



# Management Plan 2020

Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and  
Enlargement Negotiations -DG NEAR

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## INTRODUCTION

The mission of DG NEAR is to take forward the EU's Neighbourhood and Enlargement policies. The DG coordinates the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and financial assistance delivered under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). It supports key reforms and democratic consolidation in partner countries, and contributes to strengthening stability and security around Europe and fostering political and economic reforms. DG NEAR helps to promote EU values, policies and interests, and contributes to developing the special relationship of the EU with its neighbouring countries.

In the Enlargement field, DG NEAR assists those countries with the prospect of joining the EU in their efforts to meet the EU membership criteria, as defined by the Treaty on European Union and the European Council. DG NEAR closely monitors their progress and supports accession negotiations as required by the Council. The DG manages bilateral relations of the Union with candidate countries and potential candidates, frontloading reforms on rule of law, economic governance and public administration. In the Western Balkans, the DG develops and implements the EU stabilisation and association policy as defined by the European Council.

This management plan details the concrete outputs that DG NEAR will deliver in 2020.

In 2020, DG NEAR will continue taking forward the Enlargement and Neighbourhood policies, and address the unprecedented challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in all partner countries. In all regions, DG NEAR will also significantly contribute to the external dimensions of key Commission priorities on the European Green Deal, a Europe fit for the digital age, an economy that works for people, and promoting European way of life.

The DG will implement the revised enlargement methodology, continue accession negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro, and prepare the ground for opening negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia. The planned economic and investment plan for the Western Balkans (autumn 2020) will be finalised. DG NEAR will continue to invest in three strands of connectivity in the Western Balkans: infrastructures, economies, and people. The Western Balkans Investment Framework will mobilise significant funding to support investments in favour of jobs and growth. DG NEAR will continue to monitor the implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey statement, pursue high-level dialogue, and implement the agreed reorientation of reduced pre-accession funding to Turkey.

In the Neighbourhood, DG NEAR together with the EEAS has developed a new set of long-term policy objectives that has been adopted on 18 March in the Joint Communication on the future of the Eastern Partnership (EaP). In the remaining time of 2020 and on the basis of the five policy objectives of the Joint Communication, new post-2020 “deliverables” for the EaP, will be developed and are planned to be endorsed at the March 2021 EaP Summit. Cooperation with Southern Neighbourhood partners will be marked by

the 25th anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration, and will continue to aim at reinforcing stability, resilience, economic development and regional integration.

**PART 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for the year**

In 2020 DG NEAR will contribute to the Commission’s objective of making Europe stronger in the world by taking forward the enlargement and neighbourhood policies, and addressing the unprecedented challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in partner countries. As regards communication, in 2020 DG NEAR will support all efforts for the recovery phase and participate actively in the corporate Recovery Campaign, focusing on illustrating the work of the Commission in building resilience for our economies and societies, in green recovery, digitalisation, investment and reform, and research leading to finding vaccines and treatments. DG NEAR will also take part in the EU in the World corporate campaign, which is at present put on hold but still foreseen. In 2020 DG NEAR will also actively support the work of the Commission on fighting disinformation and in promoting the efforts of the Commission at high-level events on misinformation and disinformation.

DG NEAR aims to move the Western Balkans closer to the EU thanks to a **credible, merit-based accession perspective and a revised enlargement methodology, and to strengthen their economic development** (*specific objective 4.1*). To that effect, it worked on several key Communications. DG NEAR will continue accession negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro, and prepare the ground for opening negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia including finalisation of negotiating frameworks. DG NEAR will issue its annual country reports on the progress made by partners towards EU integration. TAIEX and Twinning activities will continue to help the enlargement countries address the recommendations of the EU enlargement strategy and of the accession negotiations.

General objective 4 A stronger Europe in the World		
Specific objective 4.1: <b>The Western Balkans are brought closer to the EU and their economic development is strengthened, based on a credible, merit-based accession perspective and application of the revised enlargement methodology</b>		<i>Related to spending programme(s) IPA II</i>
<b>Main outputs in 2020:</b>		
New policy initiatives		
Output	Indicator	Target
Draft Council Conclusions on Enlargement	Adoption of Council Conclusions	March 2020
Enlargement package, consisting of a Communication and country reports	Package is completed and published	Q4 2020 TBC
Commission Communication on	Communication adopted	Q1 2020

revised enlargement methodology		
Commission Communication on support to the Western Balkans in tackling COVID-19 and the post-pandemic recovery – in preparation for the Zagreb Summit	Communication adopted	Q2 2020
Commission Communication on an Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans	Communication adopted	Q4 2020
Preparations for the Enlargement package 2021	Guidance note issued and process launched.	End 2020
<b>Evaluations and fitness checks</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
TAIEX Evaluation	Roadmap produced	Q4 2020
Evaluation of Sector Budget Support in IPA beneficiary countries	Roadmap produced	Q4 2020
Country evaluation of EU cooperation in Albania	Roadmap produced	Q4 2020
<b>External communication actions</b>		
<b>Output/ Result</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
Press trips for EU journalists to the enlargement region	Number of participants	35
	Number of participants who declare the event met their expectations	>65% of participants
	Better understanding of the policy/related funding	>65% of participants
Strategic communication workshops for government communicators (TAIEX)	Number of participants	100
	Percentage of participants who declare that the workshop was well structured	>60% of participants (fully) >90% (fully and partially)
	Percentage of participants who declare that the workshop addressed key topics	>60% of participants (fully) >90% (fully and partially)
	Percentage of participants who declare that the workshop enabled them to improve their knowledge	>45% of participants (fully) >80% (fully and partially))
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
Accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia: Launch of the process and presentation of the negotiating frameworks	Adoption by Council	Q3 2020 TBC
	Inter-governmental conference	Q4 2020 TBC
Accession negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro: Preparation of Benchmark Reports, and Draft Common Positions (DCP), Monitoring progress in the rule of	Progress on accession negotiations with Montenegro/Serbia through preparation and submission of DCPs and benchmark	Throughout 2020

law area, in view of reporting twice a year to the Member States	assessment reports to COELA on chapters where the necessary conditions have been fulfilled.	
Monitoring of Stabilisation and association agreements (SAA) and implementation of structural reforms in the Western Balkans (WB)	SA Council and Committee, SAA Sub-committees / Special Groups meetings held with the Western Balkans countries.	Each Western Balkans partner: - 1 SA Council - 1 SA Committee For Montenegro and Serbia 7 sub-committees +1 PAR Special Group
Follow-up to the key priorities set in the Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for EU membership and to commitments under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.	Country annual report and SAA meetings completed	Q4 2020
Progress in delivery of Kosovo reform commitments under the SAA and European Reform Agenda	Kosovo annual report completed and meetings and follow up under the SAA	Q4 2020
Programming and implementation of bilateral assistance under IPA II	All IPA II bilateral action documents adopted	Q4 2020
Implementation of TAIEX and Twinning activities contributing to reforms and economic development in the Western Balkans	Approximately 150 activities (online and physical) implemented in the Western Balkans, depending on beneficiary demand	Throughout 2020

