



Brussels, 21.12.2023
C(2023) 9268 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 21.12.2023

on the authorisation of the disbursement of the second and third instalments of the non-repayable support and the first instalment of the loan support for Slovenia

(Only the Slovene text is authentic)

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 21.12.2023

on the authorisation of the disbursement of the second and third instalments of the non-repayable support and the first instalment of the loan support for Slovenia

(Only the Slovene text is authentic)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility¹, and in particular Article 24(5) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) According to Article 4(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the specific objective of the Recovery and Resilience Facility is to provide Member States with financial support with a view to achieving the milestones and targets of reforms and investments as set out in their recovery and resilience plans.

Council Implementing Decision of 28 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Slovenia² (the ‘Council Implementing Decision’) provides that the Union is to release instalments in accordance with the Financing Agreement and the Loan Agreement conditional on a decision by the Commission, taken in accordance with Article 24(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, that Slovenia has satisfactorily fulfilled the relevant milestones and targets identified in relation to the implementation of the recovery and resilience plan.

- (2) On 15 September 2023, Slovenia submitted a request for payment, accompanied by a management declaration and a summary of audits. The request concerned the second and third instalment of the non-repayable support and the first instalment of the loan support. Pursuant to Article 24(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the Commission assessed on a preliminary basis whether the relevant milestones and targets set out in the Council Implementing Decision had been satisfactorily fulfilled. For the purpose of this assessment, the operational arrangements concluded between the Commission and Slovenia³ in accordance with Article 20(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, were taken into account.
- (3) The Commission made a positive preliminary assessment of the satisfactory fulfilment of all 36 relevant milestones and targets related to the non-repayable support and all eight relevant milestones and targets related to the loan support and, in accordance with Article 24(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, provided its findings to the Economic

¹ OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 17.

² ST 10612 2021 ADD 1, not yet published.

³ Recovery and Resilience Facility Operational arrangements between the European Commission and Slovenia, entered into force on 8 February 2022.

and Financial Committee asking for its opinion on the satisfactory fulfilment of the relevant milestones and targets. In accordance with Article 25(4) of that Regulation, the Commission provided the competent committee of the European Parliament with an overview of its preliminary findings concerning the satisfactory fulfilment of the relevant milestones and targets. The Economic and Financial Committee agreed with the Commission's positive preliminary assessment and was of the opinion that Slovenia has satisfactorily fulfilled all the milestones and targets associated with the payment request. The Commission has taken the opinion of the Economic and Financial Committee into account for its assessment.

- (4) Section 2(1)(1.2) and section 2(1)(1.3) of the Annex to the Council Implementing Decision provides the relevant milestones and targets that are to be satisfactorily fulfilled for the second and third instalment of the non-repayable support for an amount of EUR 304 321 105.
- (5) Section 2(2)(2.1) of the Annex to the Council Implementing Decision provides the relevant milestones and targets that are to be satisfactorily fulfilled for the first instalment of the loan support for an amount of EUR 310 091 602.
- (6) Milestone 1 provides for the entry into force of the Act on the Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Energy Sources. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Act on the Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Energy Sources has been published in the Official Gazette No. 121/21 on 23 July 2021 and entered into force on 7 August 2021, the Act amending the Promotion of Renewable Energy Sources Act has been published in the Official Gazette No. 189/21 on 3 December 2021 and entered into force on 18 December 2021, the Act on the Deployment of Installations for the Production of Electricity from Renewable Energy Sources has been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 78/23 on 19 July 2023 and entered into force on 3 August 2023. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the acts regulate the use of renewable energy sources by the state and municipalities and set a binding target for the share of energy from renewable sources in gross final consumption in the Republic of Slovenia. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (7) Milestone 2 provides for the establishment of a single point to support investors in obtaining approvals for the installation and connection of generating installations to renewable energy sources. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that contact point for investors is operational since 7 April 2022, guiding investors through licence applications and other acts and assisting with the entire administrative process. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (8) Milestone 4 provides for the launch of calls for proposals for investments to increase the share of renewable energy sources in district heating systems. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call for proposals is launched and that the upgrading of the efficient district heating system does not use fossil fuels as a heat source but rely solely on renewable sources. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the eligibility criteria ensure compliance with the 'do no significant harm' Technical Guidance (2021/C58/01) and in particular that the restructured district heating systems comply with Directive 2012/27/EU; and that, in the case of biomass utilisation, the biomass is in line with Directive (EU) 2018/2001. The call for proposals was launched on 5 May 2023. Whilst this constitutes a minimal deviation

