



Brussels, 9.9.2020
C(2020) 6254 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 9.9.2020

amending Implementing Decision C(2014) 10176 approving certain elements of the regional operational programme "Azores 2014-2020" for support from the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund under the Investment for growth and jobs goal for the autonomous region of the Azores in Portugal

CCI 2014PT16M2OP004

(ONLY THE ENGLISH TEXT IS AUTHENTIC)

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 9.9.2020

amending Implementing Decision C(2014) 10176 approving certain elements of the regional operational programme "Azores 2014-2020" for support from the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund under the Investment for growth and jobs goal for the autonomous region of the Azores in Portugal

CCI 2014PT16M2OP004

(ONLY THE ENGLISH TEXT IS AUTHENTIC)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006¹, and in particular Article 96(10) thereof,

Having consulted the ESF Committee,

Whereas:

- (1) By Commission Implementing Decision C(2014) 10176, as last amended by Commission Implementing Decision C(2020) 1002, certain elements of the regional operational programme "Azores 2014-2020" for support from the European Regional Development Fund ('ERDF') and the European Social Fund ('ESF') under the Investment for growth and jobs goal for the autonomous region of the Azores in Portugal were approved.
- (2) On 18 August 2020 Portugal submitted, through the electronic data exchange system of the Commission, a request for an amendment to the operational programme. The request was accompanied by a revised operational programme, in which Portugal proposed an amendment to the elements of the operational programme referred to in points (a), (b)(i) to (v), and (d) of the first subparagraph of Article 96(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, all subject to Implementing Decision C(2014) 10176.
- (3) Pursuant to Article 25a(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, Portugal requests to apply a co-financing rate of 100% to expenditure declared in payment applications during the accounting year starting on 1 July 2020 and ending on 30 June 2021 for all priority axes of this operational programme.
- (4) Pursuant to Article 25a(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, Portugal requests the transfer of EUR 26 418 684 of the resources available for programming for the year

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 320.

2020 from the ERDF to the ESF priority axes 8 "Employment and labour mobility" and 9 "Social Inclusion and Combat against Poverty" within this operational programme. The transfer of resources does not include a change in the allocation by category of regions.

- (5) The amendment to the operational programme also consists in a transfer of the ERDF resources amounting to EUR 26 310 000 from priority axes 1 "Research, technology development and innovation", 4 "Low Carbon Economy", 5 "Climate change and risk prevention and management" and 7 "Sustainable transport and key infrastructure networks" to priority axes 3 "Competitiveness of Regional Enterprises" and 9 "Social Inclusion and Combat against Poverty", as well as in a transfer of the ESF resources amounting to EUR 149 000 from priority axis 11 "Institutional capacity and Public Administration" to the ERDF priority axes 8 "Employment and labour mobility" and 9.
- (6) The amendment to the operational programme consists in addition in introducing new types of actions to be supported under investment priorities 3c, 8v, 9i and 9a, modifying the description of the type of actions under investment priorities 7c and 8i, modifying one result indicator in the set-up of new COVID-19 related output indicators and revising some target values for some financial and output indicators of the performance framework.
- (7) In accordance with Article 30(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the request for the amendment to the operational programme is duly justified by the need to provide an effective and immediate response to the current public health and economic crisis related to the COVID-19 outbreak and to temporarily alleviate the burden on public budgets responding to the crisis situation. The request to transfer resources of EUR 26 418 684 from the ERDF to the ESF is duly justified by the need to support the extraordinary measures to address serious socio-economic consequences of the pandemic to preserve jobs and support the employability skills of the unemployed that cannot be financed under the scope of intervention of the ERDF. The request for amendment to the operational programme sets out the expected impact of the changes to the programme on achieving the Union's strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the specific objectives defined in the programme, taking account of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, Regulations (EU) No 1301/2013² and (EU) No 1304/2013³ of the European Parliament and of the Council, as well as of the horizontal principles referred to in Articles 5, 7 and 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.
- (8) In accordance with point (e) of Article 110(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the monitoring committee by written procedure finalised on 31 July 2020 examined and approved the proposal for the amendment to the operational programme, taking into account the text of the revised operational programme and its financing plan.
- (9) The Commission assessed the revised operational programme and did not make observations pursuant to the second sentence of the first subparagraph of Article 30(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

² Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 289).

³ Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 470).

(10) The amended elements of the revised operational programme subject to the Commission's approval under Article 96(10) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 should therefore be approved.

(11) Implementing Decision C(2014) 10176 should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Implementing Decision C(2014) 10176 is amended as follows:

1. in Article 1, the introductory sentence is replaced by the following:

"The following elements of the regional operational programme "Azores 2014-2020" for joint support from the ERDF and the ESF under the Investment for growth and jobs goal for the autonomous region of the Azores in Portugal for the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020, submitted in its final version on 11 December 2014, as last amended by the revised operational programme submitted in its final version on 18 August 2020, are hereby approved:";

2. in Article 4, paragraph 2 is replaced by the following:

"2. The total financial appropriation for the operational programme is set at EUR 1 137 480 882, to be financed from the following specific budget lines in accordance with the nomenclature of the General Budget of the European Union for 2014:

13 03 60: EUR 736 224 866 (ERDF – Less developed regions);

13 03 63: EUR 57 500 000 (ERDF – Additional allocation for outermost and sparsely populated regions);

04 02 60: EUR 343 756 016 (ESF – Less developed regions).";

3. Annex I is replaced by the text set out in Annex I to this Decision;

4. Annex II is replaced by the text set out in Annex II to this Decision.

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Portuguese Republic.

Done at Brussels, 9.9.2020

For the Commission

Elisa FERREIRA

Member of the Commission

CERTIFIED COPY
For the Secretary-General

Martine DEPRez
Director of the Registry
EUROPEAN COMMISSION