



Brussels, 14.11.2018
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 14.11.2018

**on the adoption of the work programme for 2019 of information provision and
promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal
market and in third countries**

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on the adoption of the work programme for 2019 of information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 3/2008¹, and in particular Article 8 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012², and in particular Article 110(1) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, both direct and shared management are to be used for the implementation of information provision and promotion measures.
- (2) Pursuant to Article 15(7) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, the financing of simple programmes is implemented by the Member States under shared management.
- (3) Pursuant to Article 16(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, the financing of multi programmes and measures on the initiative of the Commission is implemented by the Commission under direct management.
- (4) In order to ensure the implementation of the information provision and promotion measures, it is necessary to adopt the annual work programme which covers simple programmes, multi programmes and measures implemented on the initiative of the Commission.
- (5) For appropriations under direct management it is necessary to adopt a financing decision pursuant to Article 110 of Regulation (EU, EURATOM) 2018/1046, establishing detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (6) For appropriations under direct management, it is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment as laid down in Article 116 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

¹ OJ L 317, 4.11.2014, p. 56.

² OJ L 193, 30.07.2018, p. 1.

- (7) For the purpose of the implementation of multi programmes and measures on the initiative of the Commission and in order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the work programme, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.
- (8) The work programme has to provide for specific temporary arrangements to react to serious market disturbance or loss of consumer confidence as provided for in Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. It is therefore necessary to make provision for the possibility of an additional call during the year, if required.
- (9) The Commission consulted the Civil Dialogue Group on Quality and Promotion and received contributions from stakeholders.
- (10) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee for the Common Organisation of the Agricultural Markets,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The work programme

The work programme on the financing of the information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries for 2019, as set out in the Annexes is adopted.

For appropriations under budget line 05 02 10 02, this work programme shall constitute a financing decision within the meaning of Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

Article 2
Union contribution for multi programmes and measures on the initiative of the Commission

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of multi programmes and measures on the initiative of the Commission for 2019 shall be set at EUR 101.100.000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the budget line 05 02 10 02 of the general budget of the Union for 2019.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft general budget of the Union for 2019, following the adoption of that budget by the budget authority or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

Article 3
Total amount for simple programmes

The total amount foreseen for the financing of simple programmes in 2019 is set at EUR 100.000.000.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Cumulated changes to the allocations to multi programmes and measures on the initiative of the Commission not exceeding 20 % of the maximum Union contribution set in Article 2 of this Decision shall not be considered to be substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, where those changes do not significantly affect the nature of the actions and the objective of the work programme. The increase of the maximum contribution set in Article 2 of this Decision shall not exceed 20%.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the type of changes referred to in the first paragraph in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 14.11.2018

For the Commission
Phil HOGAN
Member of the Commission

ANNEX I

Work Programme for 2019

in the framework of

Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries

1.1. Introduction

On the basis of the objectives set out in Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, this work programme contains the actions to be financed with the following breakdown for year 2019:

- (a) for grants (implemented under direct management and shared management, point 1.2 below): EUR 191.600.000;
- (b) for procurement (implemented under direct management, point 1.3 below): EUR 9.500.000.

1.2. Grants

Legal basis:

Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014

Budget Lines:

Information provision and promotion programmes may consist of ‘simple’ programmes or ‘multi’ programmes. Simple programmes are programmes submitted by one or more proposing organisations which are all from the same Member State. Multi programmes are programmes submitted by at least two proposing organisations which are from at least two Member States or one or more Union organisations.

Simple and multi programmes have different management modes, different financing modes and are included in two different budget lines:

05.02.10.01: for simple programmes

05.02.10.02: for multi programmes

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

Information and promotion programmes shall consist of a coherent set of operations and shall be implemented over a period of at least one year but not more than three years. They shall in particular consist of promotional activities and information campaigns, notably taking the form of public relations, advertising, points of sales activities, participation in events and fairs of national, European and international importance, etc.

Implementation

The present work programme shall be implemented, for simple and multi programmes through the publication of two calls for proposals organised, launched and managed by the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA).

Proposals for simple and multi programmes shall be evaluated on the basis of the criteria laid down in Annex II and Annex III, respectively.

Afterwards, the financing of simple programmes shall be implemented by the Member States and multi programmes by the CHAFAEA.

Maximum rates of Union financing of the eligible costs

(a) Simple programmes

The Union financial contribution to simple programmes in the internal market shall be 70 % of the eligible expenditure. For proposing organisations established in Member States in receipt of financial assistance in accordance with Articles 136 and 143 TFEU on or after 1 January 2014, the percentage shall be 75 % for programmes decided upon by the Commission before the date from which the Member State concerned no longer receives such financial assistance.

The Union financial contribution to simple programmes implemented in third countries shall be 80 % of the eligible expenditure. For proposing organisations established in Member States in receipt of financial assistance in accordance with Articles 136 and 143 TFEU on or after 1 January 2014, the percentage shall be 85 % for programmes decided upon by the Commission before the date from which the Member State concerned no longer receives such financial assistance.

