



Brussels, 28.11.2019
C(2019) 8729 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 28.11.2019

**adopting an Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia for the
year 2019**

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 28.11.2019

adopting an Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia for the year 2019

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 of the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action¹ and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 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 966/2012², and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia for the year 2019, it is necessary to adopt a financing decision, which constitutes the annual work programme. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 establishes detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (2) The envisaged assistance is deemed to follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.
- (3) Regulation (EU) No 231/2014⁴ lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to beneficiaries listed in Annex I to that Regulation.
- (4) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 the assistance should be implemented through annual or multi-annual, country-specific or multi-country programmes. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the framework for assistance referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 and

¹ OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, 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 Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 11).

the relevant country or multi-country indicative strategy papers referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.

- (5) The Commission amended an Indicative Strategy Paper for the Republic of North Macedonia for 2014-2020 on 2 August 2018, which provides indicative allocations for the sectors for pre-accession assistance.⁵
- (6) Considering the proposals for action submitted by the beneficiaries concerned, the Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia for 2019 aims at providing assistance for actions in the following sectors: ‘Competitiveness and innovation, Agriculture and Rural Development’ and ‘Education, employment and social policies’.
- (7) Pursuant to Article 4(7) of Regulation (EU) 236/2014, indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia.
- (8) 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 funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 154(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

To this end, such entities and persons are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- (9) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.
- (10) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.
- (11) The Annual Action Programme provided for by this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the Instrument for Pre-accession (IPA II) Committee set up by Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The programme

The Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia for the year 2019 as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

⁵ C(2018) 5024 of 03/08/2018.

Article 2

Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 51,000,000⁶ and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following line of the general budget of the Union for 2020: 22.02.01.02.

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 to be carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annex, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in the Annex.

Article 4

Flexibility clause

The following changes shall not be considered substantial, within the meaning of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions:

- (a) increases⁷ or decreases for not more than 20% of the maximum contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, and not exceeding EUR 10 million;
- (b) cumulated reassignments of funds between specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2;
- (c) extensions of the implementation and closure period.

The use of contingencies shall be taken into account in the ceiling set by this Article.

⁶ This amount must include the appropriations corresponding to assigned revenue, if they are available at the time the financing decision is adopted.

⁷ These changes can come from external assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing decision.

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

Done at Brussels, 28.11.2019

For the Commission
Johannes HAHN
Member of the Commission