from the requirement of the Council Implementing Decision, the deviation related to the timing of the launch of the call for proposals does not affect the achievement of the objective of the measure to increase the energy efficiency of district heating systems through an additional 22MW of renewable energy sources in the district heating systems. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (9) Milestone 6 provides for the opening of a call for proposals for electricity transformer stations. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call for proposals for the construction of transformer stations is open until the budgetary envelope is exhausted and that the call ensures in particular criteria for the effective integration of renewable energy production and storage facilities, including recharging points for electric vehicles. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the eligibility criteria ensure compliance with the ‘do no significant harm’ Technical Guidance (2021/C58/01). On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (10) Milestone 13 provides for the entry into force of the Electricity Supply Act. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Act on the Supply of Electricity has been published in the Official Gazette No. 172/21 on 29 October 2021 and entered into force on 13 November 2021. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the Electricity Supply Act lays down the rules for the functioning of the electricity market, production, transmission, distribution, storage and supply of electricity, together with provisions for the protection of final customers, the modalities and forms of provision of utilities in electricity transmission and distribution and the electricity market, principles and measures to achieve security of electricity supply and measures to prevent energy poverty and other issues of electricity supply. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (11) Milestone 17 provides for the opening of a call for proposals for a new low-voltage distribution network. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call for proposals for construction of low-voltage distribution network has been published in the Official Gazette No. 46/23 on 21 April 2023 and it is open until the budgetary envelope is exhausted and aims at the effective integration of renewable energy production and storage facilities to the electricity distribution network, including recharging points for electric vehicles. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the eligibility criteria ensure compliance with the ‘do no significant harm’ Technical Guidance (2021/C58/01). On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (12) Milestone 21 provides for opening of a call for proposals for the implementation of individual upgrades of technical building systems, such as air-conditioning and ventilation systems. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call for proposals has been published in the Official Gazette No. 4/2023 of 4 January 2023 and has been opened for the implementation of individual upgrades of technical building systems, such as air-conditioning and ventilation systems, until the budgetary envelope is exhausted. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the eligibility criteria ensure compliance with the ‘do no significant harm’ Technical Guidance (2021/C58/01). The content and objectives of the evidence provided demonstrate that the published call for proposals is in line with the requirements of the milestone. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (13) Milestone 22 provides for opening of a public invitation for energy and sustainable renovation of publicly owned buildings of high administrative and social importance. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call for proposals has been launched for energy and sustainable renovation of publicly owned buildings of high administrative and social importance, until the budgetary envelope is exhausted. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the eligibility criteria ensure compliance with the 'do no significant harm' Technical Guidance (2021/C58/01), and at least a 30 % reduction of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions compared to the ex-ante emissions. The content and objectives of the evidence provided demonstrate that the published public invitation is in line with the requirements of the milestone. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (14) Milestone 23 provides for opening of a call for proposals for energy and sustainable renovation of publicly owned residential buildings. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call for proposals for the energy and sustainable renovation of publicly owned residential buildings has been published in the Official Gazette No 161/2022 of 23 December 2022 and has been opened for the energy and sustainable renovation of publicly owned residential buildings, until the budgetary envelope is exhausted. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the eligibility criteria ensure compliance with the 'do no significant harm' Technical Guidance (2021/C58/01), and at least a 30 % reduction of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions compared to the ex-ante emissions. The content and objectives of the evidence provided demonstrate that the published call for proposals is in line with the requirements of the milestone. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (15) Milestone 36 provides for the entry into force of amendments to rules on conditions for entry in the register of suppliers and other obligations of suppliers and on the requirements concerning the marketing of forest reproductive material. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the amendments to the rules on conditions for entry into the register of suppliers and other obligations of suppliers and on the requirements concerning the marketing of forest reproductive material entered into force on 9 October 2021 and 7 May 2022. The evidence also demonstrates that the amended rules on the main certificates of identity of forest reproductive material allow the tracking of forest reproductive material. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (16) Milestone 38 provides for the award of grants for urban wastewater discharge and treatment projects. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that grants were awarded for 15 urban wastewater discharge and treatment projects selected through a dedicated call for projects. The evidence also demonstrates that the grant awards are in line with the energy requirements of the milestone and that there is a focus on nature protection areas. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (17) Milestone 42 provides for the award of grants for drinking water supply projects. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that grants were awarded for 15 drinking water supply projects selected through a dedicated call for projects. The evidence also demonstrates that the grant awards are in line with the energy and water leakage requirements of the milestone. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (18) Milestone 46 provides for the entry into force of a new Flood Risk Management Plan. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the flood protection measures defined in the new Flood Risk Management Plan are aimed at speeding up the planning and implementation of measures that contribute to the prevention of the consequences of floods at local, regional and national level. The evidence also demonstrates that the Flood Risk Management Plan is promoting nature-based solutions and that it entered into force on 30 March 2023. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (19) Milestone 50 provides for the award of grants for further urban wastewater discharge and treatment projects. The Commission has identified a clerical error in the text of the Council Implementing Decision and has undertaken the assessment on a revised basis. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that grants were awarded for 10 urban wastewater discharge and treatment projects selected through a dedicated call for projects. The evidence also demonstrates that the grant awards are in line with the energy requirements of the milestone and that there is a focus on nature protection areas. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (20) Milestone 52 provides for the award of grants for further drinking water supply projects. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that grants were awarded for 10 drinking water supply projects selected through a dedicated call for projects. The evidence also demonstrates that the grant awards are in line with the energy and water leakage requirements of the milestone. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (21) Milestone 54 provides for entry into force of the Act establishing an integrated public passenger transport operator. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Act has been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 54/2022 of 20 April 2022 and entered into force on 5 May 2022. The Act confers tasks currently operated by the Ministry of Infrastructure, municipalities, and Slovenian Railways to an integrated public passenger transport management company. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrate that the new public passenger transport management company promotes the development of public passenger transport, proposes amendments to legislation and other acts, ensures planning of needs, conducts public procurement procedures, manages the ticketing system, ensures appropriate supervision, and provides information to passengers. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (22) Milestone 57 provides for an award of contracts for upgrading railway sections Kranj – Jesenice, Ljubljana – Brezovica, Brezovica – Preserje and Preserje – Borovnica. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the contracts were awarded and that the tender documentation provides for increasing rail fluidity by removing bottlenecks, ensures interoperability, and respects the increase in the load capacity and increase in speeds. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (23) Milestone 58 provides for an award of contracts to upgrade the Grosuplje and Domžale railway stations. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the contracts were awarded and that the tender documentation includes improvements of current accessibility for passengers and the track capacity of the lines and ‘do no

