



Brussels, 8.12.2021  
C(2021) 8833 final

ANNEX

**ANNEX**

**to the**

**Commission Decision**

**on the financing of the annual work programme 2022 for information outreach on EU  
external relations**

## ANNEX

**Legal Basis:** Article 58 (2)(d) of 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 966/2012<sup>1</sup> (the Financial Regulation).

### **Annual work programme 2022 for information outreach on EU external relations**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This annual work programme 2022 for information outreach on EU external relations concerns expenditure under the budgetary item 14 20 04 03 – **information policy and strategic communication for external action**.

On the basis of the objectives and tasks resulting from the Commission's institutional prerogatives, as provided for by Article 58(2)(d) of the Financial Regulation and following further guidance on the implementation of these tasks by the following documents:

- Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach, Communication from the Commission on 26 April 2018<sup>2</sup>;
- The Action Plan against Disinformation, adopted by the Commission on 5 December 2018<sup>3</sup>;
- Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2019–2024 - A stronger Europe in the world, Ursula von der Leyen<sup>4</sup>;
- Joint Communication from the Commission and the European External Action Service on Tackling COVID-19 disinformation – Getting the facts right of 10 June 2020<sup>5</sup>;
- The European Democracy Action Plan, 3 December 2020<sup>6</sup>

This work programme contains the actions carried out to inform the public to be financed and the budget breakdown for year 2022 as follows. The detailed budget breakdown per type of action is available under section 6:

- for procurement implemented under direct management by the European External Action Service (EEAS) in Delegations by region: EUR 12 880 000
- for procurement implemented under direct management by EEAS in headquarters: EUR 8 300 000
- for procurement and other actions (inter-institutional agreement with the European Parliament) implemented under direct management by the Service for Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI): EUR 780 312

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> COM (2018) 236 final

<sup>3</sup> JOIN(2018)36

<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/political-guidelines-next-commission\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/political-guidelines-next-commission_en_0.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> JOIN/2020/8 final

<sup>6</sup> COM (2020) 790 final

- for activities co-delegated to the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology: EUR 1 845 000
- for procurement and grants co-delegated to the EU Delegation in the United Kingdom: EUR 460 000
- for corporate IT costs: EUR 1 369 000
- The objectives set out below are designed to support the information and communication activities of the European Union’s external action. Early adoption of the decision is intended to ensure the availability of the budgetary funds at the beginning of 2022.

The overall objective is to support proactive information, communication and public outreach activities and to increase the visibility and understanding of the European Union’s external action in non-member countries, with international organisations and within the European Union when communicating themes having a strong international dimension.

## 2. PROCUREMENT CONCERNING ACTIONS ON INFORMATION OUTREACH ON EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### Legal basis

Article 58(2)(d) of the Financial Regulation

### Budget line

14 20 04 03

### Subject matter of the contracts envisaged (*communication activities by EU Delegations and EEAS Headquarters*)

The funds under this section are used to finance information activities carried out in the area of external relations, covering all areas of external action under EU competence. The funds will be used both in EU Delegations for public diplomacy, information, communication and outreach activities and at Headquarters to carry out autonomous or supporting activities or to implement projects that benefit all Delegations and are therefore better managed centrally.

Enhancing communications and public diplomacy capacity is a priority of the Global Strategy<sup>7</sup>, as confirmed in the implementation report ‘Three years on, looking forward’<sup>8</sup>. Public diplomacy, strategic communication and the fight against foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference are critical for EEAS success as outlined in the *EEAS Communications principles and priorities for 2020-2021*<sup>9</sup> note (October 2020). The strengthening of three Strategic Communications Task Forces (East, South and Western Balkans), the Knowledge and Data Analysis and the Policy, Strategy and Global Priority Issues teams as well as the establishment of the EEAS managed Rapid Alert System (RAS) and horizontal team for emerging threats and data analysis within the EEAS signals the political importance attributed to this domain. Equally, 2021 brought staff reinforcements

<sup>7</sup> [Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign And Security Policy](#)

<sup>8</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu\\_global\\_strategy\\_2019.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_global_strategy_2019.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [EEAS Communications Principles and Priorities 2020-2021](#)

of 27 Strategic Communication Officers in EU Delegations in the EU Neighbourhood, the Western Balkans, Turkey and Russia, who will be involved in implementing activity plans on tackling foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference at the local and regional level, in strong coordination with Headquarters.