DG NEAR will also aim at **improving regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans** (*specific objective 4.2*). Support in 2020 will continue to focus on three strands of connectivity: infrastructures, economies, and people of the region. The annual connectivity investment package will contribute to developing infrastructure, connectivity and policy reforms in energy and transport. The Western Balkans Investment Framework will mobilise significant funding to support investments in favour of jobs and growth. Regional security issues will be addressed among others through the Action Plan on the fight against Small Arms and Light Weapons and the set-up of the new Integrative Internal Security Governance secretariat. DG NEAR will also contribute to the seventh EU-Western Balkans summit as well as to activities under the “Berlin Process”.

## General objective 4: A stronger Europe in the World

Specific objective 4.2:

**Regional cooperation and neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans are improved**

*Related to spending programme(s)  
IPA II*

**Main outputs in 2020:**

**Other important outputs**

Output	Indicator	Target
Progress in completing the TEN-T rail and road core network to the Western Balkans and in implementing the Project of Energy Community Interest	Endorsement of the 2020 connectivity package for the Western Balkans  Contribution to the preparation of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans including its connectivity component	Q4 2020
Support to the implementation of the Multi-Annual Action Plan for the Economic Area and the development of the successor plan for the period 2021-2024	Adoption by the Western Balkans Leaders at the Sofia Summit	Q4 2020
Progress in implementation of the 2018 Sofia Agenda:		
a) Promote deepening of links among civil societies of the Western Balkans, including through the support for the Western Balkans Fund projects	10 new regional Civil Society networks collaborating on different thematics. Contract with the Western Balkans Fund signed (EUR 1 million for subgranting to small-scale regional initiatives)	Q1 2020
b) Articulation of the EU's Creative Europe Programme in the Western Balkans	Contracts signed following first call	Q4 2020
c) Establishment of a "Western Balkans Youth Lab"	First regional Youth Lab takes place	Q3 2020
d) Set-up of the new Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) secretariat hosted by RCC, following the revision process of its Terms of Reference	IISG Secretariat is set-up	Q2 2020
Adoption of 2020 IPA II multi-country action programmes	All IPA II action programmes adopted	Q3/Q4 2020
Strategic engagement and policy dialogue with civil society	Regular coordination meetings with strategic partners and regional civil society events in the Western Balkans	Throughout the year
Implementation of TAIEX activities strengthening regional cooperation	Approximately 15 regional or multi-country activities (online	Throughout 2020

and neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans	and physical) implemented in the Western Balkans, depending on beneficiary demand	
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DG NEAR will work towards **ensuring a sustainable basis for improved relations with Turkey** (*specific objective 4.3*) by pursuing all strands of cooperation, within the political margins defined by the Council, and the framework of the EU-Turkey Association Agreement and Customs Union. In 2020, DG NEAR will continue high-level dialogue meetings and monitoring the implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey statement. DG NEAR will implement the agreed reorientation of reduced pre-accession funding to further focus support on political priorities, including rule of law, fundamental rights, civil society, and people-to-people contacts, as well as actions related to migration management.

<b>General objective 4 A stronger Europe in the World</b>		
<b>Specific objective 4.3: A sustainable basis for improved relations with Turkey is ensured</b>		<i>Related to spending programme(s) IPA II</i>
Main outputs in 2020:		
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
Continuation of the high level dialogue with TK on the implementation of 2016 EU - TK statement	Number of high level meetings	3 meetings in 2020
Continuous implementation of the EU-Turkey Association Agreement	Number of sub-committee meetings held	2 meetings in Q3/Q4
Follow-up on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Customs Union	Number of meetings of the Customs Union Joint Committee held	1 meeting in Q3/Q4
Support DG TRADE in following discussions by Member States on the mandate and perspective of initiating negotiations on the modernisation of the EU-Turkey Customs Union, when political conditions are ripe	Mandate approved	when political conditions allow
Policy dialogue with Turkey on economic governance	Adoption of joint NEAR/ECFIN/EMPL assessment of Turkey's economic reform programme 2020-2022	Joint assessment adopted in Q2
Monitoring of the implementation of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey	Number of meetings of the Facility Steering Committee	1 meeting in Q4
Implementation of the funds under NEAR responsibility of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey	Level of contracted funds	All funds under NEAR responsibility contracted by end of 2020
Continuous monitoring of developments and providing policy	2020 country report on Turkey (staff working document as part	Country report published in Q4



recommendations on democracy, rule of law, judiciary, security as well as fundamental rights and freedoms	of Enlargement package) published;	
Support political priorities through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance	Adoption of 2020 IPA II country programme	Programme adopted by the end of 2020
Implementation of TAiEX and Twinning activities contributing to improved EU-Turkey relations	Approximately 10 activities (online and physical) implemented in Turkey, depending on beneficiary demand	Throughout 2020

In the Eastern Neighbourhood, DG NEAR will **take the Eastern Partnership to the next level** (*specific objective 4.4*), by putting forward a new set of long-term policy objectives, which emerged from a structured, broad and inclusive consultation carried out in 2019. These will build on the achievements of the “20 Deliverables for 2020” and will outline how the EU will work together with Eastern partner countries to tackle common challenges and strengthen their resilience as an overriding policy objective.

