COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 9.3.2022

adopting the IPA III Rural Development programme (IPARD III) of the Republic of Albania for the years 2021-2027
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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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


Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III), and in particular Article 9(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) In order to ensure the implementation of the IPA III Rural Development programme (IPARD III) of the Republic of Albania for the years 2021-2027, it is necessary to adopt a multi-annual financing decision, which constitutes the multi-annual action plan for 2021-2027.


(3) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU.

(4) Regulation (EU) No 2021/1529 lays down the rules and objectives for pre-accession assistance to beneficiaries listed in Annex 1 of that Regulation.

(5) The Commission has adopted an IPA III Programming Framework for the period 2021–2027, which identifies five thematic windows for the delivery of the specific objectives and thematic priorities of Regulation (EU) 2021/1529.

(6) In accordance with Article 20(1) of Commission Implementing Regulation 2021/2236 of 15 December 2021, rural development assistance should be subject to a multi-annual programme, which is a multi-annual action plan in accordance with Articles 23 and 24 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/947, to be drawn-up at central level, prepared by

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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.
the relevant authorities designated by the IPA III beneficiary and submitted to the
Commission after consulting the appropriate stakeholders.

(7) The actions provided for in this Decision contribute to climate and biodiversity
mainstreaming in line with the European Green Deal.

(8) The objectives pursued by the IPA III Rural Development programme (IPARD III) of
Albania for 2021-2027 are: to support sustainable food systems, through increasing the
competitiveness of the agri-food sector, progressively aligning it with the EU
standards and improving the efficiency and sustainability of on-farm production,
which will provide a better response to societal demands for safe, nutritious and
sustainable food and animal welfare; to facilitate business development, growth and
employment in rural areas, improve farmers’ position within the value chain and
attract young farmers into agriculture; to contribute to climate change mitigation and
adaptation, foster sustainable management of natural resources and contribute to the
protection of the environment; and to improve community development and social
capital in rural areas and build-up modern public administrations for agriculture and
rural development, respecting good governance principles.

(9) In accordance with Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1529, the assistance under
this Regulation may be implemented through indirect management.

(10) 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 the Financial
Regulation.

(11) To this end, the Commission should be able to entrust the implementation to Albania,
or the bodies designated by Albania, subject to the conclusion of a financing
agreement in accordance with Article 158 of the Financial Regulation.

(12) The maximum contribution of the European Union set by this Decision should cover
any possible claims for interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of
the Financial Regulation.

(13) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the IPARD programme of
Albania, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial
for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.

(14) The multi-annual programme (IPARD III) provided for in this Decision is in
accordance with the opinion of the IPA III Committee, established under Article 17 of
Regulation (EU) 2021/1529.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
Adoption of the Programme

The multi-annual financing decision, constituting the multi-annual action plan for the
implementation of the IPA III Rural Development programme (IPARD III) for the years
2021-2027 for the Republic of Albania, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

Article 2
EU financial contribution
The indicative maximum European Union contribution for the implementation of the IPARD III programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 112 000 000, split per year as follows, in million euros, and shall be financed from appropriations entered in the budget line 15 02 02 02 of the general budget of the Union.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2021 indicative amount</th>
<th>2022 indicative amount</th>
<th>2023 indicative amount</th>
<th>2024 indicative amount</th>
<th>2025 indicative amount</th>
<th>2026 indicative amount</th>
<th>2027 indicative amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The indicative amounts of the EU contribution per measure are set out as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>EU contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments in physical assets of agricultural holdings OK</td>
<td>31 480 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments in physical assets concerning processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products OK</td>
<td>30 360 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agri-environment - climate and organic farming measure</td>
<td>2 149 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of local development strategies – LEADER approach OK</td>
<td>4 320 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments in rural public infrastructure</td>
<td>12 000 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm diversification and business development</td>
<td>21 326 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>1 900 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory services</td>
<td>2 465 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>6 000 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>112 000 000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2021-2027 following the adoption of that budget by the budgetary authority for the respective years 2022-2027.

**Article 3**

**Methods of implementation**

The implementation of the actions carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annex, may be entrusted to the Republic of Albania subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements, provided that the Republic of Albania, has fulfilled the requirements pursuant to Article 154 of the Financial Regulation.

The implementation of the actions shall correspond to the following measures contained in the IPARD III for Albania:

- Investments in physical assets of agricultural holdings,
- Investments in physical assets concerning processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products,
- Agri-environment - climate and organic farming measure,
- Implementation of local development strategies – LEADER approach,
- Investments in rural public infrastructure,
- Farm diversification and business development,
- Technical Assistance,
– Advisory services,
– Forestry.

**Article 4**

*Flexibility clause*

Increases\(^5\) or decreases of up to EUR 10 million and not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, considering each financial year separately, or cumulated reassignments of funds between actions contained in an action plan not exceeding 20% of that contribution, as well as extensions of the implementation and execution period shall not be considered substantial within the meaning of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation, where 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 acting in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 9.3.2022

*For the Commission*

Janusz WOJCIECHOWSKI

*Member of the Commission*

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\(^5\) These changes can come from assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing Decision.