



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 26 September 2011
C(2011)6828

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 26/09/2011

Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING) 2011-2012 in favour of the southern Neighbourhood region to be financed under Article 19 08 01 01 of 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 Regulation (EC) n°1638/2006 of the of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)¹, and in particular Article 13 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Commission adopted the Joint Communication of 25 May 2011² ‘A new response to a changing Neighbourhood’ which set the following priorities: (a) democratic transformation and institution building, (b) partnership with people and (c) sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development.
- (2) The Commission submitted an Amending Letter to Draft Budget 2012 proposing to make available additional appropriations in support of supplementary measures in the EU Neighbourhood region as a follow-up of the Joint Communication. For 2011, a budgetary reinforcement has been approved by the Budgetary Authority.
- (3) The objectives of the proposed "Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING)" programme are to respond to the pressing socio-economic challenges that partner countries of the southern Mediterranean region are facing and to support them in their transition phase towards democracy. The SPRING programme will focus specifically on support related to democratic transformation and institution-building, and for sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development. It is a multi-country programme with an umbrella approach that provides the flexibility for modulating assistance on the basis of progress by individual countries towards deep and sustainable democracy and inclusive socio-economic development, applying the "more-for-more" principle.
- (4) The present Decision constitutes a Financing Decision within the meaning of Article 75 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the

¹ OJ L 310, 9.11.2006, p. 1-14.

² COM(2011)303.

Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget³ (hereafter 'the Financial Regulation') and Article 90 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget⁴ (hereafter 'the Implementing Rules').

- (5) Given the deliberately open and incentivizing nature of the SPRING programme which is due to the exceptional circumstances in the partner countries of the southern Mediterranean region, this financing decision does not provide for all implementing modalities which, according to Article 75 Financial Regulation, need to be determined when the Authorising Officer by delegation is authorised to commit expenditure. To ensure that the College can assume its responsibility for the financing of measures from the Union budget, the Commissioner for enlargement and European neighbourhood policy should be empowered by the present decision to adopt these modalities in agreement with the Commissioner responsible for financial programming and budget.
- (6) The maximum contribution of the European Union set by the present Decision should cover any possible claims for interest due for late payment on the basis of articles 83 of the Financial Regulation and 106(5) of its Implementing Rules.
- (7) The Commission is required to define the term "substantial change" in the meaning of Article 90 (4) of the Implementing Rules to ensure that any substantial change in this decision shall follow the same procedure as the initial decision.
- (8) The Commission has ensured that the management systems set up by the entities to which the Commission will entrust implementation of EU funds for the SPRING programme comply with the conditions for the delegation of tasks under indirect centralised management, as provided for in Articles 56(1) of the Financial Regulation and Article 35 of its Implementing Rules with regard to the actions implemented under indirect centralised management.
- (9) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the ENPI Committee set up under Article 26 of Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The "Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING)" programme in favour of the southern Neighbourhood countries, the text of which is set out in the attached Annex, is approved.

³ OJ L 248 of 16.09.2002 p. 1-48.

⁴ OJ L 357 of 31.12.2002, p.1-71.

Article 2

The provisional maximum contribution of the European Union to the "Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING)" programme is set at EUR 350 000 000 to be financed from budget line 19 08 01 01 of the general budget of the European Union of which EUR 65 million for 2011 and EUR 285 million for 2012 subject to the adoption of the 2012 budget by Budgetary Authority including the corresponding reinforcement of the ENPI budget as proposed in Amending Letter No.1/2012.

Article 3

Cumulated changes of the allocations to the specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution of the European Union shall not be considered substantial, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the "Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING)" programme. This may include an increase of the maximum contribution of the European Union up to 20%.

The relevant authorising officer may amend the present Decision to introduce non-substantial changes to the "Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING)" programme in accordance with the principles of sound financial management.

Article 4

Actions financed under this programme shall be implemented in direct centralised management in accordance with Article 53a of the Financial Regulation except where the College decides otherwise. The Commissioner for enlargement and European neighbourhood policy shall be empowered to take such decisions for the Commission, after consultation and in agreement with the Commissioner responsible for financial programming and budget. The College will be kept informed about these decisions.

Done at Brussels, 26 September 2011

For the Commission
Štefan FÜLE
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

Support for partnership, reforms and inclusive growth (SPRING)