



Brussels, 23.4.2013  
C(2013) 2263 final

**COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION**

**of 23.4.2013**

**on financing field offices to support humanitarian aid operations from the general  
budget of the European Union**

**ECHO/TAS/BUD/2013/01000**

# COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

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**on financing field offices to support humanitarian aid operations from the general budget of the European Union**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Articles 4 and 15(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In the provision of humanitarian aid it is necessary to be able to call on efficient, appropriate and effective technical assistance in the theatre of operations and crisis situations in order to monitor humanitarian projects and plans and to maximise the benefits of aid for the victims.
- (2) Such technical assistance is provided through the Regional Support Offices, the Sector Support Team and the traditional offices of individual technical experts and their local support staff based in a given country, all with the human and logistic resources needed to carry out their humanitarian work. Requirements for such assistance include the remuneration of local staff, office rent and equipment and transport and communication equipment.
- (3) Since 2009 the financing for all offices has been brought under a single decision, with a view to facilitating their management and obtaining an overview of their budgets.
- (4) It is estimated that EUR 19 000 000 under Article 23 02 01 of the 2013 general budget of the European Union is needed to achieve the objectives of this Decision.
- (5) The Commission should implement the budget for these offices directly in its departments.
- (6) In line with the Commission communication on ‘Streamlining financial rules and accelerating budget implementation to help economic recovery’<sup>2</sup>, an increase in allocations not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution authorised by this Decision is not considered to be substantial, provided that it does not significantly affect the nature and objective of the Decision, and may be adopted by the authorising officer responsible.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> SEC(2009) 477 final of 8 April 2009.

- (7) This Decision constitutes a financing decision within the meaning of Article 84 of 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 ('the Financial Regulation')<sup>3</sup> and Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union ('the rules of application of the Financial Regulation')<sup>4</sup>.
- (8) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Humanitarian Aid Committee established in accordance with Article 17(1) and (3) of Regulation EC) No 1257/96,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1*

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves a total of EUR 19 000 000 under Article 23 02 01 of the 2013 general budget of the European Union for the financing of field offices to support humanitarian aid operations in the field.
2. In accordance with Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, the principal aim of this financing decision is to ensure the monitoring of humanitarian projects in the field by providing technical assistance. This initiative will serve the following specific objective:
  - To equip technical assistance offices with the logistics and necessary means to carry out their humanitarian aid work in the best possible conditions.

The total amount provided for in this Decision shall be allocated to this specific objective.

*Article 2*

1. This Decision shall be implemented for a period of 12 months, starting on 1 May 2013. The eligible expenditure shall be committed during the implementation period of the Decision.
2. The authorising officer may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, extend the duration of the Decision for up to six months, provided that the total implementation period does not exceed 18 months, in accordance with Article 94(4) of the rules of application of the Financial Regulation.

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<sup>3</sup> OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1.

*Article 3*

The Commission shall implement the budget directly in its departments.

*Article 4*

Where unforeseeable humanitarian requirements generated by natural or man-made disasters are not covered by this Decision, resources may, in the light of circumstances, be transferred by the authorising officer responsible up to a maximum of 20% of the amount of this Decision.

*Article 5*

This Decision shall take effect on the day of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 23.4.2013

*For the Commission  
Kristalina GEORGIEVA  
Member of the Commission*



**Humanitarian aid decision**  
**23 02 01**

Title: Commission implementing decision on the general budget of the European Union related to the financing of offices in the field in support to humanitarian aid actions (ECHO/TAS/BUD/2013/01000).

Location of operation: All countries                      Amount of decision: 19.000.000 EUR

Reference number: ECHO/TAS/BUD/2013/01000

**Supporting document**

**1. Background and needs identified:**

In the field of humanitarian aid managed by the Commission under the European Union budget, technical assistance serves to underpin essential tasks such as the identification and assessment of needs and the supervision of operations in progress. It thus helps to enhance the impact of the aid to victims and improve the ability of the European Commission to determine priorities for the use of this aid.

This technical assistance is provided through the Regional Support Offices (RSO), the 'Sector Support Team' (SST), and through conventional offices established in a given country, disposing of all the human and logistical means necessary to accomplish their mission.

