



Brussels, 11.12.2020
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 11.12.2020

on the special measure in favour of the Republic of Belarus for 2020

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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 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 action², and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the special measure in favour of the Republic of Belarus for 2020, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing Decision, which constitutes the annual work programme, for 2020. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 establishes detailed rules on financing Decisions.
- (2) The envisaged assistance is deemed to follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.
- (3) In the absence of EU-Belarus Partnership Priorities, whose negotiations are on hold, it is not possible to adopt the multi-annual programming document, the Single Support Framework for 2018-2020. In its absence, this action is proposed as a Special Measure on the basis of Article 2(1), third paragraph, of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014.
- (4) The objectives pursued by this special measure to be financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument⁴ are to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations and independent media for civic engagement and promote the initiatives of local communities and citizen groups, to foster people-to-people contacts by increasing access to scholarships and stipends for studies and professional exposure and retraining in the EU; to support (re-development of SMEs to prevent lay-offs and

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.

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 Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument (OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 27).

foreclosure resulting from reduction in turn-over due to the economic downturn, and to improve health resilience and the capacity of Belarusian society to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. This action is fully in line with the Joint Communication “Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020, reinforcing resilience – an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all” adopted on 18 March 2020 notably the two policy objectives: together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies and together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies. It is also in line with the 12 October 2020 Council Conclusions on Belarus, which refer to the EU’s urgent and medium-term support to the Belarusian civil society, including youth, persons in vulnerable situations and independent media, as well as to the private and health sectors.

- (5) The action entitled ‘EU4Belarus: Solidarity with the People of Belarus’ offers concrete and visible relief for, EU solidarity with, and EU support to the Belarusian people affected by the political, health and economic crises.
- (6) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals, pursuant to Article 195 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.
- (7) Pursuant to Article 4(7) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014, indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the programme.
- (8) 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.
- (9) 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.
- (10) 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.
- (11) 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.
- (12) The measure provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Committee established under Article 15 of the financing instrument referred to in recital 4.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The measure

The “EU4Belarus: Solidarity with the People of Belarus”, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

The measure shall include the following action:

- Annex: EU4Belarus: Solidarity with the People of Belarus;

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the measure for 2020 is set at EUR 24 000 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following line of the general budget of the Union:

- budget line 22 04 02 02 : EUR 24 000 000;

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 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4. of the Annex.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases or decreases not exceeding 20% of the initial contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2 and which do not cause the total contribution to exceed EUR 10 million, 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 6
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 5.3.1 of the Annex.

Done at Brussels, 11.12.2020

For the Commission
Olivér VÁRHELYI
Member of the Commission