significant harm' principles. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (24) Milestone 63 provides for entry into force of a law establishing a national regulatory framework in the field of alternative transport fuels. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Act on Infrastructure for Alternative Fuels and Promotion of the Transition to Alternative Fuels in Transport has been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 62/2023 on 6 June 2023 and entered into force on 21 June 2023. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the Act establishes a comprehensive legal framework for the use of alternative fuels in transport, sets out legally binding rules for all stakeholders in a one-stop shop to facilitate the diversification of primarily personal transport and covers the creation, registration and operation of recharging/supply infrastructure. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (25) Milestone 69 provides for the entry into force of amendments to the Decree on the Management of Packaging and Packaging Waste and the Waste Regulation. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the act amending the Decree on the Management of Packaging and Packaging Waste has been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia on 9 April 2021 and the act amending the Decree on the Waste Regulation has been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia on 31 May 2022. The acts entered into force on 24 April 2021 and 15 June 2022 respectively. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the Decree on the Management of Packaging and Packaging Waste and the Decree on the Waste Regulation increase organisational and financial responsibility of manufacturers by setting up new obligations of manufacturers and vendors and by increased reporting and data collection responsibilities of waste producers. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (26) Milestone 71 provides for the establishment of a one-stop shop for the circular economy. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the one-stop shop for the circular economy has been established and became operational on 1 December 2022 and it supports businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and relevant stakeholders through six programmes. The platform specifically provides information to businesses and stakeholders through professional articles, manuals and it provides support for startups and SMEs in the strategic sustainable and circular transformation of business, it creates a community of sustainable and circular oriented companies and it is the contact point, where companies can ask questions and get answers about transition to circular economy. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (27) Milestone 78 provides for the adoption of the guidelines for innovative procurement. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Guidelines on Innovative Public Procurement have been adopted by the Decision of the Government of Slovenia No. 43000-3/2022/3 of 1 December 2022 and by the Decision of the Government of Slovenia No. 43000-3/2022/9 of 4 September 2023. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the Guidelines for innovative procurement define the selection procedures and criteria for the participation of applicants in innovative public procurement procedures. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (28) Milestone 80 provides for the award of contracts for projects for the digitalisation of enterprises. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the call applicants are consortia or other forms of integration of companies comprising at least one large company and multiple small and medium-sized enterprises. Furthermore, the evidence demonstrates that the selection criteria include, inter alia, strengthening employees' digital competences, and the introduction of e-identity and digital business card. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (29) Target 81 provides for the number of consortia of companies with produced digital strategy. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that 23 consortia developed tailored digital strategies for transformation of business, technology, organisation, and culture, including, inter alia, a digital readiness assessment, identification of relevant areas for digitalisation, relevant data and sources, integration of data, and learning needs. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the digital strategies developed by the consortia are expected to have a significant impact over the businesses involved in the consortia, the technology levels of every consortia, as well as the organisation and the culture of the companies involved, depending on the digital readiness assessments, leading to their transformation. Furthermore, all 23 digital strategies for the approved projects include all the elements as required by the call for proposals. On the basis of the due justification provided, the target should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (30) Milestone 91 provides for the start of issuing of new national e-identity cards. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the new e-ID cards have been issued as of 28 March 2022, reaching over 478 000 of e-ID cards issued to the date of the adoption of the preliminary assessment. Furthermore, the evidence provided by Slovenia, through the entry into force of the amendments to the Electronic Identity and Trust Services Act the following day after the publication in the Official Gazette on 23 July 2021 and to the Identity Card Act the fifteenth day after the publication in the Official Gazette on 19 March 2021, demonstrates that the e-IDs are usable both nationally and cross-border in e-commerce as well as for the use of public services. In addition, the evidence confirms that the new identity card enables citizens to identify and authenticate electronically in order to access electronic services and to sign electronically, as well as the compliance of the system cross border. On the basis of the due justification provided, the target should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (31) Milestone 93 provides for the entry into force of amendments to the General Administrative Procedure Act and the Decree on Administrative Commerce. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the amendments to the General Administrative Procedure Act entered into force the fifteenth day after the publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia of 7 January 2022 (Articles 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26) and six months after the publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia of 7 January 2022 (Articles 16, 20, 21, 22 and 23) and to the Decree on Administrative Commerce entered into force the fifteenth day after the publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia of 29 October 2021, 13 May 2022, 1 July 2022. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that these acts simplify the legal requirements for the provision of electronic public administration services and the further digitalisation of administrative processes, including, inter alia, payment services, support for the development of electronic applications, and the electronic submission of documents. Furthermore, amendments