#### General objective 4 A stronger Europe in the World

Specific objective 4.4. <b>Take the Eastern Partnership to the next level.</b>	<i>Related to spending programme(s) ENI</i>
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#### Main outputs in 2020:

##### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Joint Communication on future of Eastern Partnership policy	Communication adopted	Q1 2020
Eastern Partnership Summit – support to preparation and drafting of declaration, together with EU Member States and EaP countries	Summit held and Declaration adopted	Q2 2020

##### Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Country evaluation on Georgia	Terms of reference adopted and contracted	Q4 2020
Country evaluation on Moldova	Intermediate report	Q4 2020

##### Public consultations

Output	Indicator	Target
Report on public consultation on the future of Eastern Partnership	Report adopted and published, with positive feedback by relevant stakeholders	Early 2020

##### External communication actions

Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
Press trips for EU journalists to the neighbourhood region	Number of participants	20
	Number of participants who	>65% of participants

	declare the event met their expectations	
	Better understanding of the policy/related funding	>65% of participants
Training seminars on EU visibility and communication for beneficiaries in the neighbourhood	Number of participants	100
	Event met expectations	>65% of participants
OPEN Neighbourhood Regional Programme: campaigns, events and polling to improve perceptions of the EU in Neighbourhood countries	Number of visits to EU Neighbours website	>500,000
	Number of people reached on Facebook (average reach per post)	East: 17,000 South: 20,000 *for the South, the average would have been close to 45,000 but due to postponement of events and campaigns (coronavirus), this will be much less.
	Number of impressions – Twitter (monthly)	100,000
	Number of subscribers to news alerts	>10,000
	Number of people reached through events	>5,000 *this includes also virtual events
	Number of young people becoming part of Young European Neighbours network	East: >1,000 South: 16 social media influencers

#### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Advanced negotiations on renewed Association Agendas for DCFTA countries	Negotiations progressing satisfactorily (in particular in view of elections in several of the countries).	Q3-Q4 2020
Implementation of CEPA in Armenia, negotiating new agreement with Azerbaijan and Partnership Priorities with Belarus	Implementation and negotiations progressing satisfactorily (in particular in view of elections in several of the countries)	Q3-Q4 2020
Implementation of TAIEX and Twinning activities supporting EaP countries	Approximately 80 activities (online and physical) implemented in the Eastern Neighbourhood, depending on beneficiary demand	Throughout 2020
Strategic engagement with civil society and further increase outreach to grassroots organisations, including for mitigating COVID impacts to vulnerable persons	New contracts with Framework Partners in regional East and Ukraine for COVID response	Q3 2020
	Regular coordination meetings with strategic partners and a thematic seminar on re-granting	Throughout the year; Q3 2020

Roll-out new actions on social entrepreneurship	New contract in Eastern partnership	Q3 2020
Improve knowledge sharing on innovative mechanisms for engaging with civil society	Lessons learnt session on strategic Framework Partnerships and Operating Grants in East and Western Balkans Thematic seminar on best practices in re-granting in East, South, and Western Balkans	Q3-Q4 2020

Our cooperation and policy dialogue with Southern partner countries aims at **reinforcing stability, resilience, economic development and regional integration in the Southern Neighbourhood** (*specific objective 4.5*). In 2020, DG NEAR will contribute to the preparation of the post-2020 programming exercise and to the review of the Partnership Priorities, where necessary. NEAR will continue to be active in international fora to promote regional integration (e.g. Union for the Mediterranean) or contribute to mitigate effect and promote a positive agenda to protracted crisis (Syria, Libya, Israel-Palestine).

#### General objective 4 A stronger Europe in the World

Specific objective 4.5:

**Stability, resilience, economic development and regional integration are reinforced through our cooperation and policy dialogues in the Southern Neighbourhood**

*Related to spending programme(s)  
ENI*

**Main outputs in 2020:**

#### Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluation of ongoing programmes and definition of priorities for a regional civil society facility for the Southern Neighbourhood.	Processing available information emerging from the on-going evaluation of structured dialogue with civil society and need assessment of the civil society (with input from EUDs).	Throughout 2020

#### External communication actions

Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
Increasing knowledge and public awareness on Euro-Med partnership.	Commission's participation in the UfM communication campaign to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration / number of activities in the communication plan.	100% of activities in the communication plan have been implemented.
Press trips for EU journalists to the neighbourhood region	Number of participants	20
	Number of participants who declare the event met their expectations	>65% of participants
	Better understanding of the	>65% of participants

	policy/related funding	
Training seminars on EU visibility and communication for beneficiaries in the neighbourhood	Number of participants	100
	Event met expectations	>65% of participants
OPEN Neighbourhood Regional Programme: campaigns, events and polling to improve perceptions of the EU in Neighbourhood countries	Number of visits to EU Neighbours website	>500,000
	Number of people reached on Facebook (average reach per post)	South: 20,000 *for the South, the average would have been close to 45,000 but due to postponement of events and campaigns (coronavirus), this will be much less.
	Number of impressions – Twitter (monthly)	100,000
	Number of subscribers to news alerts	>10,000
	Number of people reached through events	>5,000 *this includes also virtual events
	Number of young people becoming part of Young European Neighbours network	South: 16 social media influencers

#### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Review/extension of current partnership priorities or equivalent documents	Process launched in the different countries as per instructions	End 2020
Implementation of the partnership priorities or equivalent documents	Multiannual and annual programming documents are in line with the Partnership Priorities	Throughout 2020.
Programming of the NDICI instrument (post 2020), in line with the Partnership priorities	Preparation of Multiannual Indicative Programmes (MIP) launched as per instructions.	Steps implemented as per upcoming instructions.
ENI annual programmes are adopted	Adoption of ENI annual programmes using fully corresponding annual budget allocation	Throughout 2020
Organisation of the Brussels IV Conference on the Future of Syria and the Region	Ministerial conference and consultation with Syrian civil society held; Funding pledges secured.	June 2020
Provide support to Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities in particular in Lebanon and Jordan, as an important element of the EU response to the Syrian Crisis and a contribution to share responsibility with host countries, maximising system-strengthening aspects; commit and contract remaining EUTF	Continued engagement with stakeholders. Action documents adopted by the EUTF board; Contract signed.	Throughout 2020

Syria budget		
Follow-up of the Berlin International Conference on Libya	Technical expertise provided by the Commission; and EU co-chairing the Berlin Economic Working Group.	Throughout 2020
Renewal of the EU-UNRWA joint declaration for the period 2021-2024, reaffirming EU strong political and financial support to the organisation	EU-UNRWA joint declaration	End 2020
Support the UfM sector policy dialogue with partner countries.	UfM ministerial meetings on Trade and Climate change are organised. UfM ministerial declarations are followed-up through yearly sector dialogues involving the full range of relevant stakeholders.	Throughout 2020
Provide institutional support to the UfM	The UfM Roadmap for Action is implemented as well as the new approach to labelling.	Throughout 2020
Strengthened security cooperation in line with the Global Strategy and the European Neighbourhood Policy security dimension	Increased performance of security actors and intensified operational cooperation with EU partners through the implementation of projects with key partners such as Interpol and EU Agencies EUROPOL, EUROJUST, FRONTEX/EBCGA and EMCDDA.	Throughout 2020
Implementation of TAIEX and Twinning events contributing to stability, resilience, economic development and regional integration in the Southern Neighbourhood	Approximately 50 activities (online and physical) implemented in the Southern Neighbourhood, depending on beneficiary demand	Throughout 2020
Strategic engagement and policy dialogue with civil society	Regular coordination meetings with strategic partners and regional meeting of Civil Society Forum Neighbourhood South	Throughout the year

DG NEAR will **support the implementation of the external dimension of the European Green Deal in partner countries** (*specific objective 1*). In particular, DG NEAR will support the design and implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, and will work towards strong environment, energy and climate partnerships within the Eastern Partnership and with the Southern Neighbourhood.

