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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 21/02/2011  
C(2011)962

**COMMISSION DECISION**

**of**

**concerning the adoption of a financing decision and work programme for 2011 in the framework of the Preparatory action "Partnership for sustainable urban-rural development" to be financed under budget line 13 03 27 for the attention of the authorising officer(s) responsible**

## COMMISSION DECISION

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**concerning the adoption of a financing decision and work programme for 2011 in the framework of the Preparatory action "Partnership for sustainable urban-rural development" to be financed under budget line 13 03 27 for the attention of the authorising officer(s) responsible**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the 'Financial Regulation'), and in particular Article 49(6)(b) and 75(2) thereof,

Having regard to Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities<sup>2</sup>, and in particular Article 90 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The objectives pursued by the Preparatory action "RURBAN- Partnership for sustainable urban-rural development" are to analyse territorial partnership practices for towns/cities and rural areas, to achieve better cooperation between different actors in developing and implementing common urban-rural initiatives based on the integrated approach and to promote territorial multilevel governance.
- (2) In accordance with Article 75 of the Financial Regulation and Article 90(1) of the Implementing Rules, the commitment of expenditure from the budget of the European Union shall be preceded by a financing decision setting out the essential elements of the action involving expenditure and adopted by the institution or the authorities to which powers have been delegated by the institution.
- (3) In accordance with Article 53d of the Financial Regulation, evidence has been obtained that the international organisation to be entrusted by the Commission with the implementation of Community funds in joint management, applies standards which offer guarantees equivalent to internationally accepted standards in their accounting, audit, internal control and procurement procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1.

- (4) The 2011 work programme being a sufficiently detailed framework in the meaning of Article 90(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002, this decision constitutes a financing decision for the expenditure provided in the work programme for procurement.
- (5) Under this decision, it should also be possible to cover the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Articles 83 of the Financial Regulation and 106(5) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002.
- (6) For the reason of legal certainty, it is appropriate to lay down what should be considered a "substantial change" within the meaning of Article 90(4) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 for the application of this decision,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

#### *Article 1*

The annual work programme for the implementation of the Preparatory Action "RURBAN-Partnership for sustainable urban-rural development" (hereinafter "the Preparatory Action"), as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted. It constitutes a financing decision in the meaning of Article 75 of the Financial Regulation.

#### *Article 2*

The maximum contribution authorised by this Decision for the implementation of the Preparatory action is set at EUR 2 000 000 to be financed from the budget line 13 03 27 of the General Budget of the European Union for 2011. Those appropriations may also cover interest due for late payment.

#### *Article 3*

The budget implementation of tasks related to Actions 1 and 2 of the Annex may be entrusted to OECD, an international organisation, which applies standards which offer guarantees equivalent to internationally accepted standards in its accounting, audit, internal control and procurement procedures.

#### *Article 4*

Cumulated changes of the allocations to the specific actions not exceeding 20 % of the maximum contribution authorised by this Decision are not considered to be substantial provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objective of the work programme.

The authorising officer may adopt such changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and of proportionality.

Done at Brussels, [...]

*For the Commission*  
*Johannes Hahn*  
*Member of the Commission*

## ANNEX

### **Preparatory action RURBAN – PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN-RURAL DEVELOPMENT (Budget article : 13 03 27)**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

*1.1.1. Budget line: 13 03 27*

*1.1.2. Basic Act: N/A*

*1.1.3 Policy context*

The Lisbon Treaty adds a third, territorial dimension to the European Union's goal of promoting economic and social cohesion and reinforces subsidiarity. Reduced disparities in development of different territories can be achieved among others by assuring a balanced urban-rural development.

*1.1.4. General objectives of the preparatory action:*

The aim of this preparatory action is to analyse territorial partnership practices for towns/cities and rural areas, to achieve better cooperation between different actors in developing and implementing common urban-rural initiatives based on the integrated approach and to promote territorial multilevel governance. These practices could be used in the next programming period for urban-rural development projects co-funded by the European Union and to build a bridge between regional policy and rural development policy.

The preparatory action should be implemented in the years 2011 - 2012.