Looking ahead, the EU will invest even more in countering and raising awareness on foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference, including global, joint campaigns with international partners. Expanding the toolbox of EEAS communication campaigns, its digital channels and the activities of the EU Delegations network will further strengthen proactive communications in the world and to European citizens about the EU's role in the world. Thematic cross-cutting communication priorities for 2022 include 1) Green Deal and Climate Change Diplomacy, 2) support for the multilateral rules-based global order and working in partnership and 3) strategic autonomy and promoting security and resilience.

Furthermore, an amount of EUR 7 150 000 will be spent on activities addressing foreign disinformation, information manipulation and foreign interference and will be carried out in conjunction with other activities outlined under point 1 and 2 below by the EEAS through a service level agreement (SLA) between the FPI and the EEAS.

#### **A. Information outreach on EU External Relations – EU Delegations**

As EU Delegations represent the EU as a whole and coordinate political work with EU Member States, they coordinate public and cultural diplomacy activities on the ground. They further coordinate media outreach on EU-related topics, including in social media and vis-à-vis local stakeholders. The overall outreach on the social media channels has significantly increased in recent years and will continue to do so.

Enhancing communications and public diplomacy capacity is a priority of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy and forms an integral part of the EU Delegations' activities, in line with *EEAS Communications principles and priorities for 2020-2021*, which apply during the period covered by this work programme as well. In close coordination with EU Member States' diplomatic missions, Delegations will develop a joined up and coherent approach to communicating EU values and interests and addressing disinformation against the EU and its policies. Where appropriate and feasible, Delegations will liaise with Embassies of likeminded partners (e.g. G7) to identify synergies and potential for cooperation in communications efforts.

Delegations are asked to focus on the relevance of the Union's activities for people in third countries and employ a storytelling approach within communication campaigns, rather than showcasing benefits of isolated initiatives or projects.

EU Delegations are expected to design and carry out a range of communication and public diplomacy activities in close cooperation with the EEAS Strategic Communications (Stratcom) divisions and in line with the *EEAS Communications principles and priorities for 2020-2021*, but adapted to local needs and capabilities. Close cooperation with concerned Commission services should also be part of the design and implementation of activities when relevant, to ensure consistency of communication and public diplomacy actions. Activities include, but are not limited to, areas such as the production and dissemination of audiovisual material, development of digital communication products, production and dissemination of publications on priority themes, development of press and media relations including the organisation of visits for groups of journalists, organisation of information events in local communities, production of information and promotional material, dissemination through and monitoring of social media, support for the information

activities of opinion leaders consistent with the Union's priorities, general outreach and public and cultural diplomacy actions.

The annual work programmes serve as a planning tool for Delegations and as a report to Headquarters of past and planned activities. They provide guidance to the Delegations about the political priorities of the EU in bilateral, regional and global contexts, as well as inform on relevant communication tools and techniques, to better steer their public outreach activities. The EEAS Stratcom divisions (STRAT 1 and STRAT 2) are and will remain in the lead in this planning process. To the extent possible, the annual work programme will also contribute to communication activities on the EU's corporate communication priorities, in particular under the themes 'EU in the World', 'Team Europe' and others, including economic issues, such as trade relations. This contribution may consist of the development of campaigns and of 'good stories' that communicate how people concretely benefit from the EU, that make its actions relatable and are a way of improving understanding of what the EU does. A coordinated approach, particularly on cross-cutting priorities, will continue to be taken. The EEAS chairs regular 'RELEXCOMM' meetings in conjunction with DG COMM, DG INTPA, DG NEAR, DG ECHO, FPI, DG TRADE and DG CLIMA amongst others. The geographic distribution of funds in 2022 will focus on agreed priority regions as well as on thematic priorities, with the objective of also ensuring a minimum level of activity in smaller Delegations. The European Neighbourhood, both East and South, represent key priority areas together with the Western Balkans, Turkey, Common Security and Defence Policy missions and emerging global threats. The recently established network of 27 Local Agents in the in the EU's neighbourhood and Western Balkans Delegations will be instrumental in strengthening Delegation capacities for coordinated action to better understand and address manipulative interference and foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference threats. Actions in this field require continuous efforts to address the relevant actors, tools, methods, prioritised targets and impact. These strategic communication officers and analysts shall continue assuring the integration of this newer work strand into the EU Delegations' daily strategic communication activities. Activities leading to the hosting of summits, like the EU-Africa and ASEAN Summits, the priority accorded to the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region and other major events shall benefit from supplementary funds as needed.

**Total budget: EUR 12 880 000**

#### **B. Information outreach on EU External Relations – EEAS Headquarters**

Communication and outreach activities designed and carried out in Headquarters will continue to play a key role. These activities will be guided by *EEAS Communications principles and priorities for 2020–2021* and other agreed political priorities for priority regions, relevant horizontal issues and priority areas, including in public, economic and cultural diplomacy.