<b>General objective 1 A European Green Deal</b>		
Specific objective 1: <b>The implementation of the external dimension of the European Green Deal is supported in partner countries</b>		<i>Related to spending programme(s) ENI, IPA II</i>
<b>Main outputs in 2020:</b>		
<b>New policy initiatives</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
The Green Agenda for the Western Balkans	Agenda launched	Q4 2020
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
Design with key stakeholders (EaP countries, EU Member States and line DGs) the policy objective “Together towards environmental and climate resilience” of the “post-2020 deliverables”	Technical agreement on new set of policy objectives under the “environmental and climate resilience”	Q4 2020
Ukraine: Strategic Partnership on Green Deal	Initiative launched	Q4 2020
Morocco: Strategic Partnership on Green Deal	memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed Action Plan adopted Follow-up committees created	End 2020
Green/climate/energy partnerships and regional initiatives in the context of Union for the Mediterranean	Initiatives launched	Q4 2020
Support the nascent gas market in the Eastern Mediterranean through the East Med Gas Forum’s secretariat	Funding of the secretariat	Throughout 2020
Priority actions on Energy and Climate Change Policies: Strengthened dialogue and regional actions	Number of meetings with Neighbourhood partners in the framework of the UfM Energy platforms and UfM Climate Change Experts Group	At least one meeting per domain throughout 2020
	Implementation of regional actions for the Southern Neighbourhood on clean energy transition and climate change	3 ongoing projects (with MEDREG association, OME and the Clima-MED project) and 2 new contracts signed (with MED TSO association and MEDENER/RCEEE) Throughout 2020
Priority actions on Environment policies including Circular economy, pollution reduction, biodiversity and water efficient use: strengthened dialogue and regional actions	Number of meeting with neighbourhood partners in the framework of the UfM Environment discussion groups and the water discussion groups	At least one meeting per domain throughout 2020
	Implementation of regional actions for the Southern Neighbourhood on Circular	5 ongoing actions: 1 on circular economy (SwitchMed), 1 on Environment and water (WES), 1

	economy, pollution reduction, biodiversity and water efficient use	on environmental data (SEIS), 1 on biodiversity (IMAP-MPA) and 3 grants for demonstration purpose on sustainable use of water in Palestine. 7 new grants for demonstration purpose on efficient use of water. Throughout 2020
Priority actions on Climate change: development of enhanced coordination with IFI's in support to cities in the Southern Neighbourhood	Number of meetings of the dedicated IFI working group (set up by DG NEAR B2 in January 2020).	4 meetings in 2020
Capacity building for the three NEAR regions on Green Deal	5 TAIEX flagships workshops held and evaluated	Q4 2020

Under the Commission's priority on "an Economy that Works for People", DG NEAR will **support inclusive and sustainable economic growth, better employment and increased connectivity in partner countries** (*specific objective 3*). In 2020, DG NEAR will assist partner countries to address the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. DG NEAR will also coordinate the completion of Economic Reform Programmes and country-specific recommendations for Enlargement countries. It will continue to implement comprehensive public administration and public financial management reform programmes, and it will support socio-economic development through notably the Neighbourhood Investment Platform, the European Fund for Sustainable Development, and the Western Balkans Investment Facility.

### General objective 3: An Economy that Works for People

Specific objective 3:

**Inclusive and sustainable economic growth, better employment and increased connectivity are supported in partner countries**

*Related to spending programme(s)  
ENI, IPA II*

**Main outputs in 2020:**

#### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
DG NEAR contribution to 'Team Europe' package proposed in the 'Joint Communication on Global EU Response to COVID-19'	Communication adopted	Early 2020
Support socio-economic recovery in the COVID-19 context: economic growth, private sector development, access to finance is facilitated notably through blending and financial instruments	NIP - Neighbourhood Investment Platform: number of operations, implementing partners, amount of EU contributions approved.  EFSD – European Fund for Sustainable Development: number of guarantee schemes, amount of EU guarantee	By end 2020  By end 2020

	contracted. Western Balkans Investment Facility - WBIF – 4 guarantee schemes initiated.	By end 2020
External communication actions		
Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
Ukraine: Increase of public awareness of EU support to Ukraine to cope with the pandemic and the consequences through #BeatCovid19 mass media communication campaign phase I (4.2020 till 6.2020) and II (6.2020 till 10.2020).	Public opinion survey (sample 1000 all UA): Increase of support/awareness:  1. Do you know that the EU is allocating funds to Ukraine to combat COVID19?  2. In the past month, have you seen in the media the information campaign “#ДолаємоCOVID19” (“#BeatCOVID19”)?	1. (Mid April: 42.5%, Mid May 53.1%) By Sept 2020 60% 2. (Mid April: 8.4%, Mid May 12.4%) By Sept 2020 15%
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Adoption or update of the relevant Annual Action Programmes (bilateral and regional), ensuring a strong EU response to Covid-19 pandemic across all NEAR countries.	% COVID response package under implementation	80%
Delivery of assistance for immediate needs related to tackling COVID epidemic in the Western Balkans	% COVID immediate response package implemented	100%
Implementation of TAIEX assistance to help partners manage the pandemic, its repercussions, and the preparation of coordinated exit and recovery strategies	Approximately 50 activities (online and physical) with a specified COVID-19 dimension implemented, depending on beneficiary demand	Throughout 2020
Further increase outreach to grassroots organizations, including for mitigating COVID impacts to vulnerable persons	New contracts with Framework Partners in regional East and Ukraine for COVID response	Q3 2020
Adopt and start to implement the COVID response package for the <b>Western Balkans</b> at <b>bilateral</b> level including the emergency response to the immediate health crisis and the response to its social and economic consequences	100% of the COVID <b>bilateral</b> response package contracted  COVID response package new decisions taken/ modified	Q4 2020
Adoption and start of implementation of COVID <b>regional</b> response package for the <b>Western Balkans</b> - including the emergency response to the vulnerable groups, to the health sector and the regional	<b>Regional</b> COVID response package fully adopted	Q4 2020