(b) Multi programmes

The Union financial contribution to multi programmes shall be 80 % of the eligible expenditure. For proposing organisations established in Member States in receipt of financial assistance in accordance with Articles 136 and 143 TFEU on or after 1 January 2014, the percentage shall be 85 % for programmes decided upon by the Commission before the date from which the Member State concerned no longer receives such financial assistance.

(c) Special co-financing rate to simple and multi programmes

The Union financial contribution to simple and multi programmes shall be 85 % of the eligible expenditure in the event of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems. For proposing organisations established in Member States in receipt of financial assistance in accordance with Articles 136 and 143 TFEU on or after 1 January 2014, the percentage shall be 90 % for programmes decided upon by the Commission before the date from which the Member State concerned no longer receives such financial assistance.

Indicative timetable and indicative amount of the calls for proposals

Calls for proposals for the co-financing of the implementation of information provision and promotion programmes in the internal market and in third countries i.e. actions under thematic priorities 1, 2, 3 and 4 referred to in point 1.2.1 shall be launched before the end of January 2019. If necessary, additional calls for proposals could be published in the case of market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems, as referred to in point 1.2.2. and 1.2.3., as soon as possible after the beginning of that market disturbance.

The overall amount for information provision and promotion programmes to be awarded in 2019 amounts to EUR 191.600.000. This amount is split between:

- (a) simple programmes: EUR 100.000.000;
- (b) multi programmes: EUR 91.600.000.

The allocation for the simple programmes under shared management establishes the maximum amount that could be granted when selecting these programmes in 2019. Given the fact that appropriations for simple programmes are non-differentiated and implemented over several years, that amount shall not necessarily correspond to the commitment appropriations entered in the general budget of the Union for 2019.

1.2.1. Actions for proposal for simple and multi programmes, in the internal market and in third countries

Background

The Commission is aiming at a balanced Work Programme, taking into account the relevant EU regulations and policy objectives, the current trade situation and macro-economic perspectives of the agricultural markets, the observations received from stakeholders (consulted via the Civil Dialog Group) and Member States (consulted via the Committee for the Common Organisation of agricultural markets – promotion), and the results of the previous calls.

To ensure continuity, the 2019 AWP follows the broad lines of the previous annual work programmes, and the major objectives of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 which are:

- to increase the number of activities aimed at third countries where there is the highest potential of growth, hence a significant share of the budget should be allocated to third countries;
- on the internal market, to focus on informing consumers about EU quality schemes.

Geographic priorities

Third country markets offer major growth potential. Arrangements are therefore needed in order to encourage a larger number of information provision and promotion measures for Union agricultural products in third countries, focusing not only on the capitals of these countries but also on other cities. This is why the annual work programme for 2019 allocates a substantial part of the budget to information provision and promotion programmes in third countries.

In order to define **priorities** for third markets, the Commission's services made a macro-economic analysis on projected increase in imports for a selection of products on existing or emerging markets, peered with imports' growth potential. The macro-economic results were crossed with a policy evaluation on Free Trade Agreements and expected removal of sanitary and phytosanitary barriers.

According to this analysis, the most encouraging markets are considered.

- **China and South East Asia** continue to be attractive markets with promising prospects for increasing imports of EU agricultural products due to continued GDP growth, population growth and past as well as forecasted import growth. China makes up a large share of world imports for all products (notably beef, sheep, dairy, pigmeat, poultry and wheat), which further underlines its importance as destinations for EU exports. China has also been chosen as destination for the High Level Mission of Commissioner Hogan in May 2018, which has created a momentum for EU exports to

this market that could be followed up by targeted promotion activities. **Japan and South Korea**, even though imports are not growing at large rates, are very relevant markets for EU agricultural products - in particular pork - and deserve particular emphasis also due to the fact that new generation FTAs are in place (South Korea) or are foreseen to enter into force soon (Japan).

- **North America** absorbs the largest share of agricultural exports from the EU and remains an attractive market. The entry into force of CETA and the ongoing work towards finalisation of the modernisation of the agreement with **Mexico** are an additional argument for paying strong attention to this region of the world. Even though TTIP negotiations are currently frozen, the **US market** remains attractive as it is a huge market with substantial interest of consumers in EU products.
- **Other geographical areas:** Central and South American countries do not show the greatest growth potential but may be attractive for specific products and in order to diversify markets. The opportunities provided by the advancing Mercosur trade negotiations and with Mexico should not be neglected. Eastern Europe and Central Asia is also not in the strongest growth category and exports to Russia continue to pose a particular problem due to the challenging political situation and import embargo. Other countries from the region should, however, not be disregarded as they still provide opportunities for exports. Furthermore, the Russian ban does not concern all agri-food products. With the prospect of negotiations on free trade agreements starting soon with New Zealand and Australia, EU exporters may want to anticipate new market opportunities for exporters. It is worth noting that in the past this region has been somewhat underrepresented with regard to the share of promotion programmes implemented. The Middle East is not displaying huge growth rates but is a destination to pay particular attention to for several important products, especially for sheep meat where the region is the world's largest importer, but also for poultry and dairy. It should also be kept in mind that the area has played an important role as alternative destination for agri-food products when the Russian ban affected export opportunities, which could be further built upon in the future. As regards African markets, with projected strong population and GDP growth, it can be expected that this region will absorb larger shares of world exports in the future.

