ensure the best use of the financial resources allocated to it. The DG has adopted an internal control strategy which takes into account the risks to the achievement of objectives and the related mitigating measures. The strategy is regularly reassessed and adjusted to consider the evolution of the identified risks (e.g. related to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as conflicts and tensions in other countries under the responsibility of DG ENEST). In that respect, DG ENEST is designing ad hoc control strategies for the Ukraine and Western Balkan Facilities, addressing the specific risks linked to them. In addition, an analysis of the controls in place for the financial instruments and budgetary guarantees is being carried out, possibly leading to the establishment of an additional Relevant Control System for DG ENEST.

To measure its progress in terms of sound financial management, and particularly in terms of legality and regularity, DG ENEST monitors the global residual error rate (RER) ⁽³⁾, which is the base for the estimation of the risks at payment and at closure. DG ENEST's objective is to have a residual error rate below 2% for all DG ENEST relevant control systems, and consequently to keep the overall estimated risks at payment and at closure below 2%.

In 2025, DG ENEST has introduced a new target of low risk performance-based expenditure at 80%. The performance-based expenditure is implemented under the Western Balkans Facility, Moldova Facility and the Ukraine Facility, through payments released upon fulfilment of pre-agreed steps. This target is based on an estimation that will be adjusted following the implementation of DG ENEST's control strategy for the Facilities, which involve ex post audits on risky steps ⁽⁴⁾.

Based on overall low level of errors in previous years, DG ENEST maintains an adequate balance between the benefits (e.g. reducing/ avoiding the financial and reputational impact of errors) and the cost of controls. DG ENEST aims to keep the cost of controls under 5% of the total value of funds managed.

In 2025, DG ENEST will keep mitigating the risks related to the ongoing and emerging tensions in its geographical area of responsibility, including through the implementation of its control strategy. DG ENEST will adopt measures to ensure an increased understanding of the local contexts and of their evolutions. For example, it will closely monitor the evolution of ongoing projects and ensure a timely reaction to the changes in unstable environments, including through reorientation or suspension of the implementation of EU funds. These measures will allow DG ENEST to mitigate the risks and to ensure sound implementation to the extent possible taking into account operational, security and access constraints.

As regards the other indicators on the effectiveness and efficiency of controls, DG ENEST aims to safeguard and reinforce the results achieved in previous years, to keep provide assurance on the functioning of its internal control system (audit and control system, budget execution and timely payments).

⁽³⁾ The residual error rate study is an annual study carried out by external auditors, who implement ex post controls on a sample of contracts closed in a done year. The aim is to identify "residual" errors, i.e. errors not detected by previous controls, thus collecting information on the functioning of the existing controls. The study provides a global residual error rate, which is an objective indicator of the effectiveness of the internal control strategy: the annual target is an error rate below 2%.

⁽⁴⁾ Given that the implementation of performance-based facilities in DG ENEST – Ukraine, Western Balkans and Moldova – has just started and the control strategies are being fine-tuned, DG ENEST will review this target in line with developments when more data becomes available.

D. Fraud risk management

In 2025, DG ENEST will continue contributing to the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy and the revised Action plan, supporting OLAF in its efforts to raise awareness in candidate countries. Additionally, it will implement its own anti-fraud strategy (AFS), with the aim of ensuring high vigilance against the risks of fraud, corruption and other intentional irregularities, while tailoring controls to developments in its anti-fraud landscape.

In this respect, as stated in Annex 3, Section D, DG ENEST aims to further enhance its comprehensive anti-fraud capacity and closely monitor the developments of new fraud risks by adopting and implementing a new anti-fraud strategy in 2025. In addition, DG ENEST will closely follow up the European Anti-Fraud Office's (OLAF) and European Public Prosecutor's (EPPO) investigations and assess and implement their recommendations within the deadlines. DG ENEST will continue providing regular reports to the Commissioner and to senior management on ongoing cases. It will also ensure continued cooperation with OLAF, the EPPO, services in the external action family and other EC services.

The main outputs and deliverables include achieving 100% implementation of due actions from 2025 to 2027, with data sourced from the new anti-fraud strategy after the split of the former DG NEAR. DG NEAR's 2024 baseline, represented by the percentage of current planned actions implemented, was achieved at 100%.

