



Brussels, 27.7.2017
C(2017) 5352 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 27.7.2017

**on the Annual Action Programme 2017 – Part 1 in favour of the ENI South countries 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 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(1) 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 European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) Regional South Strategy Paper (2014-2020) and Multiannual Indicative Programme (2014-2017)³ which set the following priorities: (i) building a partnership for liberty, democracy and security; (ii) building a partnership for inclusive and sustainable economic development; (iii) building a partnership with the people; (iv) support to regional and subregional institutional cooperation.
- (2) The objectives pursued by the Annual Action Programme 2017 – Part 1 to be financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument⁴ are to: promote economic governance and reforms that are conducive to sustainable economic growth and inclusiveness in the Southern Mediterranean partner countries; strengthen partner countries' capacity to enhance border security, to monitor drug markets and to reduce the risk of corruption in the defence and security sector; promote institution building and institutional cooperation, as well as democratic governance, intercultural dialogue and inclusion of civil society in policy-making and promote the conditions for a sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict through civil society and citizen's positive engagement.
- (3) The first action entitled “Support to economic governance and reforms in the Southern Neighbourhood” aims at promoting economic governance and reforms that are conducive to sustainable economic growth, enhanced public and private sector investments, development of small and medium sized enterprises, job creation and inclusiveness in the Southern Mediterranean partner countries. Direct management (procurement and grant directly awarded to International Monetary Fund/Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center is envisaged for this regional project.

¹ OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

³

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).

- (4) The second action entitled “Security package 2017” will seek to enhance border security in the Southern Neighbourhood. It will also seek to enhance the capacity of European Neighbourhood Policy East and South countries to monitor drug markets and to strengthen integrity, transparency and accountability and reduce the risk of corruption in the defence and security sector. Direct management with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (grants directly awarded) and indirect management with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) are envisaged for this regional project.
- (5) The third action entitled “South Programme III - support for institution-building and international co-operation in the Southern Neighbourhood” aims at promoting institution building and institutional cooperation, as well as democratic governance, intercultural dialogue and inclusion of civil society in policy-making. Direct management (procurement and grants directly awarded to the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean and to the Anna Lindh Foundation) and indirect management with the Council of Europe are envisaged for this regional project .
- (6) The fourth action entitled “Middle East Peace Process – EU Peacebuilding Initiative in 2017” aims at supporting and promoting the conditions for a sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict through the positive engagement of civil society and citizens. Direct management is envisaged for this regional project (call for proposals and procurement).
- (7) 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 1268/2012⁵.
- (8) It is necessary to adopt a work programme for grants the detailed rules on which are set out in Article 128(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and in Article 188(1) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012. The work programme is constituted by Annexe 1 (section 5.3.1), Annex 3 (sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2) and Annex 4 (section 5.3.1).
- (9) The Commission should entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the entities specified in this Decision, subject to the conclusion of a delegation agreement. In accordance with Article 60(1) and (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that these entities guarantee a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union equivalent to that required when the Commission manages Union funds. The Council of Europe complies with the conditions of points (a) to (d) of the first subparagraph of Article 60(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and the supervisory and support measures are in place as necessary. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) International Staff is currently undergoing the assessment under Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. 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 1605/2002 and on the long-standing and problem-free cooperation with it, budget-implementation tasks can be entrusted to this entity.

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).

- (10) The authorising officer responsible should be able to award grants without a call for proposals provided that the conditions for an exception to a call for proposals in accordance with Article 190 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 are fulfilled. Justifications for the direct award are provided in Annexe 1 (section 5.3.1), Annex 2 (sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2) and Annex 3 (sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2).
- (11) It is necessary to allow the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.
- (12) Pursuant to Article 94(4) of Commission 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.
- (13) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Committee set up by Article 15 of the financing instrument referred to in recital 2,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the measure

The Annual Action Programme 2017 – Part 1 in favour of the ENI South countries, as set out in the Annexes, is approved.

The programme shall include the following actions:

- Annex I: Support to economic governance and reforms in the Southern Neighbourhood;
- Annex II: Security Package 2017;
- Annex III: South Programme III – support for institution-building and international co-operation in the Southern Neighbourhood;
- Annex IV: Middle East Peace Process – EU Peacebuilding Initiative 2017.

Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum contribution of the European Union for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 37.71 million to be financed from the following budget lines of the general budget of the European Union for 2017:

- budget line 22.04.01.02 for an amount of EUR 8 million,
- budget line 22.04.01.03 for an amount of EUR 27.71 million, and
- budget line 22.04.02.03 for an amount of EUR 2 million.

The financial contribution provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3

Implementation modalities

Budget-implementation tasks under indirect management may be entrusted to the entities identified in the attached Annexes 2 and 3, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements.

The section “Implementation” of the Annexes to this Decision sets out the elements required by Article 94(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals by the authorising officer responsible in accordance with Article 190 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

Increases or decreases not exceeding 20 % of the contribution set by 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 94(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

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

Done at Brussels, 27.7.2017

For the Commission
Johannes HAHN
Member of the Commission