As regards multi-programmes, no geographical priorities are proposed for promotion programmes in third countries but thematic priorities. Indeed, it should be reminded that according to the legislator, they are a priority *per se* without distinction in the co-financing rate for the internal market and third countries. This is why no geographical priorities are proposed for multi-programmes, but applicants are encouraged to pay attention to the most promising geographical markets identified above.

Sectorial suggestions

In terms of products, it is proposed to allocate a certain share of the promotion budget to particular sectors that are under pressure and/or where there is a particular interest in helping producers and exporters to consolidate or develop new markets.

In the internal market, these dedicated campaigns meet the objectives of the new CAP and contributes to larger objectives of the Commission, notably sustainable agriculture, rural employment, healthy eating, etc. The Commission is notably convinced that there is a general need to promote the consumption of **fruit and vegetables** in the frame of healthy dietary

practices, in line with the Communication of the Future of Food and Farming¹ and Tartu call for healthy lifestyles.² Besides, the sector still faces persisting challenges such as: declining consumption and exports volume, repeated market crises (e.g. Russian embargo, export difficulties in North African countries), market access difficulties mostly due to tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as a structurally weak bargaining position vis-à-vis large-scale retail and processing trade.

Also, the European **rice** sector is currently under pressure. European rice sector is suffering from booming imports, in particular under EBA status. Consumption of European rice needs a boost, particularly in the EU areas not producing rice, where there is a high potential for consumption increase associated to Mediterranean diet. Therefore, consumption of EU sustainably produced rice in the internal market should be encouraged, as rice production in Europe has a particular environmental dimension, being at the heart of the preservation of certain wetlands. Rice cultivation is a sensitive and specific practice at European level, since it is produced in areas where there are few crop alternatives. Its preservation and improvement contribute to the sustainability of rice producing regions, by playing an active role in maintaining rural areas, protecting nature and preserving biodiversity. Therefore, it has a relevant impact in terms of economic, environmental and social sustainability all across the EU.

As far as **export** markets are concerned, there is a particular interest in helping producers to consolidate or develop new markets regarding certain sectors. European breeders of **beef** are notably faced with decreasing consumption trend, trade pressure from major competitors, Brexit, environmental and climate change challenges. Nevertheless, in terms of exports, there is a high potential, notably for China - as the country has grown to become the second largest importer of beef in the world - and South East Asia, so that the EU could help producers and exporters to develop and explore new markets via dedicated campaigns. Similarly, producers of **table olives** are currently faced with a difficult situation with increased duties, and it is opportune for them to try to diversify their exports and find new markets.

1.2.1.1. Actions under thematic priority 1: **simple** programmes in the **internal market**

Type of actions: Grants following a call for proposals

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<u>Topic 1</u> - Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at increasing the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes as defined in Article	12.000.000 EUR	The objective is to increase the awareness and recognition of the Union quality schemes, namely: (a) quality schemes: protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI), traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) and optional quality terms; (b) organic production method; (c) the logo for quality agricultural products specific to the outermost regions of the Union. Information and promotion programmes targeting

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sites/agriculture/files/future-of-cap/future_of_food_and_farming_communication_en.pdf

² https://ec.europa.eu/sport/sites/sport/files/ewos-tartu-call_en.pdf

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
5(4)(a), (b) and (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014		<p>these Union quality schemes should be a key priority in the internal market since such schemes provide consumers with assurances on the quality and characteristics of the product or the production process used, achieve added value for the products concerned and enhance their market opportunities.</p> <p>One of the expected results is to increase the levels of recognition of the logo associated with the Union quality schemes by the European consumers. According to special Eurobarometer (No 473), only 18% of European consumers recognize the logos of products that benefit from a protected designation of origin (PDO) and a protected geographical indication (PGI), and 15% for the Traditional Specialty Guaranteed, these being the main Union quality schemes. Although awareness of the organic farming logo has increased four points since 2015, still only 27% of European consumers recognize the EU logo of organic farming.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of products registered under a Union quality scheme, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>
<u>Topic 2-</u> Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at highlighting the specific features of agricultural methods in the Union and the characteristics of European agricultural and food products, and quality schemes defined in Article 5(4)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014	8.000.000 EUR	<p>The objective is to highlight at least one of the specific features of agricultural production methods in the Union, particularly in terms of food safety, traceability, authenticity, labeling, nutritional and health aspects (including proper dietary practices and responsible consumption of eligible alcoholic beverages), animal welfare, respect for the environment and sustainability, and the characteristics of agricultural and food products, particularly in terms of their quality, taste, diversity or traditions.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to increase the awareness of the merits of Union agricultural products by the European consumers and to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>

1.2.1.2. Actions under thematic priority 2: **simple programmes in third countries**³

Simple programmes in third countries may consist of information provision and promotion programmes highlighting the specific features of agricultural methods in the Union and the characteristics of EU agri-food products and quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, and/or information programmes aiming at increasing the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(a), (b) and (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. Applicants may notably consider targeting the most encouraging markets identified under section 1.2.1.