of the two acts enlarge the scope of electronic procedures in administrative processes. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (32) Milestone 94 provides for the adoption of a Broadband Plan 2021-2025. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Broadband Plan was adopted by the government and it sets out i) the need to ensure adequate broadband networks in Slovenia by 2025, in line with the objectives for Connectivity for a European Gigabit Society 2025, ii) a national plan for the construction of 5G infrastructure, iii) the entry into force of the amendments to the Electronic Communications Act to optimise procedures for constructing electronic communication networks, increase efficiency of joint construction, and the predictability of the business environment, iv) measures to ensure appropriate radio spectrum area in Slovenia, v) concrete measures to achieve the objectives set out in the Plan and vi) key performance indicators to achieve the set targets within the set deadlines in the Plan. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (33) Target 100 provides for the number of users of the new Police Digital Radio Network (TETRA). The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the digital radio network of national authorities of the Republic of Slovenia has 11 000 users and that a state-wide TETRA digital radio network infrastructure was established and is operational for the needs of the national police. Furthermore, the evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the network uses EU coordinated radio frequencies for public security and is compatible with national radio systems of neighbouring countries. On the basis of the due justification provided, the target should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (34) Milestone 110 provides for the entry into force of the Act on Research, Development and Innovation Activities, which had been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No 186/2021 of 30 November 2021. Article 108 of the act stipulates that the entry into force on 15 December 2021 and the application of the act as of 1 January 2022. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the act entered into force on 15 December 2021. The act ensures an increase and stability of, public funding for research, development and innovation (hereinafter: RDI) activities in Slovenia. It increases the autonomy of public research organisations and establishes that public funding is also based on results. The provisions of the act are expected to stimulate cooperation of researchers with EU research projects and business as well as to promote internationalisation and inter-sectoral mobility and knowledge transfer. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (35) Milestone 111 provides for the establishment of a Joint Programme Committee, which has become operational. The evidence provided demonstrates that the Government Decision No. 01100-1/2022/9, which establishes the Joint Programme Committee and was adopted on 10 May 2022 enables the Joint Programme Committee to coordinate RDI activities in Slovenia at both strategic and operational level in a stable and continuous manner. This includes the coordination between different RDI delivery instruments regardless of the source of funding. The uptake is confirmed in the minutes of the first five meetings of the Joint Programme Committee, the first of which took place on 14 June 2022. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (36) Milestone 125 provides for the adoption of the capital market development strategy. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the strategy was adopted by the Slovenian government on 2 March 2023. To establish an effective on-line system on financial service innovations, the strategy foresees the establishment of the distributed ledger technology-based market, primarily for the SMEs to facilitate entry and cost reduction for them. The strategy builds on the results of the EU-supported project “Capital Market Enhancement and Development in Slovenia”. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (37) Milestone 127 provides for the entry into force of Implementing Regulation of the Investment Promotion Act. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the “Regulation amending the Regulation on the method of determining the conditions and criteria for granting investment incentives and the conditions for strategic investment”, which is considered as the implementing regulation of the Investment Promotion, has been published in the Official Gazette of Slovenia no.26/2022 on 25 February 2022 and includes evidence that the regulation entered into force on 26 February 2022. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (38) Milestone 128 provides for the award of grants for projects to support regional development. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the tenders on co-financing initial investments to support investments to increase productivity, competitiveness, resilience and decarbonisation of the economy in disadvantaged border areas have been published on the Official Gazette of Slovenia no. 1632/22, p. 722, the Incentives to co-finance initial investments in less developed areas ref. no 4300-4/2022/11 Official Gazette of Slovenia no.1659/22, p. 706, the Incentives for co-financing initial investments in disadvantaged border areas ref. no 3021-1/2023-SRRS/8 Official Gazette of Slovenia no. 2267/23, p. 1084. The evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the decisions to award the grants have been adopted and projects were awarded in compliance with the DNSH Technical Guidance. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (39) Milestone 133 provides for the award of grants for innovative business infrastructure ecosystems. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the tender (Reference 4300/2/2022/7 published in the Official Gazette of Slovenia on 25 January 2022) was published and decisions to award the grants have been taken. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (40) Target 144 provides for the number of additional young people in subsidised employment on the basis of an open-ended contract. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that 700 people, up to and including 29 years of age, are in subsidised employment on the basis of an open-ended contract and that both employees and employers have entered a contractual agreement with the Employment Service of Slovenia, committing to at least 18 months of employment. During that time, the employers are to be provided with subsidies. Employers ensured a mentor to support the young person. At the time of the submission of evidence, all 700 subsidised employments were ongoing, with the Employment Service of Slovenia closely monitoring the completion of at least 30 hours of training, with a focus on improving digital skills, during the 18-month subsidy period. On the basis of the due justification provided, the target should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (41) Milestone 150 provides for the awarding of grants to improve the energy efficiency of tourist accommodations. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that grants have been awarded to beneficiaries following a call for proposals and that the funds were awarded only to projects complying with conditions set out in the Decree on Development Incentives for Tourism, ensuring that for new buildings their primary energy demand is at least 20 % lower than requirement for nearly zero energy buildings and that at least 50 % of the eligible costs of renovation or new construction relates to energy efficiency improvements. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (42) Milestone 154 provides the selection of the projects for renovation of cultural heritage sites owned by the state and municipalities. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that Slovenia selected 12 cultural heritage sites owned by municipalities through a public call for proposals, published on the Official Gazette of Slovenia No. 29/2022 of the 4 March 2022, and 6 cultural heritage sites owned by the state through a programme of investment activities by the Ministry of Culture (document No. - 4111-4/2022-3340-10 of 21 April 2023). The call for proposals and list of beneficiaries for cultural heritage sites owned by municipalities and the programme of investments activities for the cultural monuments owned by the State show that these investments aim at renovating, and restoring, of cultural heritage with an expected multiplier effect on tourism development and include digitalisation and use of ICT technology to promote cultural heritage. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (43) Milestone 160 provides for the completion of the selection of pilot projects for the renewal of the higher education process. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport has selected 38 pilot projects on the basis of a call for proposals, published on 15 June 2022. The evidence further demonstrates that all four beneficiaries of funds are public higher education institutions. From the projects selected for co-funding, 13 test solutions for integrating sustainable development competences, 11 test solutions for integrating digital competences and 14 test solutions for integrating both sustainable and digital competences in higher education curricula. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (44) Milestone 167 provides for the adoption of the Strategy for Greening Education and Research Infrastructure. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the strategy was adopted by the Slovenian government on 17 August 2023 (decision no. 63100-2/2023/6). The strategy identifies sustainable priorities for green investments in education and research infrastructures and for the maintenance of educational buildings, taking into account specific characteristics and specific needs, such as the principles of sustainable construction of near-zero energy buildings, spatial design, digital transition, and innovative pedagogical approaches. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (45) Milestone 172 provides for the entry into force of the second Debureaucratisation package. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the 24 separate laws adopted that are part of the package have been published and entered into force by the end of 2022. The evidence provided by Slovenia further demonstrates that the amendments are aimed at reducing administrative barriers for the business sector and citizens, simplifying the legislation, streamlining the existing procedures and removing burdensome procedures through amendments and additions to laws covering