E. Sound environmental management

DG ENEST continues its pledge to contribute to the efforts of greening the Commission. The DG will move to a new, state-of-the-art building by the end of 2025. It will continue in 2025 to finalise the planning and preparations with the OIB to ensure that this building responds to all the service needs while considerably reducing the carbon footprint of the DG. DG ENEST will also continue its change management process to prepare colleagues to work in this dynamic collaborative space, including moving as far as possible towards a paperless work environment. DG ENEST will continue to launch several campaigns in this sense to support colleagues to move to digital signatures and paperless wherever possible.

In addition, the DG has reviewed its mission guide and will continue to monitor the number of missions in 2025 to ensure that they are organised in a coordinated manner across the DG and with other services to avoid duplication, and that the overall number of participants is duly justified. DG ENEST is well on track to meet the corporate target of a 50% emissions reduction between 2019 and 2030. This requires an annual reduction of 3.7% starting in 2025, which will be achieved by applying the principles set out in the new Guide to Missions, adopted on 13 May 2025 and already communicated internally in DG ENEST. The Guide introduces updates and simplifications to mission procedures, while reinforcing greening and ethical standards.

ANNEX 1: Specific objectives and result indicators 2025-2029

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.1: Economic development and reforms in the partner countries are strengthened

Related to spending programme(s): IPA, Western Balkans Facility, Moldova Facility, NDICI-GE

Result indicator 1.1.1 Amount of support channelled to Western Balkans partners

Explanation: This indicator captures the volume of grants and loans disbursed to the Western Balkans against conditions set in the Reform Agendas (cumulative)

Source of data: European Commission

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
EUR 0.74 billion	EUR 3.01 billion	EUR 4.52 billion

Result indicator 1.1.2 Number of reforms implemented in the Western Balkans

Explanation: This indicator captures the number of “steps” set out in the Reform Agendas which trigger payments under the Reform and Growth Facility when they are assessed as satisfactorily fulfilled (cumulative)

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
119	444	618

Result indicator 1.1.3 Amount of support channelled to Moldova

Explanation: This indicator captures the volume of grants and loans disbursed to Moldova against the conditions set in the Reform Agenda (cumulative)

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
EUR 3.87 million	EUR 1.12 billion	EUR 1.63 billion

Result indicator 1.1.4 Number of reforms implemented in Moldova

Explanation: This indicator captures the number of “steps” set out in the Reform Agenda which trigger payments under the Reform and Growth Facility when they are assessed as satisfactorily fulfilled (cumulative)

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
1	106	153

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.2: Ukraine’s short-term recovery, and medium-term reconstruction and modernisation are supported

Related to spending programme(s): Ukraine Facility

Result indicator 1.2.1 EU contribution to Ukraine’s macro-financial stability through the Ukraine Facility

Explanation: This indicator captures the volume of grants and loans disbursed to Ukraine against conditions set in the Ukraine Plan, together with the associated borrowing costs borne by the EU (cumulative)

Source of data: European Commission

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
EUR 16.1 billion	EUR 37 billion	EUR 38.3 billion

Result indicator 1.2.2 Key reforms and investments set out in the Ukraine Plan and backed by EU support

Explanation: This indicator captures the number of “steps” set out in the Ukraine Plan which trigger payments under pillar I of the Ukraine Facility when they are assessed as satisfactorily fulfilled

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
23	137	151

Result indicator 1.2.3 Volume of investments mobilised by the Ukraine Investment Framework (UIF)

Explanation: This indicator corresponds to the total amount of investments enabled by the EU contribution to partner Financing Institutions (“eligible financing institutions – EFIs”) within the Ukraine Investment Framework (UIF) (in million EUR)

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
EUR 1.26 billion	EUR 10 billion	EUR 40 billion

General objective 2: A new era for European defence and security

Specific Objective 2.1: Resilience of partner countries is increased and migration is managed

Related to spending programme(s): IPA III and NDICI-GE

Result indicator 2.1.1. Alignment of visa-free lists of the Western Balkan partner countries and Moldova

Explanation: The Western Balkan countries and Moldova must align their visa-free list with that of the EU acquis and Schengen Agreement as agreed in their Reform Agendas.