Type of actions: Grants following a call for proposals

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<u>Topic 3</u> - Information provision and promotion programmes targeting one or more of the following countries: China (including Hong-Kong and Macao), Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, South East Asian region or Indian subcontinent	25.250.000 EUR	<p>The information and promotion programmes shall target one or more countries identified in the corresponding topic.</p> <p>The objectives of these programmes shall comply with the general and specific objectives set out in Article 2 and 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share in these targeted countries.</p>
<u>Topic 4</u> -Information provision and promotion programmes targeting one or more of the following countries: Canada, USA, Mexico or Colombia	22.000.000 EUR	
<u>Topic 5</u> -Information provision and promotion programmes targeting other geographical areas	25.250.000 EUR	
<u>Topic 6*</u> - Information provision and promotion programmes targeting any third countries on table olives as defined in Annex I of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, PART VII, point (b)	2.500.000 EUR	

* Programmes on table olives targeting third countries shall apply under Topic 6. They cannot apply under Topic 3, 4 or 5, except if table olives are associated with (an)other product(s).

In case a proposing organisation wishes to target several of the prioritised regions in third countries in one programme, it should submit several applications and one application per

³ The composition of region follows the United Nations country and regional classification. For more details on list of countries composing geographical area, see: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>

topic. Alternatively, it could also apply under the topic ‘information and promotion programmes targeting other geographical areas’. This topic relates to the geographical areas that have not been listed in topic 3 and topic 4, but it may also concern a combination of several prioritised regions listed in topic 3 and topic 4.

1.2.1.3. Actions under thematic priority 3: **Multi programmes in the internal market**

Type of actions: Grants following a call for proposals

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<p><u>Topic A-</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at increasing the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(a), (b) and (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 	<p>32.800.000 EUR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For information provision and promotion programmes aiming at increasing the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(a), (b) and (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014: <p>The objective is to increase the awareness and recognition of the Union quality schemes, namely:</p> <p>(a) quality schemes: protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI), traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) and optional quality terms;</p> <p>(b) organic production method;</p> <p>(c) the logo for quality agriculture products specific to the outermost regions of the Union.</p> <p>One of the expected results is to increase the levels of recognition of the logo associated with the Union quality schemes by the European consumers. According to special Eurobarometer (No 473), only 18% of Europeans consumers recognize the logos of products that benefit from a protected designation of origin (PDO) or a protected geographical indication (PGI), and 15% for the Traditional Specialty Guaranteed, these being the main Union quality schemes. Although awareness of the organic farming logo has increased four points since 2015, still only 27% of</p>

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<p><u>Or:</u> Information provision and promotion programmes highlighting the specific features of agricultural methods in the Union and the characteristics of EU agri-food products, and quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014</p>		<p>European consumers recognize the EU logo of organic farming.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of Union agri-food products registered under a Union quality scheme, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For information provision and promotion programmes highlighting the specific features of agricultural methods in the Union and the characteristics of EU agri-food products and quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014: <p>The objective is to highlight at least one of the specific features of agricultural production methods in the Union, particularly in terms of food safety, traceability, authenticity, labelling, nutritional and health aspects (including proper dietary practices and responsible consumption of eligible alcoholic beverages), animal welfare, respect for the environment and sustainability, and the characteristics of agricultural and food products, particularly in terms of their quality, taste, diversity or traditions.</p> <p>The expected impact is to increase the awareness of the merits of Union agricultural products by the consumers and to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of the concerned Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>
<p><u>Topic B-</u> Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at increasing the</p>	8.000.000 EUR	<p>The Commission is committed to promote proper dietary practices, in line with the European Commission's white paper on a strategy on nutrition, overweight, and obesity related health</p>

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<p>consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in the internal market in the context of balanced and proper dietary practices*</p> <p>Products eligible under this topic are those listed in Part IX of Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.</p>		<p>issues⁴. Actions shall highlight the benefits of consuming fresh fruit and vegetables in a balanced diet. The messages could notably focus on: aiming at having at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables each day; the place of fruit and vegetables in the food pyramid, beneficial impact on health, etc.</p> <p>The objective is to increase the consumption of EU fresh fruit and vegetables by informing consumers about balanced and proper dietary practices.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of the concerned Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>
<p><u>Topic C-</u></p> <p>Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at highlighting the sustainable aspect of the rice production**,</p> <p>Products eligible under this topic are those defined in Annex I of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, part II.</p>	2.500.000 EUR	<p>The objective is to highlight the sustainable aspect of rice sector. Rice production in Europe has a particular environmental dimension, being at the heart of the preservation of certain wetlands. Rice cultivation is a sensitive and specific practice at European level, since it is produced in areas where there are few crop alternatives. Its preservation and improvement contribute to the sustainability of rice producing regions, by playing an active role in maintaining rural areas, protecting nature and preserving biodiversity. Actions shall highlight the environmental sustainability of the production, stressing its beneficial role for climate action and the environment.</p> <p>Actions will for example address how the product(s) promoted and its/their production method(s) contribute to:</p>

⁴ COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
		<p>climate change mitigation (e.g. reduction in greenhouse gas emissions) and/or adaptation; biodiversity, conservation and sustainable use (e.g. landscape, genetic resources); sustainable water management (e.g. water use efficiency, reduction of nutrients or pesticides load); sustainable soil management (e.g. erosion control; nutrient balance; prevention of acidification, salinization). They may also highlight the role of the rice production in providing employment in rural areas.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to increase the awareness of the merits of Union agricultural products by the European consumers and to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of the concerned Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>

* Multi programme proposals on 'Fruit and vegetables' for the internal market are also eligible under Topic A. In that case, the message of proposals on fruits and vegetable under Topic A shall be different than highlighting the benefits of consuming fruits and vegetables within a balanced and proper diet (except if fruit and vegetables are associated with (an)other product(s)).