response to its social and economic consequences		
Adoption and update of 2020 Annual Action Programmes (bilateral and regional), ensuring a strong EU response to Covid-19 pandemic across <b>Eastern Partnership</b> (EaP) countries	Assistance re-oriented in support of Eastern Partnership partners' COVID action.	Q2 2020
EU response to the Covid-19 crisis impact in the <b>Southern Neighbourhood</b>	Number of ENI-funded Programmes reoriented to provide liquidities and support the health and socio-economic sectors.	In 2020: EUR 2.1 billion reallocated from the Southern Neighbourhood, including EUR 1.5 billion to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the crisis
Completion of Economic Reform Programmes (ERP) for Enlargement countries and adoption of Council conclusions	2020 ERPs completed and Council conclusions adopted	First Semester 2020
Key Policy Guidance feeds policy dialogue and programming process	Policy Dialogue and programming	Second Semester
Implementation and/or adoption of comprehensive public administration reform (PAR) programmes and public financial management reform programmes (PFM) to support the development of horizontal capacities to implement the acquis	Number of countries: Participation in PAR Special Groups/PAR policy dialogue	By end 2020: All Western Balkans countries and at least 2 ENP countries.
	Contribution to preparation and/or participation in PFM Dialogue	At least 5 Western Balkans countries and 1 ENP East.
Support socio-economic development: economic growth, private sector development, trade facilitation and regional integration, access to finance is facilitated notably through blending and financial instruments	NIP - Neighbourhood Investment Platform: number of operations, implementing partners, amount of EU contributions approved.	By end 2020
	EFSD – European Fund for Sustainable Development: number of guarantee schemes, amount of EU guarantee contracted.	By end 2020
	Western Balkans Investment Facility - WBIF – 4 guarantee schemes initiated.	By end 2020
	Support partner countries to develop Innovation and Smart Specialisation Strategies endorsed by the Commission	1 Innovation and Smart Specialisation National Strategy supported by end 2020
	Small Business Act Facsheets for Enlargement regions plus Ukraine, Moldova and Armenia	Second semester 2020
	Aid-For-Trade Report (DEVCO-NEAR Joint exercise) for all	

	NEAR regions	Second Semester 2020
	Contribution to the adoption of the Regional Economic Area in the Western Balkans (phase II)	Second Semester 2020
Partner countries are supported in building more resilient, efficient and sustainable education systems.	Evidence-based diagnosis on Education reform needs and challenges (governance, financing, quality and resilience aspects)	Launching 1 Diagnosis in Neighbourhood-South country by end 2020.
	Policy dialogue on education with partner countries	Launching Diagnosis in Western Balkans partner countries by end 2020
Increased use of blending under the Neighbourhood Investment Platform (NIP) to support SMEs and financial intermediaries.	Number of top ups and new programmes providing liquidity to SMEs, more local currency funding and trade finance	3 contracts signed by end 2020
Priority actions on trade and investment in the Neighbourhood South	Implementation of regional actions to strengthen the nexus of trade and investment with employment, to support the implementation of the External Investment Plan (EIP), and to promote value chains	3 new contracts with ILO, OECD and the International Trade Centre signed and inception started 2 contracts ongoing on Trade and Competitiveness for value chain financing with EIB and EBRD Throughout 2020
Priority actions on innovation in the Neighbourhood South	Design of new regional initiatives in support of start-ups and cluster cooperation	Actions for EUR 15 mio committed by the end of 2020

With its priority on “A Europe fit for the digital age”, the Commission seeks to harness the full potential of the digital transformation for European citizens. In the Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries, DG NEAR will work to **increase the take-up of digital opportunities** (*specific objective 2*), by strengthening the institutional capacities in e-governance and data protection, and supporting the development of digital skills and high tech entrepreneurship.

General objective 2 A Europe fit for the digital age		
Specific objective 2 <b>Increased take-up of digital opportunities in partner countries</b>		<i>Related to spending programme(s) ENI, NDICI, IPA II, IPA III</i>
<b>Main outputs in 2020:</b>		
New policy initiatives		
Output	Indicator	Target
Contribution to the adoption of the digital component of the Regional Economic Area in the Western Balkans (phase II)	Adoption of the REA (Phase II)	Q4 2020

Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Support WB partner countries in enhancing their cyber-resilience capacities, to better address the challenges of cyber threats and improve their overall security	Signature of contract for multi-annual regional project to enhance cybersecurity and resilience in WB	Q4 2020
Definition of priorities for a regional approach to Digital in the Southern Neighbourhood	Completion of a study on regional programmes and four EUDs	Q3-2020
Roll-out of broadband strategies, in line with similar EU strategies, in the Eastern Partnership countries	New or revised broadband strategies approved and financing mobilized in 3 EaP countries	Q4 2020
Progress in approximating legislation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions to EU standards (eIDAS Regulation)	Electronic Signature piloted among Eastern partners (UA and MD) and with EU (UA and EE)	Respectively Q3 and Q4 2020
Updated state of play per partner country of their governance, legal, policy and operational cybersecurity national frameworks, with the EU NIS Directive as benchmark	Country analysis piloted and reports drafted detailing the current situation and drawing recommendations	Q4 2020
Capacity building and strengthening of skills of law enforcement and judicial authorities on cybercrime	Design and delivery of introductory and advanced judicial training courses and first responders training courses to operational cybercrime units in law enforcement, prosecution and judicial authorities dealing with cybercrime and electronic evidence	Q4 2020
Progress in reducing roaming tariffs among Eastern Partnership countries	Signature of a regional roaming agreement among the 6 Eastern partners	Q4 2020
Improved frequency, quality and productivity of policy dialogue with Moroccan authorities on digitalisation.	Number of dialogues/meetings held.	Throughout 2020.

Under the objective of “Promoting our European Way of Life”, the Commission is committed to keeping Europe safe while upholding the EU’s core values. DG NEAR will work towards the **establishment of effective migration management with partner countries** (*specific objective 5*), aiming at mutually beneficial partnerships. Specific actions will continue to enable partners in better addressing issues relevant to migration and forced displacement. through these main instruments: the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the North Africa Window of the Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement in Africa, and the

Facility for Refugees in Turkey. The 4<sup>th</sup> Brussels conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region took place in mid-2020.