Source of data: European Commission

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
0	2	5

General objective 5: Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Specific Objective 5.1: Rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy in partner countries are strengthened

Related to spending programme(s): *Ukraine, Western Balkan, and Moldova Facilities, IPA III*

Result indicator 5.1.1. Level of preparation of enlargement partners on Chapter 23 of the *acquis* – Judiciary and fundamental rights

Explanation: This indicator shows the level of preparation of enlargement partners in terms of their alignment with the EU *acquis* on judiciary and fundamental rights (Chapter 23) and implementation of EU compatible reforms in this area. ⁽⁵⁾

Source of data: Annual Enlargement reports, European Commission

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
Albania – Moderately prepared Bosnia and Herzegovina – Some level of preparation Georgia - Some level of preparation Kosovo - Early stage to some level of preparation Moldova - Some level of preparation Montenegro - Moderately prepared North Macedonia – Some level of preparation to moderately prepared Serbia - Some level of preparation Türkiye – Early stage Ukraine - Some level of preparation	Increased level of preparation	Increased level of preparation

⁽⁵⁾ Overall state of play, meaning how prepared the enlargement partner is to assume the obligations of EU membership, is classified in five levels. The levels are as follows: Early stage, some level of preparation, moderately prepared, good level of preparation and well advanced.

Result indicator 5.1.2. Level of preparation of enlargement partners on Chapter 24 of the *acquis* – Justice, freedom and security

Explanation: This indicator shows the level of preparation of enlargement partners in terms of their alignment with the EU *acquis* on justice, freedom and security (Chapter 24) and implementation of EU compatible reforms in this area. ⁽⁶⁾

Source of data: Annual Enlargement country reports, European Commission

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
Albania - Moderately prepared Bosnia and Herzegovina - Some level of preparation Georgia - Some level of preparation Kosovo - Some level of preparation Moldova - Some level of preparation Montenegro – Moderately prepared to good level of preparation North Macedonia - Moderately prepared Serbia - Some level of preparation to moderately prepared Türkiye - Moderately prepared Ukraine - Some level of preparation	Increased level of preparation	Increased level of preparation

⁽⁶⁾ Overall state of play, meaning how prepared the enlargement partner is to assume the obligations of EU membership, is classified in five levels. The levels are as follows: Early stage, some level of preparation, moderately prepared, good level of preparation and well advanced.

General objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.1: Countries with EU perspective are brought closer to the EU based on a credible, merit-based accession perspective and application of the enlargement methodology

Related to spending programme(s): Ukraine, Western Balkan, and Moldova Facilities, IPA

III

Result indicator 6.1.1. Level of preparation of enlargement partners on EU approximation and *acquis*.

Explanation: This indicator shows where the enlargement partners stand in terms of their alignment with the EU *acquis* across all chapters and EU compatible reforms. ⁽⁷⁾

Source of data: Annual Enlargement country reports, European Commission

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
2.65	Increase	Increase

Result indicator 6.1.2. Level of preparation of enlargement partners in public administration reform.

Explanation: This indicator shows the level of preparation of enlargement partners in terms of reforms of the public administration to ensure its efficiency and its ability to implement and enforce the EU *acquis*. ⁽⁸⁾

Source of data: Annual Enlargement country reports, European Commission

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
Albania – Moderately prepared Bosnia and Herzegovina – Early stage to some level of preparation Georgia – Moderately prepared Kosovo - Some level of preparation Moldova - Some level of preparation Montenegro – Moderately prepared North Macedonia – Moderately prepared Serbia - Moderately prepared Türkiye - Some level of preparation to moderately prepared Ukraine - Some level of preparation	Increased level of preparation	Increased level of preparation

⁽⁷⁾ The value is given as an average of all enlargement partners and is measured on a scale from 1 to 5, namely early stage of preparation, some level of preparation, moderately prepared, good level of preparation, and well advanced, with the possibility to have in-between grades.

⁽⁸⁾ Overall state of play, meaning how prepared the enlargement partner is to assume the obligations of EU membership, is classified in five levels. The levels are as follows: Early stage, some level of preparation, moderately prepared, good level of preparation and well advanced.

General objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.2: A sustainable basis for improved relations with Türkiye is ensured

Related to spending programme(s): IPA III

Result indicator 6.2.1. High level engagement between the EU and Türkiye

Explanation: Number of high-level dialogues held annually between the EU and Türkiye

Source of data: European Commission

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
3	4	5

Result indicator 6.2.2. Volume of bilateral trade between the EU and Türkiye

Explanation: Volume of annual bilateral trade between the EU and Türkiye (exports and imports)

Source of data: Eurostat

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
EUR 206 billion	Increase	Increase

Result indicator 6.2.3. Illegal border crossings between Türkiye and the EU

Explanation: The number of illegal border-crossings detected by EU member states at the EU side of the EU-Turkey border

Source of data: Frontex

https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Risk_Analysis/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2020.pdf

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
69 436	Decrease	Decrease

General objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.3: The Eastern Neighbourhood countries are supported, including through regional connectivity and the Black Sea strategy

Related to spending programme(s): NDICI-GE

Result indicator 6.3.1 Number of key bilateral agreements ⁽⁹⁾ in place with Eastern Neighbourhood partners

Explanation: The indicator monitors the number of key bilateral agreements in place with partner countries. Since the indicator measures the evolution during 2025-2029 period, the base is set at 4.

Source of data: Country Reports

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
4	5	5

Result indicator 6.3.2. Cumulative number of Eastern Partnership Senior Officials Meetings organised, supporting regional cooperation initiatives, including the preparation of high-level meetings, such as Ministerial meetings or Summits

Explanation: The indicator monitors the number of Senior Officials Meetings that bring together the EUMS and partner countries, including in preparation to high level events such as Ministerial meetings and Summits.

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
2	6	10

⁽⁹⁾ Partnership priorities, Association Agendas, or equivalent documents.

ANNEX 2: Performance tables – delivering on Commission priorities in 2025

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness		
Specific Objective 1.1: Economic development and reforms in the partner countries are strengthened		
<i>Related to spending programme(s): Ukraine, Western Balkan, and Moldova Facilities; IPA; NDICI-GE</i>		
Main outputs in 2025:		
Implementation dialogues and reality checks		
Output	Indicator	Target
First Implementation Dialogue (with private sector representatives)	Implementation Dialogue has taken place	Q2
Other major outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Leverage investment for the economic development of the region in line with EU standards	Organisation of a Regional Investment Conference in the Western Balkan region	Q3
Financing under the Western Balkans Growth Plan (through pillar I of the Western Balkans Facility)	Number of regular instalments disbursed in 2025, as per schedule in the relevant Council implementing decision on the Western Balkans Plan	10 by Q4
Monitoring the implementation of the Western Balkans Growth Plan	Scoreboard for the Western Balkans Plan publicly available online in 2025 and updated twice per year	2 updates by Q4
Financing under the Moldova Growth Plan (through pillar I of the Moldova Facility)	Number of regular instalments disbursed in 2025, as per schedule in the relevant Council implementing decision on the Moldova Growth Plan	1 by Q4
Monitoring the implementation of the Moldova Growth Plan	Scoreboard for the Moldova Growth Plan publicly available online in 2025 and updated twice per year	1 update by Q4

Output	Indicator	Target
Progress achieved in enhancing the economic resilience of the EU's Eastern Partners	Number of SMEs supported (through access to finance, business development services or other private sector development actions)	70 000 SMEs are supported through the EU4business initiative.
Progress achieved in supporting the economic resilience of the EU's Eastern Partners	Number of new jobs created through EU support to the private sector	70 000 new jobs are created through the EU4Business initiative.

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.2: Ukraine's short-term recovery, and medium-term reconstruction and modernization are supported

Related to spending programme(s): Ukraine Facility

Main outputs in 2025:

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Financing under the Ukraine Plan (through pillar I of the Ukraine Facility)	Number of regular instalments disbursed in 2025, as per schedule in the relevant Council implementing decision on the Ukraine Plan	4 instalments by Q4
Monitoring the implementation of the Ukraine Plan	Scoreboard for the Ukraine Plan publicly available online in 2025 and updated quarterly	4 updates by Q4
Unlocking Ukraine's investment potential (through the Ukraine Investment Framework (UIF) – pillar II of the Ukraine Facility)	Financial volume of actions (guarantees and blended finance) approved by the Steering Board in 2025	At least EUR 880 million by Q4
Diversifying the presence of Financing Institutions in Ukraine (through the Ukraine Investment Framework (UIF) – pillar II of the Ukraine Facility)	Number of Financing Institutions eligible for participation ("eligible financing institutions – EFIs") which submitted applications to the Steering Board in 2025	At least 6 by Q4

