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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 16.12.2021

**on the financing of the multiannual action plan of the thematic programme Civil Society
Organisations for years 2021-2024**

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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 966/2012¹, 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 480/2009², and in particular Article 23(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of Civil Society Organisations multiannual action plan, it is necessary to adopt a multiannual financing decision, which constitutes the multiannual work programme, for years 2021-2024. 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 TFEU³.
- (3) The Commission has adopted the thematic programme for 'Civil Society Organisations'⁴ for the period 2021-2027 establishing two priorities: (i) an inclusive, participatory, empowered, and independent Civil Society and democratic space in partner countries; and an inclusive and open dialogue with and between Civil Society organisations; (ii) a better-informed and more inclusive society with a developed sense of co-responsibility for sustainable development, including addressing global challenges such as climate change and inequalities (DEAR program).
- (4) The objectives pursued by the multiannual action plan to be financed under the Regulation (EU) 2021/947 thematic programme 'Civil Society Organisations' are to:
(i) support civil society at global, regional and country level in the implementation of

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p.1.

³ 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.

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision adopting a multiannual indicative programme for the Thematic Programme "Civil Society Organisations" for the period 2021-2027, C(2021)9158 final of 14.12.2021.

the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development; (ii) contribute to the enhancement of citizens' understanding, sense of responsibility, skills and critical engagement regarding sustainable development and its underlying causes.

- (5) The action entitled 'Support for Civil Society at the Global Level' intends to support and strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of civil society advocacy, and their participation in or contribution to policymaking and improve civil society partner's ability to detect and respond to situations of a deteriorating or improving enabling environment, and address and contribute to structural prerequisites for such an environment. The action will entail three components: the Policy Forum on Development; Global Civil Society Partnerships; Monitoring and Engagement System for an Enabling Environment.
- (6) The action entitled 'Support to Civil Society in Partner Countries' will seek to strengthen local civil society Organisations engagement as actors of governance and development at country level. The action will seek to ensure an effective and meaningful inclusion and mainstreaming of civil society in all five priority areas of the Commission, selected sectors for each EU Delegations as well as with regard to cross-cutting priorities and targets, and enhances their capacity to participate in dialogue on, and implementation of, Joint Programming and Team Europe Initiatives.
- (7) The action entitled 'Development Education and Awareness Raising in Europe (DEAR)' aims at developing European citizens' awareness and critical understanding of the interdependent world, of roles and responsibilities in relation to development issues in a globalised society; and to support their active engagement with global attempts to eradicate poverty and promote justice, human rights and democracy, social responsibility, gender equality and sustainable development strategies in partner countries.
- (8) The measure entitled 'Support Measures' frames the use of support measures, aimed at supporting the implementation of the programme and the achievement of its objectives and might be implemented in the framework of any of the objectives of the Thematic Programme.
- (9) The Commission should acknowledge and accept contributions from other donors in accordance with Article 21(2) of the Financial Regulation, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreement. Where such contributions are not denominated in euro, a reasonable estimate of conversion should be made.
- (10) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants..
- (11) Pursuant to Article 26(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the action.
- (12) 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.
- (13) 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 Regulation⁵

⁵ 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.

and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) thereof before a contribution agreement can be signed.

- (14) 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.
- (15) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the multiannual 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.
- (16) The multiannual action plan provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe Committee established under Article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1 *The action plan*

The multiannual financing decision, constituting the multiannual action plan for the implementation of the multiannual action plan of the thematic program Civil Society Organisations for years 2021-2024, as set out in the Annexes, is adopted.

The action plan shall include the following actions and measures:

- (a) 'Support for Civil Society at the Global Level' set out in Annex I;
- (b) 'Support to Civil Society in Partner Countries' set out in Annex II;
- (c) 'Development Education and Awareness Raising in Europe (DEAR)' set out in Annex III;
- (d) 'Support Measures' set out in Annex IV.

Article 2 *Union contribution*

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the action plan for the years 2021-2024 is set at EUR 996 288 924, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the budget line 14.020220 of the general budget of the Union :

- EUR 202 236 981 from the general budget of the Union for 2021;
- EUR 357 866 235 from the general budget of the Union for 2022;
- EUR 248 173 270 from the general budget of the Union for 2023;
- EUR 188 012 438 from the general budget of the Union for 2024.

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

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2022, 2023, 2024 following the adoption of that budget by the budget authority.

Article 3
Methods of implementation and entrusted entities or persons

The implementation of the action carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annex III, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 4.3.5 of the Annex III.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 000 000 and not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, considering each financial year separately, or cumulated changes⁶ 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.

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 5
Grants

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with the conditions set out in the Annexes. Grants may be awarded to the bodies referred to in points 4.3.1 of the Annex I and 4.3.3 of Annex III or selected in accordance with points , 4.3.1 of the Annex II and 4.3.2 of the Annex III.

Done at Brussels, 16.12.2021

For the Commission
Jutta URPILAINEN
Member of the Commission

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