



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 21.3.2012  
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**COMMISSION DECISION**

**of 21.3.2012**

**concerning the adoption of a financing decision and work programme for 2012 in the framework and for the implementation of the Preparatory Action "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" to be financed under budget line 13 03 28**

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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, 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 objective pursued by the preparatory action "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" is to continue developing a comprehensive strategy that would promote and disseminate knowledge and experience of regional policy in the framework of the partnerships between the Commission and third countries and to co-operate with and assist international organisations in building new regional partnerships in this field. It is envisaged that explaining how the cohesion policy works will contribute to an improvement in the understanding of European values, basic principles, delivery structures and policies.
- (2) In the budget of the European Union for 2012, the budgetary authority has allocated EUR 2 000 000 to the preparatory action "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" under budget line 13 03 28.
- (3) In accordance with Article 75(2) 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

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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.

the action involving expenditure and adopted by the institution or the authorities to which powers have been delegated by the institution.

- (4) In accordance with Article 90(2) of the Implementing Rules, where the implementation of appropriations is provided for by an annual work programme constituting a sufficiently detailed framework, the work programme shall also be considered to be the financing decision for the procurement contracts involved.
- (5) The 2012 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.
- (6) This financing decision may also cover the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Articles 83 of the Financial Regulation and 106(5) of the Implementing Rules.
- (7) 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 work programme for the implementation of the Preparatory Action "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" (hereinafter "the Preparatory Action") for 2012, 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 28 of the General Budget of the European Union for 2012.

Those appropriations may also cover interest due for late payment.

#### *Article 3*

Cumulated changes of the allocations to the specific actions covered by the work programme 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, 21.3.2012

*For the Commission*  
*Johannes HAHN*  
*Member of the Commission*

## ANNEX

### **PREPARATORY ACTION: ENHANCING REGIONAL AND LOCAL COOPERATION THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF EU REGIONAL POLICY AT A GLOBAL SCALE (BUDGET ARTICLE 13 03 28)**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1. *Budget line: 13 03 28*

1.2. *Basic Act: Not applicable*

1.3. *Policy context*

The promotion of EU Regional Policy on a global scale is an important component of the Directorate General's work programme as a contribution to the Union's external policies managed by the external relations family of DGs.

1.4. *General objectives of the preparatory action:*

The objectives of the work under the Preparatory Action will be to:

- **Support the implementation of the Eastern Partnership** (EaP), in close cooperation with the EEAS, DG DEVCO and EU Delegations in the concerned countries. The EaP is a response to the ambitions of a number of neighbouring countries from Eastern Europe and South Caucasus, (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) for closer relations with the European Union;
- **share the benefit of the EU's experience** of how regional and cohesion policies underpin the process of economic and political integration with main partners outside the EU (notably those with whom a dialogue on regional policy exists), regional organisations and world regions, to bring concrete support to these countries in their efforts to improve public policy in regional development, and regional and local governance issues;
- **pool international responses and experience to the benefit of EU regions and cities** on the challenges faced by countries and regions worldwide (globalisation and recovery from the global economic crisis, ageing population, climate change, etc.), challenges that have a strong "territorial" dimension and that require action at local and regional level.

The additional resources for 2012 will help to develop the dialogue with third countries. These resources will help the Commission to deepen and widen its activities and to bring real help to third countries in their efforts to improve public policy in regional development, and regional and local governance issues.

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

In 2012 the preparatory action will be implemented, in the same way as the preparatory action in 2011, through the use of specific contracts under framework contracts or direct contracts or

cost reimbursements. The actions supported will include the organisation of events, information activities, study visits, networking and studies. For certain actions, use will also be made of calls for tender.

### ***2.1. ACTION 1: Studies and technical assistance***

In Ukraine in 2010/2011 a study was carried out on economic competitiveness and institutional capacity in two representative regions. In 2012 a number of similar studies could be carried out in other Eastern or Southern partner countries. Such studies typically analyse strengths and weaknesses in economic performance and institutional capacity enabling specific actions to be designed in response.

In Latin America in 2012, a number of actions on cross-border cooperation will be organised (study visits, workshops, technical assistance) to discuss opportunities and problems that may arise in the implementation of European experiences in the light of Latin American local reality. It is intended to give appropriate follow up to some of the recommendations that could be formulated in some of the outputs of these actions (action plans, final reports, handbooks, practical guides) for further technical assistance depending on concerned Latin American regions and actors expressing an interest.

In Latin America, namely Chile, it is expected to carry out technical assistance actions for the management of regional innovation strategies in selected regions. A specific output of this project could consist in establishing technical guidelines for drafting and implementing a regional innovation strategy and/or to implement a set of innovation services to SMEs. In the case of Chile, this assistance would follow the conclusion by mid-2011 of a major project financed by resources managed by the EU Delegation to help certain Chilean regions to build regional innovation strategies, taking into account the European experience.

In West Africa a study of opportunities for cross border cooperation was carried out in 2011. Follow up actions in the light of detailed recommendations formulated by this study could be carried out depending on the interest expressed by actors in the region. Such actions would be designed to promote cross border cooperation and facilitate the involvement of local authorities and municipalities.