several ministerial departments. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (46) Milestone 176 provides a technical assistance to support the implementation of public procurement reforms. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the technical assistance report with assessment and recommendations was completed and the recommendations focus on increase competitiveness by reducing the share of single bids and negotiated procedures. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (47) Milestone 180 provides for the entry into force of amendments to the construction act and the spatial planning act. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the amendments to the Spatial Planning Act entered into force on 31 December 2021 and aim at improving spatial planning instruments and contributing to a more efficient management of national and municipal spatial planning by enabling the digitalization of all key spatial data and speeding up the issuance of permits. Moreover, the amendments to the Building Act entered into force on 31 December 2021 contribute to reduction of administrative burden by streamlining the compliance assessment by the competent authorities, defining the roles and deadlines in the procedure for issuing building administrative relief and by introducing a single procedure combining environmental and construction technical assessment. That act also provides the legal basis necessary for establishment of digital services in the field of construction. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (48) Milestone 205 provides for the entry into force of amendments to the Housing Act with the aim to strengthen the stock of public rental housing. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the amendment to the Housing Act (SZ-1E) has been published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No 121/90 of 04 June 2021 and entered into force on 19 June 2021. The evidence provided by Slovenia further demonstrates that the amendment includes an update of the level of non-profit rent while minimising the impact on tenants at social risk; the possibility for further borrowing by public housing funds; the possibility for activating existing but unoccupied housing stock for use as public rental housing; as well as the establishment of a public rental service. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.
- (49) Milestone 207 provides for the award of contracts for the provision of public rental housing. The evidence provided by Slovenia demonstrates that the projects were selected based on a competitive call for projects. It demonstrates as well that the investment consists in the issuance of grant award notification for 32 projects and the construction of 480 new housing units for the purpose of public rental housing with an average surface area expected to be above 47 m². Whereas the measure description refers to the construction of 480 new housing units while the milestone description refers to the construction of new dwellings, they should be interpreted in the light of the purpose of the measure as reflected in the RRP, namely, to increase the stock of public rental housing by supporting the investment in new rental apartments and acquisition and renovation of the existing apartments. The terms “housing unit” and “dwelling” are used synonymously by the Slovenian authorities . Furthermore, the evidence provided by Slovenia also demonstrates that the new buildings comply with the requirements of nearly zero-energy buildings. On the basis of the due justification provided, the milestone should be considered as satisfactorily fulfilled.