<b>General objective 5: Promoting European Way of Life</b>		
Specific objective 5: <b>Effective migration management with partner countries is in place</b>		<i>Related to spending programme(s) ENI, NDICI, IPA II, IPA III</i>
<b>Main outputs in 2020:</b>		
<b>Evaluations and fitness checks</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
Evaluation of the EU's external action support in the area of migration	Completed	June 2020
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
EU regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis: implementing initiatives	Initiatives launched and implemented	Throughout 2020
Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa – North Africa: implementation of the work programme	Work programme implemented	Throughout 2020
Fourth Brussels conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region	Conference held	June 2020
Implementation of the funds under NEAR responsibility of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey <sup>1</sup>	Level of contracted funds	All funds under NEAR responsibility contracted by end of 2020
Monitoring of the implementation of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey	Number of meetings of the Facility Steering Committee	1 meeting in Q4 2020

<sup>1</sup> Outputs for Turkey are covered under objective 4.3 and added here for additional reference

## **PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for the year**

In line with the priorities of the Von der Leyen Commission, which set out to push forward the digitalisation and modernisation of the European Commission during its mandate, DG NEAR's focus of 2020 will be on the allocation of human, financial, and information technology resources to accelerate this process within the DG and promote digital skills and talent in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of continuing this process. In line with the target of the Commission to become climate neutral as an employer by 2030, DG NEAR will also deliver a set of actions aiming at reducing its environmental impact.

In its efforts to contribute to the modernisation of the administration, DG NEAR will follow the corporate policies and strategies, notably the European Commission's HR strategy, the Anti Fraud Strategy, the Digital Strategy and the 2016 communication on data, information and knowledge management.

The internal control framework<sup>2</sup> supports sound management and decision-making. It notably ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are taken into account and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls.

DG NEAR has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of the service's internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and be subject to a specific annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

### **A. Human resource management**

To deliver on its overall human resource objective of effectively deploying resources, ensuring a competent and engaged workforce led by a gender balanced management, DG NEAR will focus in 2020 on the following:

DG NEAR's HR Business Correspondent (HRBC) team aims at maintaining a knowledgeable, motivated and healthy workforce in Headquarters and EU Delegations and will continue defining the HR strategy and supporting the DG in the human resources management area.

Further to the 2018 staff survey, which showed an overall increase of staff engagement score in Headquarters and EU Delegations (69% and 59% respectively), DG NEAR drew up a development plan and contributed substantially to the development of a joint action plan for EU Delegations by the Commission and the EEAS.

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<sup>2</sup> Communication C(2017)2373 - Revision of the Internal Control Framework

In follow up of the actions implemented in 2019, additional efforts will be undertaken in 2020 to maintain and improve staff engagement, improve work/life balance, career development and talent management, including through adequate training activities. The specialised competitions organised in 2019 should contribute to maintaining the high level of expertise of staff. Additional actions will be dedicated to helping staff develop skills and knowledge that match the needs of the DG with a view to ensuring the best possible compatibility between staff competencies and service needs.

DG NEAR will continue working on the promotion and support of first female managers, in line with the Commission's target for female representation in management positions. The DG will develop or participate in programmes which will be offered to female colleagues in different grades and functions both in Headquarters and in EU Delegations.

The DG will support its staff during the COVID 19 pandemic by providing specific information and training on topics of relevance during the confinement period such as ergonomics at home, maintaining a positive mental health and teleworking with children. DG NEAR will collect and share the ideas and feedback of staff with DG HR to help shape the future working methods.

Work will continue through participatory processes and supported by the group OurNEAR on issues jointly identified by management and staff relating to staff engagement, management practices and efficiency in confinement and beyond.

**Objective:** DG NEAR employs a competent and engaged workforce and contributes to gender equality at all levels of management to effectively deliver on the Commission's priorities and core business

**Main outputs in 2020:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Maintain or increase staff satisfaction	Implement the development Plan	In order to show how the development plan was implemented, an integrated communication of the actions taken is prepared and disseminated via the intranet and senior management
Increase number of women appointed to first time middle management functions	Number of first time appointments	Appoint 1 woman to first time management position by end 2020
Promote awareness of fit@ home campaign including mental and physical health & wellbeing activities	Staff attend and participate in activities which increase staff understanding of the importance of mental and physical health to their overall well being	At least 3 fit@home workshops organised for DG NEAR on: Ergonomics Mental health Digital overload

## B. Sound financial management

DG NEAR strives to achieve the highest standards of financial management, in order to ensure the best use of financial resources and to achieve a very low error rate. Indeed, for the entire past planning period, the global residual error rate (RER) of DG NEAR has remained below the materiality threshold of 2% (0.53% in 2019). However, weaknesses have been detected in a specific part of its portfolio, namely in grants in direct management (**constantly above 2%, but below 3%, over 2017-2019**). Therefore, without lowering the attention on the other parts of the portfolio, **priority actions will be focused in 2020 on grant management**, to further contain the level of error, such as:

- Promoting a preventive approach in the control plans (i.e. increased on-the-spot checks of grant contracts towards the beginning of projects and increased audits on contracts after final payment and before closure as necessary).
- In-depth analysis of the typology of errors, to be shared and explained to all the actors in the financial circuits and to the grantees. In particular, various actions will be deployed for this purpose: dedicated information sessions, increased use of the collaborative platforms, seminars for heads of finance and contracts administrators, and heads of operations and financial officers; kick-off meetings for new grantees to explain their contractual obligations and provide clear information on the most frequent sources of errors in grants' management and their implications.
- Further training to operational staff on how to deal with grant invoices.

Based on the registered overall low level of errors in the past strategic planning period, DG NEAR will also focus on achieving a virtuous balance between the benefit (e.g. reducing/avoiding the financial/reputational impact of errors) and the cost of controls. DG NEAR aims to keep the **cost of controls** under the ceiling of 5% of the total value of funds managed. In this light, DG NEAR's internal control strategy will be continuously reassessed to enhance the controls on the most risky transactions, taking into account their evolution.

Regarding the projects in Syria and Libya, DG NEAR will continue to monitor the developments of the situation in the two countries, which currently constrain the ability of the EU to adequately monitor the EU projects, and to adopt the feasible contingency and mitigating measures, such as "third-party monitoring" of projects.

Finally, in order to improve the results in terms of time span between the assignment of funds for a project and the spending of financial assistance<sup>3</sup> (above 4 years in 2019 and 2018), DG NEAR will review, in the context of the next programming rounds and of the new MFF, the use of the method of implementation "indirect management through beneficiary countries" (IMBC), which contributed largely in the past to the underperformance, since the

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<sup>3</sup> The so called RAL absorption period (RAL= reste à liquider)

period for implementation allowed to beneficiary countries is longer than four years. As regards the other indicators in terms of effective or efficient controls, DG NEAR aims at safeguarding and reinforcing the results achieved in the previous years, in order to continuously provide adequate assurance on the functioning of the internal control system.