A number of further studies and technical assistance actions could for example cover the following topics:

- Technical assistance in improving statistical base at regional level of regional capacity in Ukraine;
- Contribution to the State Strategy for Regional Development in Georgia in particular to identify priority areas for action;
- Russia: Study on integrated development plans in former single-industry towns ("mono-cities")
- Follow up cross-border cooperation in Latin America: for example support to specific cooperation actions in Brazilian or Chilean border areas or any other border through the establishment of action plans proposing working lines for enhancing the collaboration in the border area with concrete actions and measures;

- Regional innovation strategies in Latin America, namely Chile: support the improvement of the planning and management of the regional innovation systems in selected regions through the establishment of technical guidelines and training of 10 to 20 officials and experts;
- Follow up to the cross border study in West Africa based on the detailed recommendations.

Indicative budget €500 000

## **2.2. ACTION 2: Information seminars (study visits and seminars)**

Seminars are an important means of exchanging information and promoting mutual understanding with third countries. There is an increasing demand from third countries for direct experience of the implementation of EU regional policy on the ground in different contexts. The preparatory action makes this possible, by assuming travel and accommodation costs incurred by nominated experts and third country participants.

A number of seminars and training programmes could be supported to be held in main partner countries on topics such as: strategic and governance issues, information systems, monitoring, evaluation, regional innovation systems and clusters, sustainable urban development, cross-border cooperation, etc. For example:

- Eastern Partnership: regional conference in Georgia examining strategy formulation, governance issues and EU experience and involving all Eastern partner countries;
- Ukraine: information seminars on EU approaches to regional policy and Europe 2020;
- If contacts can be organised at governmental level, readiness to work with southern neighbours eg on study visits;
- Open Days seminars on regional policy co-operation with Eastern Partner countries and other countries having a dialogue on regional policy;
- Seminar(s) on Regional insertion of outermost regions in Caribbean / Macaronesian region and/or EU;
- Brazil: National Conference on regional development policy;
- Brazil: Workshop on the OECD Territorial Review of Brazil;
- Brazil and/or other Latin American countries: Targeted training actions for cross-border cooperation actors (North, Centre and South border areas);
- China: High-level seminar on EU-China regional policy cooperation;
- Argentina and/or Chile: Contribution to Regional policy seminars with regional representatives.

A number of programme exchanges could take place, namely for representatives from countries having a dialogue with the EU on regional policy and EU national and regional

officials. Argentina, Mexico, Japan, South and West Africa (UEMOA, ECOWAS) could also participate in these exchange visits depending on them expressing an interest. Following the exchanges and visits, participants will be asked to report and provide concrete feedback on lessons learnt, good practices, possibly tips and relevance of the European experience for their respective areas of competence. Some of the following actions could be supported:

- Japan: Urban development programme exchange for 10 representatives from EU, visits to Japanese cities and joint seminar;
- Latin America: Second edition of urban development programme exchange (URBELAC) for representatives from EU cities, visits to Latin American cities and joint seminar (final output would be the identification of a detailed Action Plan by each Latin American city including the lessons learnt by beneficiary cities); study visits of representatives from Chile and/or Argentina;
- China: continuation of the Chinese European Training on Regional Policy and exchange programme for Chinese and EU representatives in the framework of the EU-China Urbanisation Partnership;
- Eastern and Southern neighbourhood: programme of visits by officials from partner countries to examine issues of strategy development, governance and cross border co-operation in EU regions. After each such visit a report and a handbook of good practice will be put together by participants and organisers for distribution in the European Neighbourhood;
- Brazil: Regional and urban development programme exchange for representatives from Brazil and EU, visits to EU/Brazilian regions and cities and joint seminar;
- Russia: Study visits for Russian representatives;
- West and South Africa: programme of visits by officials from Africa to examine issues of cross border co-operation, strategy formulation, economic development and multi level governance in EU regions.

Other expert visits from third countries to Europe or to other third countries or from European regional policy experts to third countries, in particular to those countries with a proven experience on regional policy issues (e.g. Australia, Canada, United States) could take place depending on specific interests.

Indicative budget €1 450 000

### ***2.3. ACTION 3: Support to information and communication tools***

In order to increase the visibility of the activities and priorities of regional policy it is important to prepare, and translate into other languages, information and communication products. Furthermore, the Commissioner and/or DG REGIO are frequently called upon to make presentations, together with the provision of stands at conferences all over the world. Since we cannot satisfy all these requests it makes sense to prepare ready made visual or audio visual material which could be shipped to these destinations. This action will be implemented via a service contract.

Indicative budget: €50 000

**3. Total budget: €2 000 000**

**4. Indicative calendar for procurement procedures**

The Community contribution to the procurement procedures described in the work programme will be covered by commitment appropriations for 2012 for which an amount of € 2 000 000 is available. Most of the actions (either use of a FWC or of direct contracts) will start on the 1st quarter of 2012. All specific and direct contracts are expected to have been signed by end 2012.

Within the indicative budget, changes not exceeding 20 % of the maximum contribution of the Community are not considered to be substantial provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objective of the work programme.