COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 15.12.2015

concerning the adoption of the 2016 work programme and the financing for the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative

(Text with "EEA relevance")
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concerning the adoption of the 2016 work programme and the financing for the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative

(TEXT with "EEA relevance")

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps ('EU Aid Volunteers initiative')\(^1\) and in particular Article 21(3) 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\(^2\), and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) The European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps ('EU Aid Volunteers initiative') was established by Regulation (EU) No 375/2014. It aims to contribute to strengthening the Union's capacity to provide needs-based humanitarian aid aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity and to strengthening the capacity and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities in third countries, particularly by means of disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and by enhancing the link between relief, rehabilitation and development.

(2) The objectives pursued by the 2016 Work Programme to be financed under the Union's budget are contributing to resilience building and disaster risk management in vulnerable, fragile or disaster affected countries and forgotten crises; providing capacity building and technical assistance for hosting and sending organisations and awareness raising to potential beneficiaries concerning the programme and its opportunities, thereby contributing to effective communication of the Union's humanitarian aid principles.

(3) Actions under the 'EU Aid Volunteers initiative' in 2016 should focus on deployment of EU Aid Volunteers; capacity building and technical assistance for implementing organisations; continuing certification of sending and hosting organisations and support measures, including the launch of the EU Aid Volunteers Platform for registration, networking, online volunteering and learning.

(4) Pursuant to Article 21(2) of Regulation (EU) No 375/2014, financial assistance to ensure the implementation of the 'EU Aid Volunteers initiative' may take any of the forms provided by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, the subject and conditions of which assistance are to be further specified in annual work programmes, as required

\(^{1}\) OJ L 122/1, 24.4.2014, p. 1-17.

(5) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 94 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of the Financial Regulation.\(^3\)

(6) It is necessary to allow the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

(7) 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 authorising officer responsible.

(8) For the application of this Decision, it is therefore appropriate to define the term ‘substantial change’ within the meaning of Article 94(4) of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

(9) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee referred to in Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No 375/2014.

(10) The 2016 Work Programme for the implementation of the “EU Aid Volunteers initiative” should therefore be adopted.

HAS DECIDED AS follows:

**Article 1**

The 2016 Work Programme for the implementation of the 'EU Aid Volunteers initiative', as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

**Article 2**

The maximum contribution for the implementation of the 2016 Work Programme is set at EUR 16 885 000 to be financed from budget line 23 04 01 (EU Aid Volunteers) of the general budget of the European Union for 2016.

These appropriations 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 draft general budget of the Union for 2016, following the adoption of that budget by the budgetary authority or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

**Article 3**

Cumulated changes to the allocations to specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution set in Article 2 of this Decision shall not be considered to be substantial within the meaning of Article 94(4) of the Rules of Application, where those changes do not significantly affect the nature of the actions and objective of the work programme. The increase of the maximum contribution set in Article 2 of this Decision shall not exceed 20%.

The Authorising Officer responsible may amend the present Decision to introduce non-substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 15.12.2015

For the Commission
Christos STYLIANIDES
Member of the Commission
ANNEX

Work programme 2016 for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative

| LEGAL BASIS | Regulation No 375/2014 establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (‘EU Aid Volunteers initiative’) |
| BUDGET LINE | 23 04 01: EU Aid Volunteers |
| BUDGET AMOUNTS* | EUR 16 885 000 |

* The budget amount indicated covers EU Member States’ participation as earmarked for 2016. It may be supplemented by contributions from European Economic Area (EEA) countries and acceding, candidate or potential candidate countries as well as partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy provided they have signed an appropriate agreement with the EU as provided for under Article 23 of Regulation No 375/2014.

➢ Introduction

2015 was the first year of implementation of the full range of activities of the initiative, including notably the certification of organisations, the launch of the call for proposals for technical assistance and capacity building, evaluation of applications and start of the implementation of the selected projects, the launch of the call for proposals for the deployment and the call for tenders for the training of volunteers, as well as the launch of the development of the EU Aid Volunteers Platform. In 2016 the activities under the insurance and the training of volunteers will continue. These activities except for the Platform and the communication activities will continue to be implemented by the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Agency.

The pilot phase of the initiative was closed and the initiative formally launched with a conference in September 2015 attended by volunteers and organisations that had participated in the pilot phase (2011-2014).