Communications instruments and tools will be developed as appropriate to reflect a modern and innovative approach with key performance indicators to be applied where possible. Activities may also be carried out by external contractors as appropriate. In that respect, a joint framework contract with an external contractor covering all areas of integrated communication activities and public information management was concluded by FPI in 2019.<sup>10</sup> Others may be used as appropriate and where possible.

These activities may comprise the following:

<sup>10</sup> Call ref. 2019/S 001-000015

- Development of information material and communication campaigns delivered online and offline.
- Production and distribution of publications on priority themes.
- Production and dissemination of audiovisual material, such as videos, web-documentaries, info-clips etc.
- Organisation of press visits and press events including visits for groups of journalists.
- Organisation of conferences, exhibitions and public outreach events.
- Production of publication and general communications material.
- Information activities for opinion leaders that are consistent with the Union's strategic priorities.
- Monitoring, analysis and exposure of disinformation campaigns and foreign interference, both within and outside the EU.
- Data-based analysis of foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference.
- Training to raise awareness of foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference among audiences in the EU and beyond.
- Support for language pluralism of strategic communication products.

The above list is not exhaustive as regards the nature of communication and information activities to be undertaken. However, it is to be highlighted that information provided through the EEAS website and those of the Delegations will continue to be a key priority in 2022.

**Total budget: EUR 1 150 000**

As regards EU Delegations, activities are implemented by EU Delegations through various types of procurement depending on the activities, which are mainly services.

As regards EEAS HQ, the budget will be implemented mainly through the use of framework contracts for communication activities such as audiovisual and digital communications and outreach, web and social media presence and engagement, targeted communication campaigns, press trips and events.

**C. Addressing foreign disinformation, information manipulation and foreign interference (FIMI)**

The appropriations addressing foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference for an amount of EUR 7 150 000 will be earmarked for the purpose of countering such threats. Activities shall be undertaken in line with the approaches set out in the *European Court of Auditors Special Report - Disinformation affecting the EU (June 2021)*, the *European Democracy Action Plan (December 2020)*, the *Action Plan against Disinformation* and the *Joint Communication on Tackling COVID-19 disinformation – Getting the facts right*. Activities in this area should consist of proactive communication; support for a diverse and independent media landscape; and addressing foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference in its different dimensions by improving joint situational awareness, build resilience and disrupt such activity. In this regard, specific focus will be given to activities directed at improving the EU's capacity to monitor, analyse and expose disinformation from outside the EU and to raise greater awareness of the phenomenon of disinformation amongst specialised audiences, media and the wider EU and international public. Communication instruments and tools will be developed as appropriate to reflect a modern and innovative approach with a measurable impact upon which adequate reporting can be based.

With regard to improving the capacity to monitor, analyse and evaluation, activities may comprise, among others, the following:

- Development of an efficient, transparent, collaborative and interoperable data analytics environment and the development of a common methodology and framework to collect systematic evidence of foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference, supported by an appropriate technological infrastructure.
- Development of coherent reporting standards across all products (including contracted products) with a specific focus on the common data sharing standard developed by EEAS StratCom, to cater to different audiences (EEAS, EU Institutions, EU member states, international partners, public etc.).
- Development of internal and external training sessions and relevant information materials.
- Publicly exposing of foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference both within and outside the EU.
- Establishing networks of experts to identify and report on foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference for further central analysis and action.
- Establishing, training and support for the newly recruited network of 27 local agents in the EU Delegations in the EU's neighbourhood and Western Balkans.

With regard to raising awareness of foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference disinformation from outside the EU amongst specialised audiences and the wider EU and international public, activities may comprise the following:

- Organisation of conferences and other public outreach events, including regular events for Rapid Alert System points of contact from EU member states and international partners.
- Delivery of communication campaigns, both digital and offline.
- Development of international partnerships and joint campaigning with international organisations and key stakeholders, e.g. NATO, G7, UN, UNESCO.
- Communication and awareness raising projects with the strategic communication offices of EU Neighbourhood countries and Western Balkans.
- Development of training material and conduct of training workshops and expert roundtables.
- Translation and promotion of communication products to specialised audiences.
- Translation and promotion of communication products to the wider EU and international public.

Through the increase of interaction and the use of open data, public awareness towards foreign disinformation, information manipulation and interference disinformation will be increased and the EU's capacity to anticipate and respond to this type of challenge will be improved.