**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 2020:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: Legal and regular transactions	Risk at payment	Remains < 2 % of relevant global expenditure at DG level Becomes < 2% for direct grant management
	Estimated risk at closure	Remains < 2 % of relevant global expenditure at DG level Becomes < 2% for direct grant management
Effective controls	Number of critical or very important IAS recommendations overdue for more than 6 months	Remains zero
	Effectiveness of the audit system: - % contracted of the Annual Control Plan: Year N , - % implementation of the Annual Control Plan: Year N-1, - % implementation of the Annual Control Plan: Year N-2 - % of closed audits (subsequent to all follow-up actions and their recording in the Audit Module) of the expired audit plans i.e. those equal and prior to Year N-3	Remains > 70%
		Remains > 60%
		Remains > 70%
RAL absorption period	Becomes > 30% <sup>4</sup>	
Efficient controls	Budget execution:	Remains > 90 and < 110%
	Accuracy of initial annual financial forecast for payments, for contracts and for decisions	

<sup>4</sup> This is a new indicator (agreed with DEVCO) which covers the entire multiannual audit life cycle; it measures the audits closed on the total number of completed audits of the Annual Control Plan of the Year N-3; therefore, it is sound to expect that in the year 2020 at least 30% of the audits included in the 2017 Control Plan will be closed. Even if this target is arithmetically lower than the others related to the audit system, it is equally challenging, since the implementation of the recommended actions depend on several factors and usually take several months. In addition, the closure of audits can only take place once all the follow up actions after a completed audit assignment are implemented and recorded in the Audit Module, whereas the implementation of an audit (used in the previous indicators) refers merely to the completion of the audit assignment by the auditor.



	Time to Grant	Remains < 90 days
	Time to Pay: % of payments paid within the contractual deadline	Remains > 90%
Economical controls	Overall estimated cost of controls (on the total managed funds)	Remains < 5% of managed funds

### C. Fraud risk management

Considering its complex and challenging geographical, political and organisational setting, which entails specific vulnerabilities to fraud, in 2020 DG NEAR will be fully engaged in implementing the new **Commission’s anti-fraud strategy (CAFS)** in order to ensure high vigilance against the risk of fraud, corruption and other intentional irregularities, including wrongdoing committed by insiders.

In this respect, building over the experience of the last 5 years, DG NEAR intends to further enhance its comprehensive anti-fraud controls. Firstly, based on an internal fraud-risk assessment, it will update the **DG NEAR anti-fraud strategy** for the entire planning period (2020-2024) to better tailor controls to the developments in the (anti-)fraud landscape and to the design of the new instruments and operations. In addition, it will ensure cooperation with services in the external action family (through the External Action Fraud Prevention and Detection Network Subgroup) and with OLAF and other Commission’s services, especially in implementing the action plan of the CAFS. Fraud awareness campaigns will be regularly targeted to staff in HQ and EUDs and to partner countries, particularly in order to strengthen the fraud detection capacity by operational and financial staff. Finally, DG NEAR will further reinforce the monitoring and reporting to senior management on ongoing cases and enhance the follow-up of financial and non-financial findings.

**Objective:** The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS)<sup>5</sup> aimed at the prevention, detection and correction<sup>6</sup> of fraud

**Main outputs in 2020:**

Output	Indicator	Target
DG NEAR anti-fraud strategy covering 2020-204	Update of the anti-fraud strategy of DG NEAR	By the end of 2020
Implementation of the DG NEAR anti-fraud strategy	Implementation of the actions under the strategy	At least 75% of the 2020 actions to be implemented by the end of the year <sup>7</sup>
Fraud awareness initiatives	% of staff reached by initiatives	At least 75%
Implementation of the recommendations included in the OLAF reports	Timely completion of the legal assessment on the implementation of the OLAF recommendations	100% of OLAF recommendations are legally assessed for implementation by competent AOSD within 3 months
	Reinforced monitoring on the implementation of the recommendations	Reminders are sent to action owners for outstanding recommendations at least every 4 months
Regular reporting to Commissioner and to Senior Management on the implementation of the anti-fraud strategies and on the OLAF cases	Reports to the Commissioner	2 per year (at least)
	Reports to Senior Management	2 per year (at least)

## D. Digital transformation and information management

### Digital Transformation

Improving information management will mainly be done by continuing to support the development of OPSYS. As mentioned, OPSYS can be considered the first corporate tool developed, embedding important principles from the EC Digital Strategy such as digital by default and interoperability. It will support electronic signature, automatic creation of files and electronic exchange of information with third parties. In addition, important functionalities of the locally developed Management Information System (MIS) will be transferred to and re-used in OPSYS. Local NEAR applications will be further developed and adapted to the future (e.g. interaction with OPSYS). Lastly, a DG NEAR specific plan for modernisation of digital solutions will be developed.

<sup>5</sup> 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'.

<sup>6</sup> Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

<sup>7</sup> Please note that the updated anti-fraud strategy will be adopted in the second semester, so only few actions will have to be implemented by 2020.

On an administrative level, DG NEAR will continue to be guided by the facilities provided in My Workplace by DG DIGIT. Using electronic signatures for administrative and contractual actions will be further stimulated. In addition, the use of collaborative tools will be encouraged (also facilitated by the Commission-wide roll-out of M365 by mid 2020). Lessons learnt on the use of collaborative tools in general and of Sharepoint in particular will be put in practice. Lastly, with DG NEAR being one of the external actions DGs, we will continue to push for improved IT harmonisation between COM and the EEAS, which should allow us to engage more efficiently with colleagues in our 24 delegations.

### **Information and Knowledge Management**

With regard to information and knowledge management, DG NEAR primarily will continue to use the data services provided by DG DEVCO (through their Data WareHouse) and its governance structures (DEVCO Data Governance Board).

DG NEAR will start sharing the metadata from its own key data assets, in line with the phased approach in the DataStrategy@EC action plan.

Recognising the importance of digital skills in reaping the benefits of digitalisation, DG NEAR will place particular attention in developing these skills (based on the training opportunities provided by DG HR).

### **Data Protection**

With regard to the implementation of data protection rules, DG NEAR will continue the actions put in place following the entry into force of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1725. One of the main actions that should be carried on is reinforcing the accountability and the ownership of the management for the processing operations of personal data performed under the responsibility of our DG. In addition, identifying the processing operations and ensuring that they are properly recorded with appropriate risk-based assessment on the responsible operational controllers are essential steps in continuing the implementation of the new data protection rules.

Transparency is at the core of our activities and the proper information of the data subjects with regard to processing their personal data in the context of our activities is a prerequisite condition that should continue to be implemented. Raising awareness of staff with regard to the data protection obligations and their embedment in the daily work are essential for ensuring the implementation of data protection rules.

