



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 12/8/2009
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COMMISSION DECISION

of 12/8/2009

amending Decision C(2009)3257 on two Pilot projects and the Preparatory action to be financed under Articles 13 03 22, 13 03 23 and 13 03 24 of the general budget of the European Communities

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THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities¹, and in particular Article 49(6)(a) and (b) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) By Decision C(2009)3257 of 4 May 2009 the Commission approved two Pilot projects and the Preparatory action to be financed under Articles 13 03 22, 13 03 23 and 13 03 24 of the general budget of the European Communities.
- (2) The objectives pursued by the pilot project "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" (Article 13 03 23) are to build up knowledge and experience of regional policy in the framework of the strategic partnership 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 improve understanding of European values, basic principles, delivery structures and policies.
- (3) In order to enlarge the geographical coverage of the pilot project "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" (Article 13 03 23), to improve the communications tools and to broaden the scope of the logistics/service contract under Action 1 as well as the scope of Actions 2 and 3 of that pilot project, sections 1.1.4, 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 of Annex I of Decision C(2009)3257 should be amended to reflect the need for enhanced effectiveness of that pilot project.
- (4) According to Article 53d(1)(a) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002, where the Commission implements the budget by joint management, certain implementation tasks are delegated to international organisations wherever the Commission and the international organisation are bound by a long-term framework agreement laying down the administrative and financial arrangements for their cooperation.

¹ OJ L 248, 16.09.2002 p. 1.

- (5) For the purposes of the implementation of the new Action 4 "Joint management with the OECD" of the pilot project "Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy at a global scale" (Article 13 03 23) the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (the "OECD") is an "international organisation" within the meaning of Article 53d(1) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 and Article 43(2) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation². On 4 April 2006, the Commission and the OECD have signed a framework agreement. Section 1.2.4 (Action 4) of Annex I of Decision C(2009)3257 should be replaced to allow for the delegation of certain implementation tasks to the OECD and section 1.4 (Indicative calendar for procurement procedures) of that Annex should be amended to allow for contribution agreements.
- (6) Decision C(2009)3257 should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The text set out in Annex I of Decision C(2009)3257 is replaced by the text set out in the Annex to this Decision.

Done at Brussels, 12/8/2009

For the Commission
Paweł Samecki
Member of the Commission

² OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p.1.

ANNEX

"Annex I"

1. **PILOT PROJECT: ENHANCING REGIONAL AND LOCAL COOPERATION THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF EU REGIONAL POLICY AT A GLOBAL SCALE (BUDGET ARTICLE 13 03 23)**

1.1. **Introduction**

1.1.1. *Budget line: 13 03 23*

1.1.2. *Basic Act:*

Pilot project within the meaning of Article 49(6)(a) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1).

1.1.3 *Policy context*

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

1.1.4. *General objectives of the pilot project:*

Whilst sharing many of the same aims, including keeping the general public and policy makers informed of the successes of EU Regional Policy, communication activities towards third countries differ from the DG's internal EU communications strategy. That is because potential beneficiaries outside Europe, especially in Memorandum of Understanding countries (China, Russia, Brasil and Ukraine), will be beneficiaries of increased knowledge on the method rather than of projects financed from the funds. This implies a significant difference in emphasis and a need to highlight and perhaps upgrade different information sources. Whereas the Commission's Cohesion reports are the major source as far as economic trends and statistical data are concerned, there is comparatively limited material on the aspects which DG REGIO plans to project to third countries such as the precise benefits and the mechanisms of multi-level governance or the techniques of managing cross border co-operation.

The pilot project shall help to consolidate the ongoing bilateral cooperation with China, Russia, Brazil and Ukraine (MoU countries). The signature of a Memorandum of Understanding is a useful tool to give a political signal of the importance the Commission attached to the intended cooperation and accordingly it has been limited to EU strategic partners.

DG REGIO is keen to develop further cooperation with other interested countries and organisations (in particular, other EU strategic partners and Federal States or regional groupings of a comparable size to EU) but a selective approach is needed for the signature of Memoranda of Understanding to avoid misunderstandings and misperceptions in terms of overall political priorities.

Realistically, this one year pilot project, whose implementation might still continue in 2010, can pursue two interrelated aims:

- a greater mutual understanding and promotion of more effective policies in the regional domain, notably informing regions in the countries where a Memorandum of Understanding is in existence or under discussion of the realities of regional development in Europe. This would be to avoid misunderstandings about the scope of its reach and the risk of raising expectations too high.
- increasing visibility on the activities and the priorities of regional policy, i.e. to make existing material more widely available. The assistance of the pilot project, and the freedom it should give to act outside the European Union, will be most valuable in making the activities and priorities of regional policy more accessible. An element to have in mind in increasing availability is to clarify to what extent DG REGIO can itself disseminate information directly and to what extent it should use agents such as the Commission's delegations in the areas concerned. As a first step a regional policy correspondent should be identified in the key country delegations. We should develop closer contacts and joint activities with organisations specialised in this field such as the Forum of Global Associations of Regions (FOGAR), United Cities and Local Government and the Association of European Border Regions. Another aspect could be to develop more material on the method and studies and publications could be directed to this end.