The financing of this technical assistance includes amongst others the funding of national staff, office hire and equipment, as well as means of transport and communication.

The necessary support to the logistical arrangements for EU missions deployed in the framework of evaluation and coordination of Civil Protection (for missions in third countries) is also ensured through the technical assistance in the field; the financing of this support is covered for an amount of 250.000 EUR through the adoption by the Commission of a financing decision in the framework of the decision 2007/162/CE Euratom du Conseil, setting up the financial instrument for Civil Protection.

## 2. Objective and components of proposed financing operation:

### 2.1. Objective:

The main objective of this financing decision is to provide technical assistance for operations to monitor humanitarian projects in the field. These initiatives are undertaken in the framework of the following specific objective:

- Provide ECHO's technical assistance offices with the necessary logistical support and resources to carry out their humanitarian aid mission under the best possible conditions

An amount of 19.000.000 EUR under article 23 02 01 is allocated to this specific objective.

The above resources include national staff (under employment contracts subject to the respective national laws), office hire, including contracts such as insurance policies, leases and security contracts, office equipment, communications and IT equipment, means of transport, and mission expenses for expatriate and local staff.

Expenditure relating to expatriate staff is not financed by this decision but by the decision on DG ECHO technical assistance ECHO/TAS/BUD/2013/02000.

### 2.2. Components:

Beginning 2013, DG ECHO had 44 offices (6 regional support offices (RSO) and 38 conventional field offices) in the following countries:

- Central Africa, Horn of Africa and Southern Africa region: Kenya (RSO), Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Sudan (Khartoum and Nyala), South Sudan, DRC (Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu and Bunia), Somalia and Zimbabwe;
- West Africa region: Senegal (RSO), Burkina Faso, Chad, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali and Niger;
- South-East Asia region: Thailand (RSO), Indonesia, Myanmar (Burma) and Philippines;
- South Asia region: India (RSO), Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan and Pakistan;
- Latin America region: Nicaragua (RSO), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti;
- Mediterranean/Middle East/Balkans/NIS region: Jordan (RSO), Algeria (Alger and Tindouf), Georgia, Lebanon, Palestine (Jerusalem and Gaza), Tajikistan and Yemen.

Countries may be added and/or withdrawn depending on the situation and humanitarian needs<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to safeguard the necessary flexibility, the addition/removal of a country to/from the indicative list will not require any amendment of this financing decision.

### 3. Duration of the decision:

This decision will be implemented over a period of 12 months, starting on 1 May 2013.

Expenditure under this decision shall be eligible from 1 May 2013.

### 4. Previous Commission interventions/decisions

Since 2009, with a view to facilitating their budgetary, administrative and financial management, all offices were put under a single ad hoc decision.

The following decisions have been approved by the Commission on the financing of the offices in the field in support to humanitarian aid actions:

Decision	Amount	Start date	End date
ECHO/TAS/BUD/2009/01000	12.500.000 EUR	1 May 2009	28 April 2010
ECHO/TAS/BUD/2010/01000	15.000.000 EUR	1 May 2010	30 April 2011
ECHO/TAS/BUD/2011/01000	18.000.000 EUR	1 May 2011	30 April 2012
ECHO/TAS/BUD/2012/01000	19.000.000 EUR	1 May 2012	30 April 2013

### 5. Amount of the decision

#### 5.1. Total amount of the decision

A total amount of 19.000.000 EUR will be charged on the budget line 23 02 01. This amount has been calculated on the basis of the needs of the offices and on the average of their actual expenditure over previous years, plus a margin to cover the opening of new facilities and to allow for the modernisation of administrative and financial management tools or to reinforce ICT equipment. Furthermore, new initiatives will be taken in the framework of the management of national staff in the offices, developing their technical competences in order to enhance their contribution to the activities managed in the field.

#### 5.2. Budget breakdown by office

The main budget items are: national staff, offices, IT and communications equipment, means of transport, and missions of expatriate and local staff. Of these, the highest expenditure is on national staff and missions.

The budget necessary for the good functioning of the offices will be made available via:

- A system of specific Imprest Accounts created by the Accountant of the Commission;
- Direct commitment and payment by Headquarters of expenses of a high amount or covering several offices.