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**COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION**

**of 6.12.2022**

**on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Uzbekistan for 2022**

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### on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Uzbekistan for 2022

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),

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 966/2012<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009<sup>2</sup>, and in particular Article 23(2) for action plans thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the annual action plan in favour of Uzbekistan for 2022, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing decision, which constitutes the annual work plan. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 ('the Financial Regulation') establishes detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (2) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU<sup>3</sup>.
- (3) The Commission has adopted the National Multiannual Indicative Programme for the period 2021-2027<sup>4</sup>, which sets out the following priorities: effective governance and digital transformation; inclusive, digital and green growth; and development of a smart and eco-friendly agri-food sector.
- (4) The objectives pursued by the annual action plan to be financed under the Regulation Regulation (EU) 2021/947 geographic programme 'Asia and the Pacific' are to promote strategic, long-term and multi-dimensional administrative and anti-corruption reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan and support the creation of an enabling regulatory environment for trade and economic development in the country. It also aims to decouple economic growth from environmental and climate degradation and to contribute to the development of a sustainable market oriented and inclusive agri-food system that will increase farm income, expand livelihood opportunities and enhance

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu). 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, the OJ prevails.

<sup>4</sup> Commission Decision on the adoption of the National Indicative Programme between the European Union and Uzbekistan C(2021)9137 final of 14.12.2021.

food security for smallholder farmers, women and the most vulnerable groups in Uzbekistan.

- (5) The action entitled ‘Improving Governance in Uzbekistan’ aims to improve national policy as well as legal and institutional frameworks with robust preventive, enforcement and punitive measures, in line with best international practices. It aims to strengthen integrity capacities of the national, regional, district and local government authorities with more dynamic anti-corruption transformations and to enhance effectiveness of the implementation of the National Anticorruption Strategy by fostering civic monitoring and promoting zero-tolerance towards corruption by raising public awareness. The action would also pursue a strengthened organisational, administrative, technical and legal capacity of the Ministry of Justice to ensure high quality, predictable and accountable regulatory framework and the establishment of a high-quality and compact system of normative and technical regulations.
- (6) The action entitled ‘European Union Assistance to Uzbekistan in Green Transition and Growth’ aims to enhance coherence between economic policies and environmental objectives within the inclusive green economy framework as well as reallocate the consumption and investment of government and firms towards green goods and projects through fiscal policies and public financial management reforms. The action also aims to enhance effectiveness of mechanisms and tools for the management of hazardous chemicals, wastes and reduction of use of dangerous pesticides in agriculture, including agriculture practises and awareness for reducing the use of pesticides.
- (7) The action entitled ‘Budget Support for the development of Uzbekistan’s agri-food sector and resilient rural livelihoods’ aims to support the implementation framework of the agri-food development strategy enabling inclusive development of a climate smart agri-food sector and sustainable livelihood opportunities, food security and nutrition, decent jobs and access to markets for the most vulnerable (smallholders, Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), youth, women, disabled, migrants).
- (8) Pursuant to Article 26(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the action.
- (9) 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 the Financial Regulation.

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 the Financial Regulation<sup>5</sup> and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) thereof 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 the Financial Regulation.
- (11) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the action plan, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.

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<sup>5</sup> Except for the cases of Article 154(6) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, where the Commission may decide, not to require an ex-ante assessment.

- (12) The action plan provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established under Article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1*  
*The action plan*

The annual financing decision, constituting the annual action plan for the implementation of the annual action plan in favour of Uzbekistan for 2022, as set out in the Annexes, is adopted.

The action plan shall include the following actions:

- (a) ‘Improving Governance in Uzbekistan’ set out in Annex I;
- (b) ‘European Union Assistance to Uzbekistan in Green Transition and Growth’ set out in Annex II;
- (c) ‘Budget Support for the development of Uzbekistan’s agri-food sector and resilient rural livelihoods’ set out in Annex III.

*Article 2*  
*Union contribution*

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the annual action plan in favour of Uzbekistan for 2022 is set at EUR 45 200 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following line of the general budget of the Union:

– budget line 14.02.01.30: EUR 45 200 000.

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 Annexes, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in points 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 of Annex I, 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 of Annex II and point 4.4.2 of Annex III.

*Article 4*  
*Flexibility clause*

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 000 000 not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes<sup>6</sup> 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 for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation provided that these changes do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

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<sup>6</sup> These changes can come from assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing decision.

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.

Done at Brussels, 6.12.2022

*For the Commission*  
*Jutta URPILAINEN*  
*Member of the Commission*