Output	Indicator	Target
Enabling the delivery of project-based bilateral assistance to Ukraine (through the Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF) under pillar III of the Ukraine Facility)	Work Programme 2025 adopted	By Q4
Additional oversight in the fight against mismanagement of Union funding under the Ukraine Facility	Number of reports submitted in 2025 by the Audit Board of the Ukraine Facility	3 by Q4

General objective 2: A new era for European defence and security

Specific Objective 2.1: Resilience of partner countries is increased and migration is managed

Related to spending programme(s): IPA III and NDICI-GE

Main outputs in 2025:

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Alignment of Western Balkan partner countries with Network and Information Security (NIS)2 cybersecurity requirements in line with the deadlines agreed in the Reform Agendas	4 countries aligned with NIS2 requirements	By Q4
Adoption of Joint Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism	Adoption by all Western Balkan partner countries	By Q4
Adoption of the visa liberalisation action plan for Armenia	Adoption by the EU member states of the visa liberalisation action plan	By Q4

General objective 5: Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Specific Objective 5.1: Rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy in partner countries are strengthened

Related to spending programme(s): Ukraine, Western Balkan, and Moldova Facilities; IPA

Main outputs in 2025:

Evaluations and fitness checks – part of the stress testing of the EU acquis

Output	Indicator	Target
Final deliverable of the Evaluation of EU cooperation on migration in the Western Balkans (2018-2023)	Publication of the final deliverable	Q4
Final deliverable of the Evaluation of EU support to IPA Roma inclusion projects (2016-2023)	Publication of the final deliverable	Q4

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Rule of Law Report country chapters for Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia	Publication of country chapters for the four candidate countries in the annual Rule of Law Report (coordinated by DG JUST)	Q3
Progress of Albania under the Fundamentals Cluster	Presentation of the fundamentals non-paper to the Council	Q2
Progress of Montenegro and Serbia under Chapters 23 and 24	Presentation of the rule of law non-papers on the state of play under Chapters 23 and 24 to the Council	Q2
Progress of North Macedonia under the Fundamentals Cluster	Preparation of the Opening Benchmarks Assessment Reports for the Fundamentals Cluster, once conditions set by the Council have been met	Q2 to Q4
Progress of Moldova and Ukraine under the Fundamentals Cluster	Preparation of Opening Benchmarks Assessment Reports for the Fundamentals Cluster for both countries	Q2

General objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.1: Countries with EU perspective are brought closer to the EU based on a credible, merit-based accession perspective and application of the enlargement methodology

Related to spending programme(s): Ukraine, Western Balkan, and Moldova Facilities; IPA

Main outputs in 2025:

Implementation dialogues and reality checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Second Implementation Dialogue (with selected stakeholders)	Implementation Dialogue has taken place	Q4

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Annual Enlargement Package	Adoption of the 2025 Enlargement Package	Q4
Progress on accession negotiations with Albania once the necessary conditions have been met	Presentation of remaining screening reports and Draft Common Positions once the Council has asked Albania for its negotiating position	Q2
	Possible report on the fulfilment of interim benchmarks on the rule of law chapters, depending on Albania's progress and if collegially agreed	Q4
Progress on accession negotiations with North Macedonia once the necessary conditions have been met	Presentation of remaining screening reports	Q1
	Submission of the Opening Benchmark Assessment Report to the Council and opening of Cluster 1	Q4
Progress on accession negotiations with Montenegro once the necessary conditions have been met	Preparation of Draft Common Positions and Benchmark Assessment Reports	Q2 to Q4
Progress on accession negotiations with Serbia once the necessary conditions have been met	Possible opening of Cluster(s) once Serbia has met the necessary conditions and Council agrees	Q3 to Q4

Output	Indicator	Target
Progress in accession negotiations with Moldova and Ukraine once the necessary conditions have been met	Completion of screening for all Chapters Presentation of further screening reports in Council and Draft Common Positions	Q4 Q2 to Q4
Launch of and progress in accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina once the necessary conditions have been met	Report to Council on progress and possible presentation of the Negotiating Framework to the Council once conditions are fulfilled	Q3 to Q4
Progress on Kosovo's alignment with the Copenhagen criteria	Presentation of progress on the fundamentals in the Enlargement Package	Q4

General objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.2: A sustainable basis for improved relations with Türkiye is ensured

Related to spending programme(s): IPA III

Main outputs in 2025:

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Continuation of high-level engagement with Türkiye, in line with the European Council conclusions	Number of high-level dialogues	4
Implementation of the Association Agreement with Türkiye	Number of sub-committees held	4
Follow-up on the implementation of the Customs Union	Volume of bilateral trade	At least EUR 206 billion
	Finalised assessments of Turkish draft legislation relevant for the removal of technical barriers to trade (as a percentage of Turkish requests submitted)	80%
	Customs Union Joint Committee meeting held	1 meeting

Output	Indicator	Target
Support Directorate-General for Trade (DG TRADE) in following discussions by Member States on the mandate and on initiating negotiations on the modernisation of the Customs Union, when political conditions are ripe	Mandate approved by Council	2025, if political conditions allow
Support for refugees and host communities in Türkiye	Programming for 2025-27 finalised	2025
Close monitoring of developments and providing policy recommendation on democracy, rule of law, judiciary, security as well as fundamental rights and freedoms	Adoption of the Türkiye report (Enlargement package)	2025
Support to investments in Türkiye	Number of Türkiye Investment Conferences organised	2

General objective 6: A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships

Specific Objective 6.3: The Eastern Neighbourhood countries are supported, including through regional connectivity and the Black Sea strategy

Related to spending programme(s): NDICI-GE

Main outputs in 2025:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Joint Communication on building an EU strategic approach to the Black Sea, as tasked by the European Council in June 2024 and as included in the 2025 Commission Work Programme	Communication developed	By July 2025

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Resilience and Growth Plan for Armenia	Disbursement of Budget Support Programme	By Q4

Output	Indicator	Target
Comprehensive Strategy for the Energy Independence and Resilience of Moldova	Disbursement of 2 tranches of Budget Support	By Q2
All bilateral (except with Ukraine) and regional programmes are adopted under 3 Financing Decisions (multi-country, NIP, and regional)	3 Financing decisions adopted	By July 2025

ANNEX 3: Performance tables – A modern and sustainable public administration

A. Human resource management

Objective: ENEST employs a skilled, diverse and motivated workforce to deliver on the Commission's priorities		
Main outputs in 2025:		
Output	Indicator	Target
Continue interactive sessions of staff with senior management	Number of Townhall Meetings, Extended Management meetings and interactive readouts from senior management meetings	3 townhall events 5 Extended Management meetings At least 1 readout per month
Adapt / develop local HR Strategy for DG ENEST, in line with new Commission mandate	HR Plan developed Staff involved in the development	1 by end of the year >50% of staff actively participated
“FUTURE SKILLS LAB”, tailored training package for the DG and add “security” thematic package	Organised training sessions Training package on security	8 in 2025 of which 4 “deep dives”, i.e. advanced modules 1 available and 1 st training organised
Enhanced talent management package for colleagues in ENEST with limited contracts	Talent Management Programme launched and accessible to colleagues with limited contracts Career development sessions organised for these colleagues	1 new edition in 2025 4 sessions organised
Increased number of women appointed to first time middle management functions	Number of new first female appointments to middle management positions	1 new first female appointment by the end of 2025

B. Digital transformation and data management

Objective: [The department] is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policymaking, data management and administrative processes to create a digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

Main outputs in 2025:

Output	Indicator	Target
Digital Culture	% of statutory staff that has completed at least one IT training course Source of data: Digital Commission Dashboard (data measured at DG-level)	Baseline (2024) : 33% Target (2025): 40%
Seamless digital environment	Cloud adoption – % of IT systems utilising cloud infrastructure services compared to the total number of IT systems	50%
Cyber Awareness	Average participation rate in cybersecurity trainings Source of data: Digital Commission Dashboard (data measured at DG-level)	Baseline (2024): 28% Target: 35%
Cybersecurity	Number of Local Information Systems covered by an up to date (less than 2 years old) security plan	100%
Data Management	Maturity level in implementing corporate data policies across four key areas: data management, ownership and responsibilities, data quality, and data skills (basic, developing, established, advanced, or trendsetting).	Developing
Artificial Intelligence	Number of AI capabilities implemented across systems	1

Output	Indicator	Target
Data Protection	50% weight: number of (updated or new) records which have been published in the last two years (2 records) compared to the overall number of published records (9 records) : 11% and 50% weight: % of staff trained in data protection on 31.12.2024 (number of staff 100%): 50%.	Baseline 61% Target: 100%

