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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 19.12.2008
C(2008) 8472 final

COMMISSION DECISION

of 19.12.2008

**adopting the Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA Transition Assistance and
Institution Building Component for the year 2008**

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THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)¹, and in particular Article 14(2)(a) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to candidate and potential candidates.
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006, the assistance should be provided through multi-annual or annual programmes, which can be established by country and by component, or, as appropriate, by group of countries or by theme. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the general policy framework referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 and the relevant multi-annual indicative planning document referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) The Council established for all candidate and potential candidate countries a European or Accession Partnership. The Commission has adopted on 17 July 2008 a Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document 2008-2010 which presents indicative allocations for the main priorities for pre-accession assistance to the countries concerned².
- (4) Therefore, the Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2008 aims at providing assistance to: support the Community Agencies in preparing their counterparts in the Beneficiaries to participate in (the activities) of these Agencies; contribute to the increased legal and social inclusion of the marginalised communities and facilitate their full enjoyment of citizenship rights in the region of the Western Balkans; support the monitoring and implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) and the activities of the South East European Investment Committee; enable cooperation between and exchange of approximately 500 academic staff and students; allow approximately 140 students from the Western Balkans and Turkey to undertake postgraduate studies in EU high profile master's courses; promote non-formal education and youth sectors in the region by supporting projects with the

¹ OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 82.

² C(2008)3585, 17.07.2008

Beneficiaries; improve the capabilities of quality infrastructure³ bodies to implement strategies in compliance with accession negotiations; continue upgrading and strengthening the statistical systems in the Beneficiaries; improve the integrated water management of the Sava river basin; increase investments in projects related to the protection of water and water related ecosystems in the Danube and the Black Sea.

- (5) This decision meets the requirements of Article 90 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No 1605/2002⁴ (hereafter: “Implementing Rules”) and constitutes thus a financing decision within the meaning of Article 75 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities⁵ (hereafter: “Financial Regulation”).
- (6) It is appropriate to implement the Social Inclusion project in joint management with the UNHCR, as the Commission and the UNHCR have elaborated this project jointly.
- (7) In order to improve trade relations and increase investments in the Western Balkans, the implementation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) should be supported through a grant to the CEFTA Secretariat, in accordance with Article 168 (1) (c) of the Implementing Rules.
- (8) It is appropriate to implement Activity 2 of the Trade programme in joint management with OECD, as it has been developed jointly by the Commission and the OECD.
- (9) In light of its extensive experience and exclusive competence as foreseen in the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, a direct grant agreement will be signed with the Sava River Commission to support its activities in relation to Activity 1 for the preparation of the Sava River Basin Management Plan.
- (10) A service contract will be signed via a negotiated procedure with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) in conformity with Article 242(1) (b) of the Implementing Rules whereby “*services may be entrusted to public-sector bodies and relate to activities of an institutional nature*” for the implementation of assistance in the area of quality infrastructure.
- (11) The measures provided for by this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the IPA Committee⁶,

³ Quality infrastructure refers here to all aspects of metrology, standardization, accreditation, market surveillance, testing, quality management, inspection and certification that have a bearing on conformity assessment (abbreviated as MSTQ). This includes both public and private institutions and the regulatory framework within which they operate.

⁴ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1.

⁶ Recalling the Council Conclusions of 18 February 2008, Member States declare that the adoption of the Multi-beneficiary Programme 2a under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2008 does not prejudice the position of each individual Member State on the status of Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99), which will be decided in accordance with their national practice and international law.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2a, under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2008, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

This programme shall be implemented partly by centralised management and partly by joint management with the UNHCR and the OECD.

The programme is implemented without financing agreements.

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community contribution shall be **EUR 32.9 million**, to be financed through Item 22.020701 of the general budget of the European Communities.

Done at Brussels, 19.12.2008

For the Commission

Olli REHN

Member of the Commission