**Total budget: EUR 7 150 000**

**Overall budget implemented by EEAS under (A), (B) and (C) EUR 21 180 000**

**Type of contract and type of procurement and indicative timeframe for launching the procurement procedure**

Delegations contracts: throughout the year

EEAS Framework Contract - Digital Communication and Information Services: throughout the year

FPI Framework Contract Policy Support Facility FPI/PSF/2019: throughout the year

### Implementation mode

The implementation method of the activities is through direct management. The operational expenditure will be implemented by means of procurement procedures in line with Title V of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) N° 2018/1046.

The activities in EU Delegations and at EEAS HQ level will be carried out by the EEAS on the basis of a service level agreement (SLA) between the FPI and the EEAS<sup>11</sup> allowing the EEAS to carry out information and communication activities on behalf of the Commission within the framework established by the administrative arrangement between Commission and EEAS services of 14/12/2010.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. GRANTS, PROCUREMENT AND OTHER ACTIONS MANAGED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION (DG CNECT) AND THE EU DELEGATION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM – INFORMATION ABOUT EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN FARSI AND EUROPEAN UNION CITIZENS’ RIGHTS OUTREACH ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

#### Legal basis

Article 58(2)(d) of the Financial Regulation<sup>13</sup>

#### Budget line

14 20 04 03

#### Description and objective of the implementing measure

##### A. Information about European Affairs in Farsi

The provision of quality information in Farsi with a clear and balanced approach on European and international policies remains important to enhancing knowledge of these issues among native Farsi speakers, as well as to providing regular and reliable information on European affairs and their impact on citizens.

The amount programmed by the Commission for the activities covered by this decision has since 2009 included a measure to promote the production and dissemination of European news in Farsi to Iran (currently subject of a contract with Euronews). A Euronews broadcasting television service in Farsi was launched in 2010 in response to a European Parliament Resolution of 10 May 2007 ([2006/2172\(INI\)](#)). As of 2017, Euronews introduced a new production model as a result of which the production and dissemination of the Farsi service became fully digital.

<sup>11</sup> Ares(2013)3719368 - 13/12/2013

<sup>12</sup> Ares (2010) 943776

<sup>13</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018



In July 2021 the Commission signed a new Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with Euronews for 2021-24. In 2022, the production of the Euronews Farsi service will be funded within this framework.

**Total budget: EUR 1 845 000**

### **B. European Union citizens' rights outreach activities in the United Kingdom**

Finally, EUR 460 000 will be co-delegated to the EU Delegation to the United Kingdom to fund European Union citizens' rights outreach activities in the United Kingdom.

The budget will be used to provide outreach information and advice to EU citizens protected by Part 2 of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement. This will cover areas on (1) how those who are still eligible – including late applicants and joining family members – can bring themselves into the scope of protections of the Withdrawal Agreement; and on (2) monitoring and raising awareness on how citizens already covered can rely on their new status in order to exercise their continued EU rights. To this end the Delegation of the European Union to the United Kingdom manages an integrated EU citizens' rights function. This provides information and advice to EU citizens and entities assisting EU citizens in the UK in the context of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement. The budget will be implemented through procurement.

**Total budget: EUR 460 000**

### **Implementation mode**

Implementation of the action concerning information on European affairs in Farsi will be done by direct management via a co-delegation (Type II) to the European Commission Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT) and will take the form of a specific grant agreement in the framework of the 3 year Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) signed by the European Commission with Euronews in 2021. The grant will take the form of reimbursement on the basis of unit costs, as currently authorised by the Commission decision C(2021)3578 of 27.05.2021, according to Article 181 of the Financial Regulation; or alternatively, on the reimbursement of a percentage of the eligible costs actually incurred if the conditions to apply unit costs are not met. The Commission may finance up to 95% of the eligible costs. The type of applicants targeted by the grant agreement are media outlets able to cover world news from a pan-European perspective.

The European Union citizens' rights outreach activities will be implemented by the EU Delegation to the United Kingdom. The corresponding funds will be co-delegated (co-delegation Type II) to the EU Delegation in the United Kingdom.

