



Brussels, 26.7.2024
C(2024) 5375 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 26.7.2024

**on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of the Neighbourhood East Region
for 2024**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947² of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009, and in particular Article 23(1) and (2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the action plan in favour of the Neighbourhood East Region for 2024, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing Decision, which constitutes the annual work programme for 2024.
- (2) The envisaged assistance should comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.
- (3) The action plan provided for in this Decision should contribute to climate and biodiversity mainstreaming in line with Commission Communication 'The European Green Deal'⁴ and in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources⁵.

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p.1.

³ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

⁴ COM(2019)640 final of 11 December 2019.

⁵ OJ L 433I, 22.12.2020, p. 28.

- (4) The Commission has adopted the Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Neighbourhood East Region⁶ for the period 2021-2027, which sets out the following priorities: 1. Resilient, sustainable and integrated economies; 2. Accountable institutions, the rule of law and security; 3. Environmental and climate resilience; 4. Resilient digital transformation; 5. Resilient, gender equal, fair and inclusive societies.
- (5) The objectives pursued by the annual action plan to be financed under the Neighbourhood geographic programme of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 should contribute to enhance democracy, rule of law and security as well as addressing economic and climate-related challenges in the Eastern Partnership region.
- (6) The action entitled ‘Governance and EU related reforms’ (Annex I) aims at enhancing democracy, the rule of law, and security by strengthening accountable, inclusive and gender sensitive institutions and by supporting societal resilience in the EaP countries. The Action (I) includes three sectors of support: a) Public Administration Reform and Rule of Law; b) Strengthening Resilience through Conflict Prevention, Civil Protection and Support to Democracy; c) Support to Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy. The Commission should acknowledge and accept contributions from other donors in accordance with Article 21(2) of the Financial Regulation, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreement. Where such contributions are not denominated in euro, a reasonable estimate of conversion should be made.
- (7) The action entitled ‘Green and Sustainable Development, Trade and Investment promotion Facility for the Eastern Partnership’ (Annex II) aims to address several key economic and climate-related challenges in the Eastern Partnership region, while also supporting the accession process of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. The overall objective of this action is to contribute towards the development of sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the EaP countries. The Commission should acknowledge and accept contributions from other donors in accordance with Article 21(2) of the Financial Regulation, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreement. Where such contributions are not denominated in euro, a reasonable estimate of conversion should be made.
- (8) The objective and design of the actions fulfil the criteria for Official Development Assistance established by the OECD/DAC, as per the requirements of Article 3(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947, contributing to the sustainable development of partner countries and the implementation of the 2030 agenda by supporting resilience, recovery and reforms in the Eastern Partnership countries, with a particular focus on advancing the green and digital transition. The countries benefiting from the action which are included in the list of ODA recipients, are identified in the respective action document.
- (9) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants.
- (10) Pursuant to Article 62(1), point (c) of the Financial Regulation, indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the action plan.
- (11) The Commission is to ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union with regards to entities and persons entrusted with the implementation of Union

⁶ Commission Implementing Decision COM(2021)9370 final of 15.12.2021 on Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Neighbourhood East Region.

funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 154(3) of the Financial Regulation.

- (12) To that end, such entities and persons are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of the Financial Regulation⁷ and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) of the Financial Regulation before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- (13) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (14) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the action plan, it is appropriate to determine the changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (15) The action plan provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the NDICI-GE Neighbourhood Committee.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The action plan

The annual financing Decision, constituting the annual work programme for the implementation of the action plan in favour of the Neighbourhood East Region for 2024, as set out in the annexes, is adopted.

The action plan shall include the following actions:

- Governance and EU related reforms set out in Annex I;
- Green and Sustainable Development, Trade and Investment promotion Facility for the Eastern Partnership set out in Annex II.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the action plan for 2024 is set at EUR 72 500 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in budget line BGUE-B2024 14.020111 C1 of the general budget of the Union.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3
Methods of implementation and entrusted entities or persons

The implementation of the actions carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annexes may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 4.3.3 of the Annex I and point 4.3.2 of the Annex II.

⁷ Except for the cases of Article 154(6) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, where the Commission may decide not to require an ex-ante assessment.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases⁸ or decreases of up to EUR 10 million and not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in Article 2, first paragraph, or cumulated changes to the allocations of specific actions not exceeding 20% of that contribution, as well as extensions of the implementation period shall not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, provided that these changes do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the changes referred to in the first paragraph. Those changes shall be applied in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Article 5
Grants

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with the conditions set out in the Annexes. Grants may be awarded to the bodies referred to of the Annex I and to the bodies selected in accordance with point 4.3.2 of the Annex II.

Done at Brussels, 26.7.2024

For the Commission
Olivér VÁRHELYI
Member of the Commission

⁸ These changes can come from external assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing Decision.