The general level of knowledge about data protection obligations among DG NEAR staff must be further improved. This requires that participation in data protection trainings for staff and dedicated trainings for senior and middle management regularly organised by the

Commission and EDPS<sup>8</sup> should be significantly increased, ensuring at the same time that the knowledge is balanced dispersed within the services for a coherent application of the data protection rules.

The Data Protection Coordinator of the DG will provide practical guidance and short presentations on setting in the data protection rules in the daily work of DG NEAR staff in 2020. Monitoring compliance and ensuring follow-up on the actions taken in order to evaluate the progress made during the year are mandatory steps in ensuring a rigorous implementation of data protection rules.

**Objective:** DG NEAR is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policy-shaping, information management and administrative processes to forge a truly digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

**Main outputs in 2020:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Improve implementation of digital solutions modernisation plan (DSMP)	DG NEAR DSMP available	December 2020
Support development of OPSYS	MIS functionalities successfully included in OPSYS	September 2020
Improved IT security of local NEAR applications	Positive DIGIT Vulnerability Assessment Report for TMSWeb applications	Dec 2020
Improve digital way of working	% of intramuros timesheets signed electronically	100% (from May 2020 onwards)
Improve digital way of working	number of contracts signed electronically (outside OPSYS)	15
Improve digital way of working	% of documents now received, registered and kept in in electronic format via OPSYS in HQ (previously in paper format).	3%
Increase information sharing	% of NEAR files available in reading to all Commission	1% (baseline 2020: 0%)
Stimulate use of collaborative tools	Increase in active SharePoint-sites in DG NEAR	+10% (baseline: 44, 20/05/2020)
Stimulate use of collaborative tools	Level of use of Teams within DG NEAR HQ	80% (Dec 2020)
Improve implementation of corporate data governance policy	Sharing of meta data of key data assets in COM data catalogue	Dec 2020
Improve digital skills	% colleagues in HQ having followed introductory course on	50% (Dec 2020)

<sup>8</sup> European Data Protection Supervisor

			use of Teams	
Support harmonisation between EEAS	improving COM and	IT	Participation in IT-specific fora of EUDEL	Dec 2020

## E. Sound environmental management

The Communication on the Green Deal stipulates that the Commission, as an institution and employer, aims to be climate neutral by 2030. DG NEAR will actively contribute to the achievement towards this target during the period 2020 to 2024 by promoting EMAS<sup>9</sup> corporate campaigns at local level and implementing dedicated local environmental actions.

In the strategic plan, two priority areas for action have been defined, namely: the reduction of waste production (target for 2020: 0.18 ton/person) and reduction of emission of CO<sub>2</sub> per capita (target for 2020: less than 2,064 tonnes/person for missions by air, by increasingly replacing missions with videoconferences).

An essential part of DG NEAR's environmental management policy shall be raising the awareness of staff. To this effect, in 2020 DG NEAR will strengthen the corporate awareness raising communication within DG NEAR. Furthermore, local actions will be defined to progressively 1) reduce plastic use, 2) go paperless (reduce paper waste), 3) reduce food-waste, 4) green the cafeteria and 5) strengthen the internal communication.

**Objective:** DG NEAR takes full account of its environmental impact in all its actions and actively promotes measures to reduce the related day-to-day impact of the administration and its work.

### Main outputs in 2020:

Output	Indicator	Target
Reduced waste production	Waste production per person	0.18 ton/person
Reduced CO <sub>2</sub> emission	CO <sub>2</sub> emission per person for missions by air	2,064 tonnes/person
Raised environmental awareness of staff	Number of thematic local action plans developed	5

## F. Examples of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

### OurNEAR

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<sup>9</sup> The Eco-Management and Audit Scheme

OurNEAR is an organisational change project that was launched in 2016. It has converted since then into an organisational development capacity that is an integrated part of the DG.

The objective of the OurNEAR is to support ways of working that allow the organisation to best engage with collective intelligence and respond to the organisational challenges that the DG is facing. The priorities are set by the Director General. For **2020**, priorities include the preparation of a Management Charter for the DG, encourage collaborative tools and processes and support a staff engagement process around the greening of the DG. Furthermore OurNEAR supports team buildings and good management practices. The OurNEAR exist of one full time person supported by an OurNEAR Core Group of volunteers across the DG.

The work of the OurNEAR has been seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that work has been reoriented since March 2020 towards on-line learning and staff engagement. Therefore 2020 included a large DG wide series of staff engagement events (with participation ranging from 10 - 240 participants) organised in a participatory way online and engaging the whole DG and EU Delegations. Staff engagement process focused around “What have we learned from this period working on line”, the voluntary return to the office, wellbeing@Work from home etc. Learning events were also organised around collaborative tools (such as SharePoint) to facilitate the online working reality and contributing to reducing workload.

Further staff engagement processes are foreseen in the autumn of 2020 on the organisational implications of the Commission priorities, better engagement of expertise within the DG and ways to become more agile as an organisation (learning from the COVID-19 experience, working in project teams and moving from online to hybrid forms of working - i.e. online/onsite).

Depending on the further impact of the COVID-19 situation certain activities will need to be rescheduled (e.g. participatory leadership training for the DG) or change from on-site to online. Furthermore the impact of the new situation of on-line reality on management practices and charter will also be considered.

### **International pledging conference coronavirus pandemic**

In response to the global coronavirus pandemic, The European Union and its partners hosted an international pledging conference starting on Monday 4 May 2020 to raise funds to kick-start the global cooperation for developing, producing and deploying a vaccine for all. Together with DG DEVCO, DG NEAR set up a task force to successfully support the actual organisation of the event by notably sharing its experience in the organisation of donor conferences.

### **Western Balkans Covid liaison team**

The sudden onset of the COVID pandemic in Europe, including the Western Balkans, requires immediate and well-coordinated action throughout the region. In the first days of the outbreak, the Director responsible for the Western Balkans appointed a 15-member COVID Liaison Team under the supervision of her Adviser. The COVID team brings together experts from across the directorate dealing with key issues related to financial assistance, financial instruments, humanitarian response, vulnerable groups, health systems coordination, competition, transport, borders, fundamental rights, agriculture, trade and economy. Each member is responsible for ensuring contacts and following issues related to specific DG(s).

Particular care was taken to ensure that all units in the directorate were represented in the team to ensure smooth flow of information with their respective units. The Team meets daily and produces weekly updates of its activity that are shared with the units and EU Delegations in the region.

The work of the team focuses on the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive response package to the region, association of the region with EU initiatives, as well as a medium term economic recovery package. The team will continue operation as long as the epidemiological situation warrants this.