- (50) Furthermore, the Republic of Slovenia has also confirmed that previously satisfactorily fulfilled milestones and targets have not been reversed.
- (51) Following the fully positive assessment concerning the Republic of Slovenia's payment request, in accordance with Article 24(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the disbursement of the financial contribution for the second and third instalments of the non-repayable support and the disbursement of the loan for the first instalment of the loan support should be authorised.
- (52) In accordance with Article 2(3) of the Council Implementing Decision, as specified in the Financing Agreement, the pre-financing of the financial contribution shall be cleared by being proportionally deducted against the payment of the instalments. As Slovenia received EUR 255 398 888 of the financial contribution as pre-financing, an amount of EUR 41 232 000 of the payment should be utilised to clear the pre-financing, of which EUR 4 772 162 to clear the pre-financing for the REPowerEU chapter. Additionally, in accordance with Article 13(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 and Article 5 of the Financing Agreement, this payment shall also be reduced to offset the excess amount of pre-financing of EUR 37 176 185.
- (53) This Decision should be without prejudice to procedures relating to distortions of the operation of the internal market that may be undertaken, in particular under Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It does not override the requirement for Member States to implement the measures in accordance with Union and national law and, in particular, to notify instances of potential State aid to the Commission under Article 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
- (54) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established by Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Authorisation of the disbursement of the non-repayable support