➢ Objectives and priorities of the initiative in 2016:

- To contribute to resilience building and disaster risk management in vulnerable, fragile or disaster affected countries and forgotten crises, including actions in the following stages of the disaster management cycle: disaster prevention, preparedness, disaster risk reduction and recovery from natural and man-made disasters, early warning;
- To prepare the selection, training and deployment of **350 volunteers** in vulnerable and disaster-affected communities in third countries;
- To continue capacity building and technical assistance for hosting and sending organisations, including in tools and methods of early warning for disasters;
- To implement the training programme and training of candidate volunteers funded under the Work Programme for 2015;
- To continue to support insurance service provision for EU Aid volunteers, apprentices, and participants to capacity building activities taking place in the European Union, funded under the Work Programme for 2014;
- To continue certification of sending and hosting organisations;
- To launch the EU Aid Volunteers Platform for registration, networking, online volunteering and learning.

Actions:

1. Deployment of EU Aid Volunteers, including apprenticeship placements for junior professionals and capacity building / technical assistance for implementing organisations

| Objective | Selection, preparation and deployment of volunteers to contribute to strengthening the Union’s capacity to provide needs-based humanitarian aid aimed at strengthening the capacity and resilience of vulnerable and disaster-affected communities in third countries. Strengthening the capacities of implementing sending and hosting organisations participating / intending to participate in the initiative. |
| Expected results | - 350 junior/senior volunteers deployed to communities in third countries in vulnerable and disaster-affected countries.  
- Projects funded under this call provide synergies and complementarity to EU-funded operations in humanitarian aid or civil protection in the respective countries / region  
- For junior professionals: possibility to take part in apprenticeship placements in Europe before deployment.  
A list of countries for 2016 for deployments and capacity building in third countries will be defined prior to the call according to the needs assessment methodology similar to that for humanitarian aid actions excluding ex-ante the areas with ongoing armed conflict to which EU Aid Volunteers should not be deployed (Index for Risk Management – INFORM [http://www.inform-index.org/](http://www.inform-index.org/)) |
| Type of activity | Selection, recruitment, preparation and deployment of EU Aid Volunteers, capacity building and technical assistance for sending and hosting organisations. |
| Indicative amount | EUR 8 400 000 (Maximum rate of co-financing: 85 %) |
| Type of procedure | Call for proposals |
| Indicative schedule | Call published 1st or 2nd quarter 2016  
Grant agreements signed 3rd or 4th quarter 2016 |
### Essential eligibility, selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Projects are designed and implemented by transnational partnerships involving at least two certified sending organisations from two different countries and two certified hosting organisations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When forming a partnership, the sending and hosting organisations may include as partners other organisations specialised in any areas relevant to the objective of the action in order to contribute with their specific experience (Article 8(3), DR);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eligible activities include:**

- Selection, recruitment, preparation and deployment of EU Aid Volunteers.
- Apprenticeship placements of up to 6 months in one of the participating EU Member States.
- Deployment period from minimum 1 month to a maximum of 18 months.
- Activities to promote involvement of online volunteers as well as employee volunteers to support the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.
- Communication activities in compliance with the Communication Plan of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

**Selection criteria**

- Project applicant and partners are certified sending and hosting organisations or sending and hosting organisations that have applied for certification before the deadline for submitting applications subject to the outcome of the certification process;
- They have the operational capacity, professional qualifications and experience to carry out a project according to the proposed objectives and deliverables;
- Financial soundness of all project participants: financial viability and co-financing capacity.

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2. Technical assistance and capacity building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the capacities of sending and hosting organisations intending to participate in the initiative and ensuring compliance with the standards and procedures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected results</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacities of around 115 sending and hosting organisations are strengthened in areas such as disaster risk management, preparedness and response as well as linking relief, rehabilitation and development, strengthening local volunteering in third countries, capacities to undergo certification including administrative capacity, capacity to provide early warning to local communities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building activities, trainings, seminars, workshops, job shadowing, twinning and other relevant activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicative amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Indicative schedule | Call published: 2nd quarter 2016  
Grant agreements signed: 4th quarter 2016 |
| Essential eligibility, selection | Eligible activities include:  
- Study / scoping visits to refine and finalise needs assessment of the action;  
- Activities to build / strengthen capacities;  
- Training courses for third country trainers/coaches/mentors/multiplicators;  
- Seminars and workshops;  
- Job shadowing;  
- Twinning arrangements and exchange of staff;  
- Exchange of good practices;  
- Study visits;  
- Activities to foster partnership building  
*Additional eligible activities per sub-action:*  
**sub-action 2a)**  
- Coaching/mentoring of key sending organisation paid staff and volunteers;  
**sub-action 2b)**  
- Training courses for third country trainers/coaches/mentors/multiplicators;  
- Study visits of up to 3 months for key paid staff or volunteers from third countries to be based in European applicant/partner organisations;  