1.2. Actions /Type of financial intervention

1.2.1 ACTION 1: Conferences in and outside Europe/ service contract

1.2.1.1. Communication Tools

The Commissioner and the Directorate for Regional Policy are regularly called upon to make presentations on the lessons of EU regional policy, their possible applications elsewhere and the extent to which experience can be shared with regions in other parts of the world. To make best use of our resources we propose to produce exhibition panels and umbrella stands which summarise the messages and a presentation kit, including a specially produced brochure, video and power point material which can be used by delegations and other information relays when our own presence is not feasible. At the same time a number of language versions of the kit including those most commonly used in emerging regions of the world (French, English, Portuguese and Spanish) as well as the MoU languages (Chinese Russian and Ukranian) will be produced along with versions of DG REGIO's standard brochures. The activities of research, writing, design, layout, translation and printing can be covered by Commission framework contracts.

Indicative budget: €200 000.

1.2.1.2. Logistics/service contract

Commission Framework contracts: There are a number of events planned in Brussels and in Brazil, Africa, China, Russia and the neighbourhood countries at which REGIO could contribute to the programme definition and preparation, the management of invitations, the costs of speakers' travel, site and equipment hire and local personnel. Reimbursement of travel costs and accommodation will be made according to Commission's rules.

- Conference 11/12 May in Brussels (mostly financed by existing framework contracts). This will deal with the global scope of EU Regional Policy and invitations have been promised to a number of high level officials in different regional groupings in Africa and South America notably. Some of them may speak at the event and in these cases travel and accommodation expenses should be foreseen. At this level and at these distances the use of Business class is required. This implies an average cost of €6000 per invitee. Presume 5 speaker invitations.
- Proposed UEMOA conference Ouagadougou 'Regional Policy techniques and multi level governance' 2nd semester 2009. Co-organisation and travel expenses.
- Open Days 2009: In the context of a series of high-level panels and seminars on exchange of good practice in regional economic development, a number of networking events designed to foster contacts between third country officials attending OPEN DAYS and other local and regional government officials from across the EU.

Indicative budget: €700 000.

1.2.2. ACTION 2: Training exchanges

This action would include expert visits from the EU to various regions of the world (this could include neighbourhood/Ukraine) and the facilitation of study visits from officials in these regions to Brussels and to European regions. This activity could take the form of a programme sponsored by DG REGIO on the basis of requests for travel bursaries. We can also sponsor specific training courses in the context of existing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs).

- Expert visits to Africa, South and Central America, Asia and the eastern Neighbourhood countries.
- Programme to encourage visits by officials from third countries to Brussels and other locations in the EU (including Open Days 2009).
- Related programme of networking activities (regional workshops, publications, website).
- Training programmes for civil servants in the context of MoUs.

This action will be implemented via service contracts and reimbursement of expenses for the expert visits according to the Commission's rules. The indicative time frame for launching the procurement procedures will be the second quarter of 2009.

Indicative budget: € 600 000.

1.2.3. ACTION 3: Studies

The desirability of undertaking studies in the context of Memorandums of Understanding has been raised by the Chinese (where one has already taken place) and the Brazilians. A lot of statistical and other territorial planning work is also required in Africa, together with

feasibility studies for Cross border Co-operation activities. There will be maximum 5 studies conducted under the indicative theme:

Influences which centralise and decentralise in regional policy as conducted in China, Brasil, West Africa, South East Asia and Latin America.

These studies will be implemented via service contracts. The indicative time frame for launching the procurement procedures will be the second quarter of 2009.

Indicative budget: €250 000.

1.2.4. ACTION 4: Joint management with the OECD

In the framework of the EU-Brazil regional policy dialogue, it is important to help Brazilian authorities to build a strategic capacity in territorial development. To accomplish this, an OECD national territorial review can help to build and frame a general debate and dialogue in order for Brazil to consider not only technical tools but also wider strategic issues. OECD has already conducted more than 40 territorial reviews either at the national level or the sub-national level. The territorial review of Brazil would have three main goals:

- (i) The analysis of socio-economic trends in regional performances and disparities;
- (ii) The assessment of key policy areas to improve regional performance, notably accessibility, research and innovation, clusters, urban and rural policies and, in particular, policies to assist regions in tapping unexploited opportunities and
- (iii) To identify and disseminate information and good practices regarding the governance framework (distribution of competencies and resources among the different levels of government and local capacities to deal with regional development). Co-operation with neighbouring countries especially MERCOSUR members (Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay) will be also addressed, in particular regarding policies towards border regions. The final report will propose as well policy recommendations for regional development.

Indicative budget: €250 000.

1.3 Total budget: € 2 000 000

1.4 Indicative calendar for procurement procedures

The Community contribution to the actions described in the work programme will be covered by commitment appropriations for 2009 for which an amount of €2 000 000 is available. All the actions (either use of a FWC, the launch of procurement procedure, contribution agreements) will start on the 2nd quarter of 2009. All specific and direct contracts are expected to have been signed by end 2009.

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."