C. Sound financial management

Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions

Main outputs in 2025

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: legal and regular transactions	Estimated risk at payment	Remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure ⁽¹⁰⁾
	Estimated risk at closure	Remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure
	Low risk performance-based expenditure	80%
Effective controls	Effectiveness of the audit system ⁽¹¹⁾ : - % contracted of the Annual Control Plan: Year N	Effectiveness of the audit system: - Remains > 70 %

⁽¹⁰⁾ For the Research, industry, space, energy and transport family of departments, it is necessary to make a distinction between Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe since they have different materiality criteria. The relevant departments should use a common approach.

⁽¹¹⁾ These indicators are part of the KPI dashboard managed by DG INTPA. While their substance remains stable over the years, their specific definition and targets may be subject to change following a review coordinated by DG INTPA after the Annual Management Plan is adopted.

Output	Indicator	Target
	- % implementation of the Annual Audit Plan: Years N-1 and N-2 ⁽¹²⁾	- Remains > 60 %
	- % reduction of old unclosed audits ⁽¹³⁾	- Remains > 50 %
Efficient controls	Budget execution	Remains >90 % of payment appropriations
	Timely payments	Remains >90 % of payments (in value) made on time
Economy of controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	Remains < 5 % of funds managed

D. Fraud risk management

Objective: The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission anti-fraud strategy ⁽¹⁴⁾ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction ⁽¹⁵⁾ of fraud

Main outputs in 2025:

Output	Indicator	Target
Adoption of a new DG ENEST anti-fraud strategy	Adoption of a new AFS	Adoption by the end of 2025
Implementation of the DG ENEST anti-fraud strategy	Implementation of the 2025 annual AFS action plan: percentage of actions completed within the applicable deadlines	At least 50 %

⁽¹²⁾ An audit is considered as “implemented” when the final audit report has been received.

⁽¹³⁾ This is an indicator (agreed with DG INTPA) which covers the entire multiannual audit life cycle; it aims at achieving the timely closure (subsequent to all follow-up actions and their recording in the Audit Module) of all audits under old Audit Plans (those equal and prior to N-3). Even if this target is lower than the others related to the audit system, it is equally challenging, since the implementation of the recommended actions depends on several factors and usually takes several months.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Communication from the Commission 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget', COM(2019) 176 of 29 April 2019 – ‘the CAFS Communication’ – and the accompanying action plan, SWD(2019) 170 – ‘the CAFS Action Plan’.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Correction of fraud’ is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

Output	Indicator	Target
Implementation of the recommendations included in the OLAF reports	Timely completion of the assessment on the implementation of the OLAF recommendations Reinforced monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations	75 % of OLAF recommendations are assessed for the implementation by the competent AOSDs within 3 months Reminders are sent to action owners for outstanding recommendations at least every 6 months
Regular reporting to Commissioner and Senior Management on the implementation of the anti-fraud strategies and on the OLAF cases	Report to the Commissioner and Senior Management	2 per year (at least)

E. Sound environmental management

Objective: Reaching climate neutrality by 2030 and a reduced environmental footprint for the Commission.

Main outputs in 2025

Output	Indicator	Target
Actions to reduce emissions from staff missions ⁽¹⁶⁾	Monitoring of indicators from the new ENEST mission guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than 3 colleagues per mission in principle and if so only with clearly justified reasons Joint missions between departments and with other institutions where possible. DG ENEST staff travel emissions – 50% emissions reduction between 2019 and 2030 (baseline 2019: 443 654,21 CO2 Kg) 	100% compliance 2025: 267 236,35 CO2 Kg

⁽¹⁶⁾ DG/department emissions report from MIPS+. Emissions from staff whose place of assignment is one of the Commission's sites: [EMAS](#).

Output	Indicator	Target
Energy saving actions	ENEST buildings L-15 and J-54 participate in the annual BEST energy saving actions	At least 2 weeks closure of building in 2025
Staff awareness actions	ENEST to raise awareness of corporate awareness actions in line with EMAS/greening corporate campaigns, notably on reduction of use of paper and the usage of electronic signatures	At least 5 dedicated articles in the weekly newsletter / publications on the ENEST intranet 2 specific campaigns started on this with Emails targeted at all staff