**Eligibility criteria for sub-action 2a): Technical Assistance**  
- Projects are designed and implemented by transnational partnerships involving entities from at least three countries participating in the programme and belonging to one of the categories mentioned in Article 10(3)(c) of the Regulation;  
- The applicant in each project is active in the field of humanitarian aid as defined in article 3 (d) of the Regulation for at least 3 years;  
- At least one applicant or partner in each project must have been active in the field of volunteer management for at least 3 years.  

**Selection criteria for sub-action 2a): Technical Assistance**  
- All participants have the operational capacity, professional qualifications and experience to carry out a project according to the proposed objectives and deliverables;  
- Financial soundness of all project participants: financial viability and co-financing capacity;  
- The project applicant has a relevant track record in providing technical assistance to other organisations in the fields related to the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.
Eligibility criteria for sub-section 2b): Capacity building

- Projects are designed and implemented by transnational partnerships involving entities from at least three countries participating in the programme belonging to one of the categories mentioned in the Regulation (Article 10(3)(c)) and at least three third countries in which humanitarian aid activities and operations as per Article (3)(d) take place and which belong to one of the categories mentioned under Article 10(4)(c).
- In each project, the applicant and partners from countries participating in the programme must have been active in the field of humanitarian aid as defined in Article 3(d) of the Regulation for at least 3 years.
- In each project, at least 2 partners from third countries in which humanitarian aid activities and operations take place are active in the field of humanitarian aid as defined in Article 3(d) of the Regulation.
- At least one applicant or partner from countries participating in the programme in each project must have been active in the field of volunteer management for at least 3 years,

Selection criteria for sub-section 2b): Capacity building

- All participants have the operational capacity, professional qualifications and experience to carry out a project according to the proposed objectives and deliverables;
- Financial soundness of all project participants: financial viability and co-financing capacity;
- All participants from the countries participating in the programme have a relevant track record in providing capacity building in the field of humanitarian aid to organisations in third countries in the fields related to the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

Award criteria for Actions 1 and 2:

- Relevance of the action to the objectives of the call;
- Quality of the project design and implementation;
- Quality of the partnership and cooperation arrangements;
- Impact and dissemination

2. 3. Costs for external evaluators for Actions 1 and 2 and the certification mechanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Support for the management of the call for proposals for certification of sending and hosting organisations; deployment, technical assistance and capacity building.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expected results</td>
<td>Independent external evaluation of more than 140 applications for certification, deployment and technical assistance/capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of</td>
<td>Contracting of external evaluators, info-meetings and/or on-line briefing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>Indicative amount</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicative amount</td>
<td>EUR 100 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicative schedule</td>
<td>Throughout the year on a rolling basis.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 3. SUPPORT MEASURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicative amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and awareness raising to potential beneficiaries concerning the programme and its opportunities, thereby contributing to effective communication of the Union's humanitarian aid principles. Provision of studies and services to allow collection of lessons learnt. Development of tools to support the development of the network.</td>
<td>EUR 425 000</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected results</th>
<th>Type of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The technical environment of the Database and the Network for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative are developed;</td>
<td>• Networking and alumni activities planned for future and current participants to the programme;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The technical environment for the online volunteering programme is further developed;</td>
<td>• Outreach activities aimed at increasing participation in the programme;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Relevant actors are informed about opportunities arising during 2016 in the context of the initiative and information on key results of activities organised under the initiative are gathered and publicised;</td>
<td>• IT environment launched and its use promoted;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Networking of different actors in the initiative further developed;</td>
<td>• Communication and awareness raising activities on the programme including seminars, conferences, visibility items, audio-visual material, brochures, web content;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dissemination and outreach on the initiative further developed;</td>
<td>• Studies, exchange of good practice, edition of handbooks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Studies and collection of lessons learnt activities are launched.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative schedule</th>
<th>Type of procedure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Database and Network launch foreseen in 2nd quarter 2016.</td>
<td>Use of existing framework contracts or call for tender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of existing framework contracts for information and communication activities: 2nd quarter 2016</td>
<td>In-house development of the Database and the Network.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>