



Brussels, 9.12.2015
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 9.12.2015

**adopting a multi-annual Action Programme for Montenegro on Employment, Education
and Social policies for the year 2015-2017**

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance² and in particular Article 7 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 1605/2002³ and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to beneficiaries listed in Annex I to that Regulation.
- (2) 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 the relevant country or multi-country indicative strategy papers referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) In accordance with Article 6(3) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014, the Commission may adopt multi-annual action programmes for a period up to seven years under IPA II. For years other than the initial commitment year, the commitments are indicative and depend on the future annual budgets of the Union.
- (4) The Council established an Accession Partnership or a European Partnership for all beneficiaries listed in Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 231/2014. The Commission adopted an indicative strategy paper for Montenegro for 2014 - 2020 on 18 August

¹ OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 11.

³ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p.1.

2014 which provides indicative allocations for the sectors for pre-accession assistance.⁴

- (5) Considering the proposals for action submitted by Montenegro, the multi-annual Action Programme for Montenegro on Employment, Education and Social policies for 2015-2017 aims at providing assistance for actions in the following sector: Education, employment and social policies.
- (6) 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 1268/2012.⁵
- (7) The Commission should be able to entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the IPA II beneficiary specified in this Decision, subject to the conclusion of a Financing Agreement. In accordance with Article 60(1) and (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and first subparagraph of Article 14(3) of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that the entrusted entity guarantees a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union equivalent to that required under Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, when the Commission manages Union funds.

The entrusted entity is currently undergoing a complementary assessment of its systems and procedures. In anticipation of the results of this review, the authorising officer responsible deems that, based on the entity's positive assessment under Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002⁶ and Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007⁷ and the entity's present compliance with the requirements of points (a) to (d) of Article 60(2) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, budget implementation tasks can be entrusted to this entity. In accordance with Article 60(1)(c) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 966/2012, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that measures are taken to supervise and support the implementation of the entrusted tasks. A description of these measures and the entrusted tasks are laid down in the Annex to this Decision.

- (8) 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 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.
- (9) 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.
- (10) The action programme provided for by this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the IPA II Committee set up by Article 13 of the Regulation (EU) No 231/2014,

⁴ C(2014) 5771 of 18 August 2014

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).

⁶ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1).

⁷ Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA) (OJ L 170, 29.6.2007, p.1).

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the programme

The multi-annual Action Programme for Montenegro on Employment, Education and Social policies for the year 2015-2017 under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) as set out in the Annex, is hereby approved.

Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum amount of the European Union contribution for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at 15,300,000 euro and shall be financed as follows:

EUR 5,000,000 shall be financed from the budget line 22.02.01.02 of the general budget of the EU for year 2015

EUR 4,950,000 shall be financed from the budget line 22.02.01.02 of the general budget of the EU for year 2016

EUR 5,350,000 shall be financed from the budget line 22.02.01.02 of the general budget of the EU for year 2017

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft budget for 2016 and 2017 after the adoption of the budget for that financial year or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

The financial contributions referred to in the first sub-paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3

Implementation modalities

This programme shall be implemented by indirect management.

The budget implementation tasks under indirect management may be entrusted to the entities identified in the Annex subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements.

A multi-annual Financing Agreement shall be concluded between the Commission and the Government of Montenegro in conformity with the Framework Agreement concluded between the same parties on 04 June 2015.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

The following changes shall not be considered substantial provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions:

- (a) increases 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 within each budgetary year not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2;
- (c) within the limits of 20% referred to in points a) and b) above, up to 5% of the contribution referred to in the first paragraph of Article 2 of this financing decision may serve to finance action which were not foreseeable at the time the present financing decision was adopted, provided that those actions are necessary to implement the objectives and the results set out in the programme.

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

Done at Brussels, 9.12.2015

For the Commission
Johannes HAHN
Member of the Commission