The disbursement of the second and third instalment of the non-repayable support as laid down in Section 2(1)(1.2) and Section 2(1)(1.3) of the Annex to the Council Implementing Decision of 28 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Slovenia as amended by the Council Implementing decision of 17 October 2023 for an amount of EUR 304 321 105 is authorised.

In accordance with the Financing Agreement concluded pursuant to Article 23(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 between the Commission and the Republic of Slovenia, EUR 78 408 185 shall be utilised to clear the pre-financing of the financial contribution and offset the excess amount of pre-financing paid. EUR 225 912 920 shall be provided to Slovenia by means of payment to the bank account indicated in the Financing Agreement.

Article 2

Authorisation of the disbursement of the loan support

The disbursement of the first instalment of the loan support as laid down in Section 2(2)(2.1) of the Annex to the Council Implementing Decision of 28 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Slovenia as amended by the Council Implementing decision of 17 October 2023 for an amount of EUR 310 091 602 is authorised.

In accordance with the Loan Agreement concluded pursuant to Article 15(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 between the Commission and the Republic of Slovenia, EUR 310 091 602 shall be provided to Slovenia by means of payment to the bank account indicated in the Loan Agreement.

Article 3
Addressee

This Decision is addressed to the Republic of Slovenia.

Done at Brussels, 21.12.2023

For the Commission
Paolo GENTILONI
Member of the Commission