** Multi programme proposals on rice for the internal market are also eligible under Topic A. In in that case, to avoid overlaps, the message of rice proposals under Topic A shall be different than the sustainable aspect of the rice production (except if rice is associated with (an)other product(s)).

1.2.1.4 Actions under thematic priority 4: **Multi programmes in third countries**

Type of actions: Grants following a call for proposals

Third country markets offer major growth potential. Arrangements are therefore needed in order to encourage a larger number of information provision and promotion measures for Union agricultural products in third countries, focusing not only on the capitals of these countries but also on other cities. This is why the annual work programme for 2019 allocates an important part of the budget to multi programmes in third countries.

Multi programmes under Topic D can target any third country(ies). Applicants may notably consider targeting the most encouraging markets identified under section 1.2.1.

Multi programmes in third countries may consist in information provision and promotion programmes highlighting the specific features of agricultural methods in the Union and the characteristics of EU agri-food products and quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, and/or information programmes aiming at increasing the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes mentioned in Article 5(4)(a), (b) and (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<p><u>Topic D</u>- Information provision and promotion programmes targeting any third country(ies).</p>	38.300.000 EUR	<p>The information and promotion programmes shall target one or several third countries.</p> <p>The objectives of these programmes shall comply with the general and specific objectives set out in Article 2 and 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share in these targeted countries.</p>
<p><u>Topic E</u>- Information provision and promotion programmes on beef and/or veal targeting any third country(ies)*.</p> <p>Products eligible under this topic are those listed in Part XV of Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council</p>	5.000.000 EUR	

* Multi programmes on beef targeting third countries shall apply under Topic E. They cannot apply under Topic D, except if beef is associated with (an)other product(s).

*1.2.2. Actions in case of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems with an additional call for proposals via **simple** programmes*

Type of actions: Grants following a call for proposals

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results:

These actions consist of information and promotion programmes designed to react in case of unexpected serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems where information and promotion programmes co-financed by the sector would be an adequate response to face the event and would be complementary to exceptional measures taken in accordance with Part V, Chapter 1 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013.

The unexpected serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems shall have a European dimension.

The information and promotion programmes shall have a European dimension, in terms of content and impact. The objective of these programmes is to help restore consumer confidence and the normal market conditions.

The expected ultimate result is to restore the normal market conditions for those sectors affected by the market disturbance.

In case where there has not been a serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems during the year, the budget shall be reallocated to simple programmes in third countries under Topic 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals:

Information provision and promotion measures shall consist of a coherent set of operations. The programmes designed to react to serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems should be more targeted and implemented over a period of one year.

Indicative timetable:

The call for proposals would be published shortly after the beginning of the market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems.

Indicative allocation: EUR 5.000.000

*1.2.3. Actions in case of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems with an additional call for proposals via **multi** programmes*

Type of actions: Grants following a call for proposals

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results:

These actions consist of information and promotion programmes designed to react in case of unexpected serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems where information and promotion programmes co-financed by the sector would be an adequate response to face the event and would be complementary to exceptional measures taken in accordance with Part V, Chapter 1 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013.

The unexpected serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems shall have a European dimension.

The information and promotion programmes shall have a European dimension, in terms of content and impact. The objective of these programmes is to help restore consumer confidence and the normal market conditions.

The expected ultimate result is to restore the normal market conditions for those sectors affected by the market disturbance.

In case where there has not been a serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems during the year, the budget shall be reallocated to multi programmes to third countries under Topic D.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals:

Information provision and promotion measures shall consist of a coherent set of operations. The programmes designed to react to serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems should be more targeted and implemented over a period of one year

Indicative timetable:

The call for proposals would be published shortly after the beginning of the market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems.

Indicative allocation: EUR 5.000.000

1.3. Procurement (measures on the initiative of the Commission)

The overall budgetary allocation reserved for procurement contracts in 2019 amounts to EUR 9.500.000.

