



Brussels, 29.10.2014
C(2014) 7807 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 29.10.2014

**on the Annual Action Programme 2014 in favour of the Republic of Armenia 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 the 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 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 (SSF) for the period 2014-2017 for Armenia³, points 3.1, 3.3 and 5 of which provide for the following priorities: 1) Private sector development, 2) Justice sector reform, including protection of human rights, and 3) Complementary support for capacity development and institution building, focusing on EU-Armenia agreements.
- (2) The objectives pursued by the Annual Action Programme to be financed under Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the council of 11 March 2014 establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument⁴ are: 1) to support private sector development in Armenia and 2) to enhance the human rights protection in the country in line with EU-Armenia agreements, including human rights provisions in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan and GSP (Generalised Scheme of Preferences) and related commitments.
- (3) The first action entitled "Support to SME Development in Armenia" aims to create employment opportunities by enhancing private sector development in Armenia. The specific objective is to improve the national business and investment climate and support the creation and development of SMEs. The action will be implemented through grants, service contracts and indirect management with an international organisation.
- (4) The second action entitled "Support to Human Rights Protection in Armenia" will help Armenia in implementing its national strategy and international commitments, including EU-Armenia agreements, in the area of human rights. The specific

¹ OJ L77, 15.03.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

³ Decision C(2014)5101, 23.07.2014

⁴ OJ L77, 15.03.2014, p.27.

objectives are 1) Improving the protection of human rights through enacting and implementing relevant legislation in the areas of right to free elections, torture prevention, anti-discrimination (including minorities, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups), gender equality and child protection; and 2) Enhancing coordination and cooperation in the area of human rights and increasing capacity of relevant stakeholders. The action will be implemented through budget support, grants and service contracts. During the remaining programming period (2015-2017), further support to human rights protection in Armenia will be provided under the Justice sector reform priority of the SSF complementing this action.

- (5) This Decision complies with the conditions laid down in Article 94 of 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 Union⁵.
- (6) The Commission may entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the entity identified in this Decision, subject to the conclusion of a delegation agreement. However, this entity (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH) is currently undergoing the ex ante assessment. In anticipation of the results of this review, the responsible authorising officer deems that, based on a preliminary evaluation and on the long-standing and problem-free cooperation with it, budget-implementation tasks can be entrusted to this entity.
- (7) It is appropriate to acknowledge that grants may be awarded without a call for proposals by the responsible authorising officer who ensures that the conditions for an exception to a call for proposals according to Article 190 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 are fulfilled. The reasons for and potential beneficiaries of such award should be identified, where known, in this Decision for reasons of transparency.
- (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) The Commission is required to define the term "non-substantial change" in the sense of Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer by delegation, or under his or her responsibility, by sub-delegation (hereinafter referred to as the 'responsible authorising officer').
- (10) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Committee set up by the basic act referred to in Recital 2.

⁵ OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the measure

The following Annual Action Programme, constituted by the actions identified in the second paragraph and attached as annexes, is approved:

Annual Action Programme 2014 in favour of the Republic of Armenia.

The actions constituting this measure are:

- Annex 1: " Support to SME Development in Armenia";
- Annex 2: " Support to Human Rights Protection in Armenia".

Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum contribution of the European Union authorised by this Decision for the implementation of this programme is set at EUR 19 million and shall be financed from the following budget lines of the general budget of the European Union for 2014:

- budget line 21 03 02 01: EUR 12 000 000;
- budget tline 21 03 02 02: EUR 7 000 000.

Article 3

Implementation modalities

Budget-implementation tasks under indirect management may be entrusted to the entity identified in the attached Annex 1, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreement.

Section 4 of the Annexes referred to in the second paragraph of Article 1 sets out the elements required by Article 94(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals by the responsible authorising officer according to Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012. Where known at the moment of the adoption of this Decision, the reasons for this as well as the potential beneficiaries shall be identified in the attached Annexes.

The financial contribution referred to in Article 2 shall also cover any possible interests due for late payment.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20% of the contribution referred to in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes to the allocations of specific actions not exceeding 20% of that contribution shall not be considered substantial, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

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

Done at Brussels, 29.10.2014

For the Commission

Štefan Füle

Member of the Commission