Directorate General for Regional Policy will guarantee a strong ownership of these activities. Selection of case studies and main policy messages will be based on the results of internal discussion within our Directorate.

#### **1.2. Actions /Type of financial intervention**

*1.2.1 Joint Management: Comprehensive Study on Partnership for Sustainable Urban-Rural Development + Technical Assistance*

##### **Action 1: COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN-RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

A Review of existing practices of Urban-Rural partnership in several EU Member States (desk research). For each selected EU Member State the study has to analyse if it exists a strategy for the development of rural and urban areas and if within this strategy there is a reference to the importance of building up, and facilitating development of partnerships. Existing innovative cooperation tools need to be analysed.

The review has to deal with both EU Regional and rural development policies, and other national/regional existing policy tools. The focus will be on existing cases of integration and synergic use of ERDF and EAFRD funds. Relationships between Urban and Rural areas

should be a direct objective of the tool, but also cases of interesting indirect territorial cooperation between rural and urban areas should be considered.

Descriptions of several case studies to better understand strategy, implementation and governance of partnerships at local level, with the possible support of upper levels. Selected case studies have to be prepared also on the basis of field interviews and visits.

This study will be implemented by OECD. This Organisation has a consistent experience in territorial analysis (with territorial reviews; urban reviews and rural reviews) and a strong experience of case study implementation at both regional and local level.

Indicative budget: 550.000 EUR

### **Action 2: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: meetings; seminars and others.**

Products for Action 1.2.1.: Comprehensive study (review of EU policy context; case studies; policy suggestions)-Research report: general part and Case Studies; synthesis report; country policy suggestions for EU27.

Indicative Budget : 100.000 EUR

Implementing Mode: Contribution Agreement with OECD.

Indicative timetable: First semester 2011

### **1.2.2 Procurement: Preparatory Study + Dissemination**

#### Action 3: PREPARATORY STUDY

The Preparatory Study will be based on the material resulting from previous seminars organised by Directorate General for Regional Policy on Rural Urban linkages and Territorial Cohesion, on intergovernmental activities (Territorial Agenda), on existing research in this field (Espoon, OECD). The results of this study will be used to draft policy conclusion for next programming period.

#### Action 4: DISSEMINATION OF STUDIES RESULTS

Organisation of a main Conference in Brussels to discuss results with policy makers from Directorate General for Regional Policy and Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural development; Ministries involved in the Territorial Agenda process; Managing Authorities of both regional and rural development programmes; European Territorial Cooperation programmes concerned; university experts, Committee of Regions and other stakeholders.

Organisation of four Seminars, based possibly in some of the areas selected for case studies (eg: North, West, South, East), to discuss results of the analysis with policy makers; universities and stakeholders.

- Publication and translation of the study (see action 2).

- Production of a video

- Production of brochures and texts than can be used on Directorate General for Regional Policy Website.

## Action 5: DISSEMINATION AT LOCAL LEVEL TO FACILITATE NEW POSSIBLE URBAN RURAL PARTNERSHIPS

The scope and content of dissemination activities at local level will be designed on the basis of consultation with stakeholders (Cemr, Eurocities, METREX, R.E.D. others), to prepare an activity to facilitate the spread of Rural-Urban partnership at local level.

Organisation of Focus Groups to facilitate urban-rural partnerships practices at local level. Activities to facilitate discussion with upper level of governance and programme management authorities.

## Action 6: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Activities to facilitate the implementation of this action.

For a selected number of member States showing a particular interest to Rural-Urban linkages and with strong tradition of territorial analysis, it could be interesting to compare existing territorial methodologies and statistical options to define Rural-Urban functional areas. The creation of a specific working group could be taken into account.

The creation of a steering group should be constituted so as to follow the entire Preparatory Action.

Meetings, small seminars.

Products for Action 1.2.2: 1 Preparatory study (including policy suggestions); one conference; four regional Seminars; Publication of the study in different languages; communication tools; Local dissemination activities and Focus Groups.

*Indicative global budget for procurement:* 1. 350 000 EUR

*Implementing Mode:* EU Framework Contracts/ Call for Tender

*Indicative timetable for procurement procedures:* First semester 2011