It covers activities such as communication campaigns in third countries including participation with a pavilion in major agri-food trade fairs in third countries, organisation of business delegation visits to third countries, seminars, provision of technical support services, organisation of campaigns in the event of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems, development of communication tools, communication about the EU promotion policy and related evaluation. Requests for services under existing framework contracts shall be launched. An overview of the procurement procedures considered to be launched in relation to the actions described above encompasses:

1.3.1. Promotion events in third countries

Legal basis

Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014
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Budget line

05.02.10.02

Subject matter of the contracts envisaged

<p>Organisation of up to 4 communication campaigns in third countries covered by priority geographical areas listed under thematic priorities 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the annual work programme may take form of advertising and public relations activities, participation in fairs with a pavilion, social media, web presence, business to business measures, activities on points of sales and in restaurants, study visits, seminars, trainings and related evaluation.</p>

<p>Organisation of up to 3 business delegation visits in third countries covered by priority geographical areas listed under thematic priorities 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the annual work programme.</p>
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<p>Business delegation visits to third countries shall gather up to 80 representatives of the agri-food sector. The objective of the action is facilitating market access, establishing business contacts, and enhancing the image of Union products with media, businesses and consumers in the third country in question.</p>

<p>Beside communication campaigns, it may be decided</p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ to participate in up to 10 major international trade fairs with Union pavilions dedicated to products and themes eligible for promotion within the meaning of Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. Participation of Union producers who will exhibit their products at the pavilion may be foreseen.▪ to organise up to 6 events taking the form of study visits in the EU or seminars |
|---|

organised in third countries covered by priority geographical areas listed under thematic priorities 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the annual work programme.

Communication tools may comprise online and offline communication material.

Type of contract

Existing framework contracts for services.

Indicative number of contracts envisaged: up to 25 specific contracts based on the existing framework contracts (FWC).

Indicative timeframe for launching the procurement procedure

1st quarter: up to 7 specific contracts;
2nd quarter: up to 8 specific contracts;
3rd quarter: up to 6 specific contracts;
4th quarter: up to 4 specific contracts.

Implementation

Implementation by the Consumer, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA) and DG AGRI.

1.3.2. Technical support services

Legal basis

Article 9(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014

Budget line

05.02.10.02

Subject matter of the contracts envisaged

The following objectives shall be pursued by establishing technical support services:

- (a) encouraging awareness of different markets by providing country, market research and statistical reports on key target countries listed under thematic priority 2 of the annual work programme;
- (b) maintaining a dynamic professional network around information and promotion policy, including providing advice to the sector with regard to the threat of imitation and counterfeit products in third countries, in particular by publishing the relevant information on an information portal;
- (c) improving knowledge of Union rules concerning programme development and implementation, mainly by providing adequate information online, organising or participating in events and fostering the development of a network of agro-food operators with the aim of helping operators to take part in co-financed programmes, to conduct

effective campaigns or to develop their export activities.

The envisaged contracts concern the updating of a web portal, market research, country and statistical reports as well as other communication activities, such as organisation of events.

Type of contract

Existing framework contract for services.

Indicative number of contracts envisaged: 1-2 specific contracts based on existing framework contracts.

Indicative timeframe for launching the procurement procedure

2nd quarter : 1 specific contract

4th quarter: 1 specific contract

Implementation

Implementation by the Consumer, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA).

1.3.3. Information provision and promotion measures in the event of a serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems

Legal basis

Articles 2(2)(e) and 9(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014

Budget line

05.02.10.02

Subject matter of the contracts envisaged

In the event of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems, targeted communication and promotion activities shall be launched with the objective of restoring normal market conditions. Those measures may in particular take form of communication campaigns, high level missions, participation in trade fairs and exhibitions of international importance by means of stands, or other operations aimed at enhancing the image of Union products.

Type of contract

Existing framework contract.

Indicative number of contracts envisaged: up to 3 specific contracts.

Indicative timeframe for launching the procurement procedure

N/A: specific contract shall be signed only in the event of a serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems.

Implementation

Implementation by the Consumer, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA).

1.3.4. Experts

Legal basis

Article 15(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014

Article 200 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046

Budget line

05.02.10.02

Subject matter of the contracts envisaged

Experts to provide technical and linguistic assistance in the context of the evaluation of proposals submitted following the calls for proposals launched in implementation of the present work programme.

Type of contract

Service contract; selection of experts from experts included in AMI (appel à manifestation d'intérêt) list.

Indicative number of contracts envisaged: 50.

Indicative timeframe for launching the procurement procedure

Second quarter of 2019.

Implementation

Implementation by the Consumer, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA).

ANNEX II

Criteria for financial contribution to simple programmes as referred to in Article 1

The Financial Regulation, Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 apply to the evaluation of the simple programmes.

Proposals shall be evaluated on the basis of the four categories of criteria:

1. Eligibility criteria, to determine whether an applicant is allowed to participate in the call for proposal.
2. Exclusion criteria, to eliminate from participation in the procedure or award, applicants who are in one of the exclusion situations referred to below.
3. Selection criteria, to assess the applicant's financial and operational capacity to complete a proposed action.
4. Award criteria, to assess the relevance of the proposal's scope to the announced priorities and other quality aspects taking into account its costs.

(1) Eligibility criteria

Proposals for simple programmes can only be submitted by legal persons or other entities which may not have a legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to those offered by legal persons as referred to in Article 196 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 . Those legal persons shall be:

- (a) one or more of the proposing organisations listed in Article 7(1)(a), (c), or (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014;
- (b) representative of the sector or product concerned by the proposal complying with conditions set out in Articles 1(1) or 1(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829⁵.

