

	education and research			
	Migration @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020122 Total estimated cost: EUR 4 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 4 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Indirect management with entrusted entity/ies to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.4.1 and 4.4.2			

1.2 Summary of the Action

The European Union's cooperation strategy with Lesotho, the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027¹, focusses on two priority areas: (1) green and resilient economy and (2) good governance, peaceful and just society. This action stems from the second priority area, and especially its specific objective 1: "Enhanced political stability and trust in the political system", and intends to support the Kingdom of Lesotho in the implementation of selected key recommendations of the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM)'s report of 2022. In particular, key recommendations made with regard to civic education and participation, gender equal representation, voter registry and transparency of party and campaign financing. In this context, the action will contribute to the enhancement of public trust and inclusion in the political system and to building the basis for political stability and sustainable development. Following a thorough assessment of past actions in the same sector in the country and in the region, and extensive in-country consultations with relevant Government officials, international partners and civil society, the action identifies three components for implementation.

The first component aims to strengthen citizen's participation and inclusion in democratic and election processes especially for the population living in vulnerable situations. It includes activities such as: revision of education curricula to incorporate continuous civic education, support to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in implementing continuous civic and voter education, and support for media and civil society organisations including women's organisations and organisations of persons with disabilities, to monitor and report on the conduct of elections. The election monitoring will cover the election process in general, as well as monitoring of accessibility for persons with disabilities, media and social media monitoring to combat disinformation and hate speech, particularly on violence against women in politics and political and campaign finance monitoring. The component also includes inclusiveness and internal democracy trainings for political parties, as well as support to dialogue and consensus building on political and campaign finance with the IEC, relevant ministries, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and political party leaders.

The second component aims to establish an inclusive, gender sensitive, and accurate voter registry with sustainable maintenance systems ensuring its continuous integrity and reliability. It includes activities such as: technical assistance to IEC to improve procedures, training and management of the voter registration, supporting an accessibility audit and upgrading of IEC's ICT infrastructure, security and systems, and establishing linkages for data cross-referencing between the voter registry and civil registry. The IEC website will be upgraded with new modules providing opportunity for fully accessible online voter registration and updates on elector records. Voters will also be able to look up their polling station allocation online.

The third component aims to strengthen the capacity of the IEC to administer elections. The action will provide electoral cycle support to IEC in planning and implementing election operations, voter registration, candidate nomination, awareness, polling, counting, and election dispute resolution. It will provide legal support to IEC in

¹ Commission implementing Decision of 14.12.2021 adopting a multiannual indicative programme for the Kingdom of Lesotho for the period 2021-2027 - C(2021)9086.