COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 14.9.2017

on the Annual Action Programme 2017 in favour of the Republic of Azerbaijan 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) 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 1605/2002\(^1\), and in particular Article 84(2) 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 action\(^2\), and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) The Commission has adopted the Single Support Framework for EU support to Azerbaijan for the period 2014-2017\(^3\), point 1.2 of which prioritises regional and rural development, justice sector reform and education and skills development.

(2) The objective pursued by the Annual Action Programme to be financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument\(^4\) is to sustainably enhance the competitiveness and value-added of the fruit and vegetable sector of the Lankaran Economic Region.

(3) The Annual Action Programme 2017 contains one action. The action entitled "European Union for the Lankaran Region of Azerbaijan" has the overall objective of supporting Government efforts in the diversification of the economy while promoting balanced and inclusive growth of economically sound regions. The specific objective of the action is to sustainably enhance the competitiveness and value-added of the fruit and vegetable sector of the Lankaran Economic Region. The action will be implemented under direct management through grants (including Twinning) and service contracts.

(4) 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 1268/2012\(^5\).

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\(^2\) OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.
\(^3\) Decision C(2014) 5129
It is necessary to adopt a work programme for grants in accordance with Article 128(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 188(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012. The work programme is set out in the Annex.

It is necessary to allow for 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 Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Pursuant to Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, any substantial change to a financing decision that has already been adopted should follow the same procedure as the initial decision. It is therefore appropriate that the Commission defines the changes to this Decision that are considered non-substantial in order to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer responsible.

The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Committee established by Article 15 of the ENI Regulation,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
Adoption of the programme


The programme shall include the following action:


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 13.5 million and shall be financed from budget line 22 04 02 02 of the general budget of the Union for financial year 2017.

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

Article 3
Methods of implementation

The elements required by Article 94(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, are set out in the Annex to this Decision.

Article 4
Non-substantial changes

Increases 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 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of
the actions. The use of contingencies shall be taken into account in the ceiling set by this Article.

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

Done at Brussels, 14.9.2017

For the Commission
Johannes HAHN
Member of the Commission