



Brussels, 4.2.2019
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COMMISSION DECISION

of 4.2.2019

on the financing of the individual measure in favour of West Africa

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2015/322 of 2 March 2015 on the implementation of the 11th European Development Fund , and in particular Article 9(1) thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2018/1877 of 26 November 2018 on the financial regulation applicable to the 11th European Development Fund, and repealing Regulation (EU) 2015/323, and in particular Article 24 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the Institutional Support to ECOWAS, it is necessary to adopt a financing decision. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 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.
- (3) The Commission has adopted the Regional Indicative Programme for West Africa for the period 2014-2020 which sets out the following priorities: (i) peace, security and regional stability, (ii) regional economic integration and support for trade, and (iii) resilience, food and nutrition security and natural resources.
- (4) The objectives pursued by the measure to be financed under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Internal Agreement ('Internal Agreement') are to support the institutional reform and the capacity building of the regional institutions.
- (5) The action entitled "Institutional Support to ECOWAS" aims to increase the impact and the sustainability of the cooperation activities of the European Union in the West African Region. The specific objectives are to ensure (i) that the ECOWAS Commission has internal administrative/financial governance and control systems in line with international standards, (ii) that the ECOWAS Regional Authorising Officer Support Unit is operational and enables improvements in the coordination and monitoring of the Regional Indicative Programme, and (iii) that the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) acquires capability and eligibility to manage EU funding.
- (6) Pursuant to Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877 indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the programme.
- (7) 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 applicable in accordance with Article 30(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877.

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.

- (8) 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 applicable in accordance with Article 24(2) and Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877.
- (9) 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.
- (10) The measure provided for in this Decision does not fall within the categories of measures for which the prior opinion of the Committee is required. The EDF Committee established under Article 8 of the Internal Agreement should be informed of this Decision within one month following its adoption.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The measure

The financing decision, constituting the implementation of the individual measure in favour of West Africa, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

The measure shall include the following action:

- Annex: Institutional Support to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the measure is set at EUR 4 000 000 and shall be financed from the 11th European Development Fund.

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 5.4 of the Annex 1.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

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 for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom)

2018/1046, applicable in accordance with Article 24(2) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1877, provided that these changes 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 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, 4.2.2019

For the Commission
Stefano Manservigi
Director-General
Directorate General for International
Cooperation and Development