



Brussels, 13.2.2015
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 13.2.2015

**adopting the Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development of the former
Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
(IPA II) for the years 2014-2020**

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adopting the Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) for the years 2014-2020

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) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance² and in particular Article 7 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 1605/2002³ and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 lays down the objectives and principles for pre-accession assistance to beneficiaries listed in Annex 1 of that Regulation.
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 the assistance should be implemented through annual or multi-annual, country-specific or multi-country programmes. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the framework for assistance referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 and the relevant country or multi-country indicative strategy papers referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) In accordance with Article 6(3) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014, the Commission may adopt multi-annual action programmes for a period of up to seven years under IPA II. For years other than the initial commitment year (2014), the commitments are indicative and depend on the future annual budgets of the Union.
- (4) Article 55 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 of 2 May 2014 on the specific rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (IPA II)⁴ lays down the provisions for drawing up multiannual rural development programmes under the instrument for pre-accession assistance IPA II (hereinafter referred to as the "IPARD II Programme").

¹ OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 11.

³ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 132, 3.5.2014, p. 32.

- (5) The Council established an Accession Partnership or a European Partnership for all beneficiaries listed in Annex I of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014. The Commission adopted an indicative strategy paper for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for 2014-2020 on 19 August 2014 which provides indicative financial allocations for the sectors for pre-accession assistance⁵.
- (6) Considering the proposal for action submitted by the national authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the rural development programme for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the years 2014-2020 is in line with IPA II specific objectives and thematic priorities for assistance listed in Annex 2 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 and aims at achieving the following (a) to increase the food-safety of the IPA II beneficiary and the ability of the agri-food sector to cope with competitive pressure as well as to progressively align the sector with Union standards, in particular those concerning hygiene and environment, while pursuing balanced territorial development of rural areas; and (b) channelling investment support through management and control systems which are compliant with good governance standards of a modern public administration and where the relevant country structures apply standards equivalent to those in similar organisations in the Member States of the European Union.
- (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 1268/2012⁶.
- (8) The Commission should be able to entrust budget implementation tasks under indirect management to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, subject to the conclusion of a Financing Agreement. In accordance with Article 60(1) and (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 14(3) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014, the responsible Authorising Officer needs to ensure that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia guarantees a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union equivalent to that required under Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, when the Commission manages Union funds.
- (9) In accordance with Article 14(3) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014, before the Commission entrusts budget implementation tasks of IPA II assistance, it shall review the request by the National Authorising Officer for entrustment with budget implementation tasks to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the established structures and authorities, for the purposes of the ex-ante assessment pursuant to Article 61(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and obtain evidence that the requirements set out in points (a) to (d) of the first subparagraph of Article 60(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and those of Article 13(3) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 are fulfilled.
- (10) The maximum contribution of the European Union set by this Decision should cover any possible claims for 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.

⁵ Decision No C(2014) 5861 of 19 August 2014.

⁶ 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).

- (11) Pursuant to Article 94(4) of 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 responsible Authorising Officer.
- (12) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the IPA II Committee set up by Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the Programme

The multiannual Programme for rural development for the years 2014-2020 for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II), as set out in the Annex to this decision, is hereby adopted.

Article 2

Financial contribution

The indicative maximum amounts of the European Union contribution for the implementation of the rural development programme under IPA II referred to in Article 1 are set out as follows (in million euros) (Budget line: 05.05.03):

| Year | 2014 | 2015 indicative amount | 2016 indicative amount | 2017 indicative amount | 2018 indicative amount | 2019 indicative amount | 2020 indicative amount |
|--------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Total | 5 000 000 | 5 000 000 | 5 000 000 | 6 000 000 | 10 000 000 | 14 000 000 | 15 000 000 |

The indicative amounts of the EU contribution per measure are set out as follows:

| Measures | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Investments in physical assets of agricultural holdings | 2.15 | 2.15 | 2.05 | 2.28 | 3.6 | 4.62 | 4.95 |
| Investments in physical assets concerning processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products | 2.25 | 2.25 | 1.85 | 1.98 | 3.2 | 5.18 | 5.25 |
| Investments in rural public infrastructure | 0 | 0 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 3.0 |
| Farm diversification and business development | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.84 | 1.2 |
| Technical assistance | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.24 | 0.4 | 0.56 | 0.6 |
| TOTAL | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 | 14.0 | 15.0 |

The financial contributions referred to in the first sub-paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations following the adoption by the budgetary authority of the general budget of the European Union for the respective years 2015-2020 or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

Article 3

Implementation modalities

1. The programme shall be implemented under indirect management.
2. The budget implementation tasks under indirect management shall be entrusted to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements, providing that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has fulfilled the requirements laid down in Articles 13 and 14 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 and Articles 60(1) and (2) and 61 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.
3. The budget implementation tasks referred to in paragraph 2 shall correspond to the following measures contained in the rural development programme for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: 'Investment in physical assets of agricultural holdings'; 'Investment in physical assets concerning processing and marketing of agriculture and fishery products'; 'Investments in rural public infrastructure'; 'Farm diversification and business development'; and 'Technical Assistance'.

Article 4

Non substantial changes

The following changes shall not be considered substantial provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the programme:

- (a) increases or decreases of the EU contribution by not more than 20% of the maximum contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2 of this decision, and not exceeding EUR 10 million;
- (b) cumulated reassignments of funds between specific measures within each budgetary year not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2 of this decision;
- (c) extensions of the implementation and closure period;

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

Done at Brussels, 13.2.2015

For the Commission
Phil HOGAN
Member of the Commission