Applicants who already receive Union financing for the same information provision and promotion measures shall not be eligible for Union financing for those measures under Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.


Moreover:

- (a) proposals can only cover products and schemes listed in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014;
- (b) proposals shall ensure that measures are implemented through implementing bodies as referred to in Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. Proposing organisations must select bodies responsible for implementing programmes ensuring best value for money and absence of conflict of interest (see Article 2 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829) The proposing organisation shall undertake that the body responsible for the implementation of the programme shall be selected at the latest before the

⁵ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829 of 23 April 2015 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries (OJ L 266, 13.10.2015, p. 3).

signature of the contract (see Article 10 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/18316);

- (c) if a proposing organisation proposes to implement certain parts of the proposal itself, it shall ensure that the cost of the measure which it plans to carry out itself is not in excess of the normal market rates;
- (d) proposals shall comply with Union law governing the products concerned and their marketing and have a Union dimension; they shall also comply with all the provisions described under Article 3(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829;
- (e) if a message conveyed concerns information on the impact on health, proposals shall comply with the rules as referred to in Article 3(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829;
- (f) if the proposal proposes to mention origin or brands, it shall comply with the rules as referred to in Chapter II of Implementing regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

 For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the *entire* duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 34.3 of the grant agreement.

(2) Exclusion criteria

The applicants are not in any of the situations of exclusion listed in Article 136 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 .

(3) Selection criteria

Proposing organisations must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period of implementation of the programme and to participate in its funding.

Proposing organisations must have the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the programme. In cases where they propose to implement certain parts of the proposal, they shall have at least three years' experience in implementing information provision and promotion measures.

Those criteria will be further explained in the call for proposals.

(4) Award criteria

To be assessed against the award criteria, the proposals shall meet the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria.

The following award criteria will be applied:

⁶ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831 of 7 October 2015 laying down rules for application of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in the third countries (OJ L 266, 13.10.2015, p. 14).

- (a) Union dimension (20 points out of 100; threshold 14);
- (b) Quality of the technical proposal (40 points out of 100; threshold 24);
- (c) Quality of the project management (10 points out of 100; threshold 6);
- (d) Budget and cost-effectiveness (30 points out of 100; threshold 18).

Financial contributions shall be awarded to the highest scoring proposals up to the available budget. A separate ranked list shall be established for each priority topic listed in Sections 1.2.1.1 and 1.2.1.2 of the annual work programme as set out in Annex I.

The following sub-criteria shall be taken into account in the assessment of each of the main award criteria:

Union dimension

- (a) Relevance of proposed information and promotion measures to the general and specific objectives listed in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, aims listed in Article 3 of that Regulation, as well as to priorities, objectives and expected results announced under the relevant thematic priority;
- (b) Union message of the campaign;
- (c) Impact of project at Union level.

Quality of the technical proposal

- (a) Quality and relevance of the market analysis;
- (b) Coherence of the programme strategy, objectives, target groups and key messages;
- (c) Suitable choice of activities with respect to objectives and programme strategy, adequate communication mix, synergy between the activities;
- (d) Concise description of activities and deliverables;
- (e) Quality of the proposed evaluation methods and indicators.

Quality of the project management

- (a) Project coordination and management structure;
- (b) Quality control mechanisms and risk management.

Budget and cost-effectiveness

- (a) Justification of the overall level of investment;
- (b) Suitable allocation of budget in relation to the objectives and scope of the activities;
- (c) Clear description of the estimated costs and accuracy of the budget
- (d) Consistency between the estimated costs and deliverables;
- (e) Realistic estimation of costs of project coordination and of activities implemented by the proposing organisation, including number and rate of person/days.

If there are two (or more) proposals with the same number of points on the same ranked list, then the proposal(s) which allows for diversification in terms of products or targeted markets shall be prioritised. It means that between *ex aequo* proposals, the Commission shall first select the one the content of which (firstly in terms of products, secondly in terms of targeted market) is not yet represented in the higher ranked proposals. If this criterion cannot be applied, then the Commission shall select first the programme which got the highest score for

the individual award criteria. It will first compare the scores for 'Union dimension', then for 'Quality of the technical proposal', and finally for 'Budget and cost-effectiveness'.

(5) Criteria for reallocation of foreseen amounts

If for a given topic there are not enough proposals on the ranked list to exhaust the whole foreseen amount, the remaining amount may be reallocated to other topics according to the following criteria:

- (a) the total of the remaining foreseen amount for the two topics on the internal market shall be allocated to the projects targeting the internal market with the highest quality score, irrespective of the topic for which they have applied;
- (b) the same approach shall be taken for proposals targeting third countries (Topics 3-6);
- (c) if the foreseen amount is still not exhausted, the remaining amounts for both internal market and third countries shall be merged and assigned to projects with the highest quality score, irrespective of the priority and topic for which they have applied.

The order of the ranked lists will be strictly followed.

ANNEX III

Criteria for financial contribution to multi programmes as referred to in Article 1

The Financial Regulation, Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 apply to the evaluation of the multi programmes.