## **4. PROCUREMENT AND OTHER ACTIONS MANAGED BY FPI – EUROPEAN UNION VISITORS PROGRAMME AND FPI EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

### **Legal basis**

Article 58(2)(d) of the Financial Regulation<sup>14</sup>

### **Budget line**

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<sup>14</sup> OJ L 193, 30.07.2018

### **A. European Union Visitors Programme**

The budget line will also cover a direct contribution of EUR 480 000 to the European Parliament for the European Union Visitors Programme (EUVP), which is a unique framework for introducing the EU institutions to key contacts from third countries, selected by the EU Delegations. The EUVP, which is maintained jointly with the European Parliament, is a long-running inter-institutional arrangement established initially as ‘Programme communautaire d’invitation de ressortissants américains’ by an ‘administrative regulation’ co-signed by the president of the European Parliament and the president of the European Commission in 1974 and subsequently prolonged every year by tacit agreement<sup>15</sup>. It has become a firmly anchored part of the EU’s public diplomacy outreach and is much appreciated by Delegations and the European Parliament. Within the limits of the available total budget allocated by the European Parliament and the European Commission, in 2022, the EUVP will provide 300-350 participants with the opportunity to participate in tailor-made study visits to the European Commission and the European Parliament on a specific policy area or theme. They receive first-hand information on the EU’s values, functioning, activities, policies and perspectives, with a view to making them ‘ambassadors’ for the EU at home. In view of the possible continuation of COVID-19 restrictions, some of the study visits can take place virtually.

A growing EUVP social media community as well as post-visit interactions with alumni serve to gauge the increase of information about the EU.

The expenses related to the EUVP programme pertain to the reimbursement of expenses incurred by persons invited by the institutions in the framework of physical or virtual visits. The reimbursement of these expenses is managed by the European Parliament by way of direct management based on a 50%-50% co-financing mechanism between the two institutions. The allotted funds can also be used to cover information and communication activities related to the EUVP.

### **B. FPI external communication**

EUR 300 312 will be used for service contracts ensuring the maintenance of FPI’s web presence, web-hosting and other associated outreach activities in support of FPI’s mandate, including through social media.

The FPI external communication activities will focus on contributing to the implementation of the political guidelines of the von der Leyen Commission (notably A Stronger Europe in the World). They will reinforce the messages of the EU Global Strategy in key areas (e.g. human rights and climate change), the EU’s strategic responsibility as a global actor and strong partner on peace, security and defence, economic and cultural diplomacy.

FPI’s external communication will target audiences in the EU and beyond. FPI’s communication activities will serve to demonstrate to EU citizens the EU’s positive role in the world, delivering targeted messages on EU policies and external action.

Besides ensuring that FPI’s web presence is user-friendly and relevant, and integrated with the new Commission web-architecture, as well as social media and other outreach activities, FPI will seek to further reinforce the visibility and recognition of its actions, and contribute

<sup>15</sup> To be replaced by a Memorandum of Understanding currently under preparation

to Commission and EEAS corporate communication efforts.

### Overview

- EUVP: EUR 480 000 – Inter-institutional agreement.
- FPI website and external communication as well as hosting costs for FPI websites: EUR 300 312 (procurement, one contract per year under DG COMM FWC and annual hosting costs through a co-delegation arrangement with DG DIGIT).

**Overall budget implemented by FPI under (A) and (B); EUR 780 312**

### Implementation mode

The funds will be implemented through direct management.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE IT

### Legal basis

Article 58(2)(d) of the Financial Regulation<sup>16</sup>

### Budget line

14 20 04 03

### Amount

EUR 1 369 000

### Description and objective of the implementing measure

EUR 1 369 000 are allocated to central corporate IT activities implemented by DG DIGIT, in line with the Communication on the guidelines on financing of the IT corporate systems<sup>17</sup>.

**Total budget: EUR 1 369 000**

### Implementation mode

The implementation method of corporate communication will be direct management.

## 6. BUDGET SUMMARY

	BUDGET IN EUR
<b>ACTION 1. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY EEAS IN EU DELEGATIONS BY REGION</b>	<b>12 880 000</b>

<sup>16</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018

<sup>17</sup> C(2020)6126, 10.09.2020

<b>OUT OF WHICH PROCUREMENT: 12 880 000</b>	
<b>Action 2. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY EEAS HQ</b> <b>OUT OF WHICH PROCUREMENT: 8 300 000</b>	<i>8 300 000</i>
<b>Action 3. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY FPI</b> <b>OUT OF WHICH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PROCUREMENT: 300 000</b></li> <li>• <b>INTER-INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT: 480 000</b></li> </ul>	<i>780 312</i>
<b>Action 4. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY DG CONNECT</b> <b>OUT OF WHICH GRANT: 2 081 000</b>	<i>1 845 000</i>
<b>ACTION 5. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE EU DELEGATION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM</b> <b>OUT OF WHICH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PROCUREMENT: 460 000</b></li> </ul>	<i>460 000</i>
<b>Action 6. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE IT</b> <b>OUT OF WHICH PROCUREMENT: 1 369 000</b>	<i>1 369 000</i>
<b>TOTAL UNDER BUDGET LINE 14 20 04 03</b>	<i>25 634 312</i>