



Brussels, 22.7.2015
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 22.7.2015

**on the Annual Action Programme 2015 in favour of Azerbaijan to be financed from the
general budget of the European Union**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action¹, and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002², and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Commission has adopted the Single Support Framework for Azerbaijan for the period 2014-2017³, which provides for the following sectors of intervention: 1 – Regional and Rural Development, 2 – Justice Sector Reform, 3 – Education and Skills Development, complemented by support for capacity development and institution building, and support for civil society. This Implementing Decision falls under the focal sector Regional and Rural Development.
- (2) The objectives pursued by the Annual Action Programme to be financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)⁴ are to support the diversification of the economy in Azerbaijan while promoting a balanced and inclusive growth, decrease regional disparities and improve rural livelihoods. The Annual Action Programme contains one action.
- (3) The action entitled "Integrated Regional Development of Azerbaijan (IRDA)" contributes to business development, investment promotion and employment

¹ OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

³ C(2014) 5129, 25.7.2014

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument (OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 27).

generation across economic regions of Azerbaijan as well as to raise rural livelihoods and quality of life in rural areas. The action will be implemented under direct management through grants and service contracts.

- (4) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012⁵.
- (5) It is necessary to adopt a work programme for grants the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 128(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and in Article 188(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012. The work programme is constituted by the Annex 1 (sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2).
- (6) It is necessary to allow the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.
- (7) Pursuant to Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, the Commission should define changes to this Decision which are not substantial in order to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer responsible.
- (8) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Committee set up by Article 15 of the ENI Regulation,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the measure

The "Annual Action Programme 2015 in favour of Azerbaijan", as set out in the Annex 1, is approved.

The programme shall include the following action:

- Annex 1: Integrated Regional Development of Azerbaijan (IRDA).

Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum contribution of the European Union for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 13.5 million and shall be financed from budget line 21 03 02 02 of the general budget of the European Union for 2015.

⁵ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1).

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

Article 3

Implementation modalities

The section “Implementation” of the Annex to this Decision sets out the elements required by Article 94(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20 % of the contribution set by the first paragraph of Article 2, 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 within the meaning of Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions. The use of contingencies shall be taken into account in the ceiling set by this Article.

The authorising officer responsible may adopt such non-substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 22.7.2015

For the Commission

Johannes HAHN

Member of the Commission