Proposals shall be evaluated on the basis of the four categories of criteria:

1. Eligibility criteria, to determine whether an applicant is allowed to participate in the call for proposal.
2. Exclusion criteria, to eliminate from participation in the procedure or award of grant, applicants who are in one of the exclusion situations referred to below.
3. Selection criteria, to assess the applicant's financial and operational capacity to complete a proposed action.
4. Award criteria, to assess the relevance of the proposal's scope to the announced priorities and other quality aspects taking into account its costs.

(1) Eligibility criteria

Proposals for multi programmes can only be submitted by legal persons or entities which do not have a legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial Interests equivalent to those offered by legal persons as referred to in Article 196 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046. Those legal persons shall be:

- (a) at least two of the proposing organisations referred to in Article 7(1)(a), (c), or (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 coming from at least two different Member States or one or more Union organisations referred to in Article 7(1)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014;
- (b) representative of the sector or product concerned by the proposal complying with conditions set out in Articles 1(1) or 1(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829.

Applicants who already receive Union financing for the same information provision and promotion measures shall not be eligible for Union financing for those measures under Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.

Moreover:

- (a) proposals can only cover products and schemes listed in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014;
- (b) proposals shall comply with Union law governing the products concerned and their marketing and have a Union dimension;
- (c) proposals in the internal market covering one or more schemes as referred to in Article 5(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, shall focus on the(se) scheme(s) in its main Union message. When in this programme, one or several products illustrate(s) the(se) scheme(s), it/they shall appear as a secondary message in relation to the main Union message;

- (d) if a message conveyed by a multi programme concerns information on the impact on health, this message shall:
- (i) in the internal market, comply with the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁷, or be accepted by the national authority responsible for public health in the Member State where the operations are carried out;
 - (ii) in third countries, be accepted by the national authority responsible for public health in the country where the operations are carried out;
- (e) if the proposal proposes to mention origin or brands, it shall comply with the rules as referred to in Chapter II of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the *entire* duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 34.3 of the grant agreement.

(2) Exclusion criteria

The applicants are not in any of the situations of exclusion listed in in Article 136 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

(3) Selection criteria

Proposing organisations must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period of implementation of the programme and to participate in its funding.

Proposing organisations must have the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the programme.

Those criteria will be further explained in the call for proposals.

(4) Award criteria

To be assessed against the award criteria, the proposals shall meet the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria.

The following award criteria will be applied:

- (a) Union dimension (20 points out of 100; threshold 14);
- (b) Quality of the technical proposal (40 points out of 100; threshold 24);
- (c) Quality of the project management (10 points out of 100; threshold 6);

⁷ Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods (OJ L 404, 30.12.2006, p. 9).

(d) Budget and cost-effectiveness (30 points out of 100; threshold 18).

Financial contributions shall be awarded to the highest scoring proposals up to the available budget. A separate ranked list shall be established for each priority topic listed in Section 1.2.1.3 and 1.2.1.4 of the annual work programme as set out in Annex I.

The following sub-criteria shall be taken into account in the assessment of each of the main award criteria:

Union dimension:

- (a) Relevance of proposed information and promotion measures to the general and specific objectives listed in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, aims listed in Article 3 of that Regulation, as well as to priorities, objectives and expected results announced under the relevant thematic priority;
- (b) Union message of the campaign;
- (c) Impact of project at Union level.

Quality of the technical proposal

- (a) Quality and relevance of the market analysis;
- (b) Coherence of the programme strategy, objectives, target groups and key messages;
- (c) Suitable choice of activities with respect to objectives and programme strategy, adequate communication mix, synergy between the activities;
- (d) Concise description of activities and deliverables;
- (e) Quality of the proposed evaluation methods and indicators.

Quality of the project management

- (a) Project coordination and management structure;
- (b) Quality control mechanisms and risk management.

Budget and cost-effectiveness

- (a) Justification of the overall level of investment;
- (b) Suitable allocation of budget in relation to the objectives and scope of the activities;
- (c) Clear description of the estimated costs and accuracy of the budget
- (d) Consistency between the estimated costs and deliverables;
- (e) Realistic estimation of costs of project coordination and of activities implemented by the proposing organisation, including number and rate of person/days.

If there are two (or more) proposals with the same number of points in the last place of the same ranked list, then the proposal(s) which allows for diversification in terms of products or targeted markets shall be prioritised. It means that between *ex aequo* proposals, the Commission shall first select the one the content of which (firstly in terms of products, secondly in terms of targeted market) is not yet represented in the higher ranked proposals. If this criterion cannot be applied, then the Commission shall select first the programme which got the highest score for individual award criteria. It will first compare the scores for 'Union dimension', then for 'Quality of the technical proposal', and finally for 'Budget and cost-effectiveness'.

(5) Criteria for reallocation of foreseen amounts

If for a given topic there are not enough proposals on the ranked list to exhaust the whole foreseen amount, the remaining amount may be reallocated to other topics according to the following criterion:

The total of the remaining foreseen amount for all five topics shall be merged and assigned to projects with the highest quality score, irrespective of the topic for which they have applied

The order of the ranked lists will be strictly followed.