COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 21.5.2019

on the financing of the individual measure in favour of Central Asia for 2019
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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 action², and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) In order to ensure the implementation of the individual measure in favour of Central Asia for 2019, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing decision, which constitutes the annual work programme, for 2019. 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 TFEU³.

(3) The Commission has adopted the Regional Multiannual Indicative Programme for Central Asia for the period 2014-2020⁴, revised through the Mid-term Review of programming documents under the DCI Regulation (EU) 233/2014 as foreseen by its Article 11⁵, which sets out the following priorities: "Regional Sustainable Development", and "Regional Security and Stability".

(4) The objectives pursued by the measure to be financed under the Development Cooperation Instrument⁶ are to strengthen human capacity development in Afghanistan by increasing women’s access to quality higher education and TVET through cooperation with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

² OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.
³ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy, the OJ prevails.
⁴ Decision C(2014) 5653
This action is adopted as an individual measure so as to seize the current momentum for peace in Afghanistan, to position the EU as a credible partner for the region, and to help build a peaceful Afghanistan through greater regional cooperation with Central Asia. Empowering Afghan women through access to study and work opportunities can play a key role in peace-building and regional stability, by capitalising on shared interests related to connectivity, trade and economic cooperation between Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The action builds on an initiative of the Kazkah Government, and was announced by HRVP Mogherini at the Conference on Empowering Women in Afghanistan which took place in Astana in September 2018. The timing of the action is meant to deliver on this commitment without delay, allowing for a first cohort of women students to enrol in the academic year 2019-2020.

The action entitled ”Supporting the Economic Empowerment of Afghan Women through Education and Training in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan” aims to strengthen the human capacity development of Afghanistan by increasing women’s access to quality higher education and TVET through cooperation with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Pursuant to Article 4(7) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the programme.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 measure should be submitted for opinion to the Development Cooperation Instrument Committee established under Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 should be informed of this Decision within one month following its adoption.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The measure

The annual financing decision, constituting the measure for the implementation of the individual measure in favour of Central Asia for 2019, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

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Except for the cases of Article 154(6) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, where the Commission may decide, not to require an ex-ante assessment.
The measure shall include the following action: “Supporting the Economic Empowerment of Afghan Women through Education and Training in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan” set out in Annex.

**Article 2**

*Union contribution*

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the measure for 2019 is set at EUR 2 000 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following line of the general budget of the Union: budget line 21.020300.

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 action 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 5.3.1 of the Annex.

**Article 4**

*Flexibility clause*

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 000 000 not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes⁸ 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, provided that these changes do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

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, 21.5.2019

*For the Commission*

Stefano Manservisi
Director-General
Directorate General International Cooperation and Development

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⁸ These changes can come from assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing decision.