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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 10.8.2021

on the special measure EU support for COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the Eastern Partnership for 2021 to be financed from the general budget of the 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, 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 966/2012¹, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe and amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009 (hereafter referred to as ‘Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe’)², and in particular article 23(4) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the EU support for COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the Eastern Partnership, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing Decision, which constitutes the annual work programme for 2021. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 establishes detailed rules on financing Decisions.
- (2) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.
- (3) In the absence of an approved Multi-Annual Indicative Programme covering the objectives of this action and taking into account the background and consequences of the crisis declaration⁴ towards addressing the unprecedented and persisting negative impact of the pandemic in the neighbourhood, it is proposed as a special measure on the basis of Article 23 (4) of Regulation (EU) No 2021/947.

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 Ares(2020)7334142

- (4) The objectives pursued by the special measure EU support for COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the Eastern Partnership to be financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument⁵ are to reduce the COVID-19 health impacts in the Eastern Partnership. This will be achieved by supporting a rapid and safe deployment of COVID-19 vaccines in the short term, but also by improving deployment as well as routine immunisation systems thus strengthening longer-term health resilience.
- (5) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants, pursuant to Article 195 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.
- (6) Whereas actions receiving financial assistance under the proposed Implementing Decision shall not receive assistance from other Union financial instruments, in accordance with Article 191(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 (1), financial assistance granted under the special measure ‘EU support for COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the Eastern Partnership for 2021’ shall not prevent financing from other Union instruments in accordance with the conditions established therein.
- (7) The Commission should authorise the eligibility of costs as of a date preceding that of submission of a grant application, which is prior to the date of adoption of this Decision, for reasons of extreme urgency in crisis management aid or in other exceptional and duly substantiated emergencies, whereby an early engagement by the Union would be of major importance.
- (8) Pursuant to Article 26(1) of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the programme.
- (9) 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.
- (10) 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.
- (11) 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.
- (12) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the measure, 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.
- (13) The measure provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Committee established under Article 45 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/947.

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI-Global Europe) (OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1-78)

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The measure

The annual financing decision, constituting the special measure for the implementation of ‘EU support for COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the Eastern Partnership’, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

The measure shall include the following action: EU support for COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the Eastern Partnership.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the measure for 2021 is set at EUR 75 million and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following lines of the general budget of the Union:

- (a) - budget line 14 02 01 11: EUR 75 000 000;

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 Annex, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 4.4 of the Annex.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases⁶ or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in 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 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, 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. 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 pursuant to Article 195 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 to the bodies referred to in point 4.4 in the Annex.

The eligibility of costs prior to the submission of grant applications and which is prior to the date of adoption of this Decision shall be authorised as of the date set out in the Annex.

⁶ These changes can come from external assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing Decision.

Done at Brussels, 10.8.2021

For the Commission
Olivér VÁRHELYI
Member of the Commission