



FACTSHEET

Brussels, 10 January 2014

Financing of military operations: the ATHENA mechanism

Article 41 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) sets the principles for the financing of EU civilian and military crisis management operations. Operations having military or defence implications cannot be financed from the Union budget. For the common costs of such operations, the Council of the EU has established a special mechanism (ATHENA).

In February 2004, the Council of the European Union for the first time established a mechanism to administer the financing of common costs of operations having military or defence implications.¹ The currently applicable Council decision has been adopted in December 2011.²

This mechanism, called ATHENA, is managed under the authority of the Member States within the Special Committee. ATHENA manages some expenditures - the common costs - of each military operation from its preparatory phase to its termination. ATHENA is managed by an administrator and has legal capacity.³

Common costs

The Council Decision establishing ATHENA⁴ includes a list of common costs⁵ which are financed by all contributing states.

The Operation Commander is the authorising officer for the operation he commands. Where there is no Operation Commander, ATHENA's administrator is the authorising officer.

During the preparatory phase of an operation (i.e. before the Operation Commander is appointed), ATHENA finances *inter alia* the costs for transport and accommodation necessary for exploratory missions and preparations (in particular fact-finding missions) by military and civilian personnel⁶.

As of the date when the Operation Commander is appointed, ATHENA finances most incremental costs for Operation-, Force- and Component Headquarters, as well as for example incremental costs for infrastructure, essential additional equipment and evacuation for persons in need of urgent medical evacuation (MEDEVAC)⁷.

¹ Council Decision 2004/197/CFSP of 23 February 2004 (O.J. No L 63, 28 February 2004, p. 68).

² Council Decision 2011/871/CFSP of 19 December 2011 (O.J. No L343, 23 December 2011, p.35).

³ ATHENA has the necessary legal capacity, in particular, to hold a bank account, acquire, hold or dispose of property, enter into contracts and administrative arrangements and be a party to legal proceedings.

⁴ See footnote N° 3.

⁵ Annexes I, II, III and IV of Council Decision 2011/871/CFSP.

⁶ See Annex II of Council Decision 2011/871/CFSP.

⁷ See Annex III of Council Decision 2011/871/CFSP.

P R E S S

Finally, the Special Committee may decide that certain expenditures that do not figure on the list of common costs, can be financed in common for a given operation. For instance barracks/lodging for the forces, certain type of medical services and facilities in theatre, or even demining and Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear protection, insofar as necessary for the operation. Transport of the forces and multinational task-forces headquarters however remain under the Council's competence.

ATHENA currently administers the financing of the common costs of the following operations/actions:

- Operation **EUFOR-Althea** (Bosnia and Herzegovina): 14.6 million euros in 2014;
- Operation **EUNAVFOR-ATALANTA**: 7 million euros in 2014;
- **EU Training Mission Somalia**: 7.3 million euros in 2014;
- **EU Training Mission Mali**: 7.7 million euros in 2014.

Nation Borne Costs

In addition, ATHENA is managing the "Nation borne costs", i.e. items such as fuel, water and food which are being paid by the Member States and Third States which contribute forces to operations, on the basis of their consumption.

Early financing

In order to improve the rapid reaction capability of the European Union, an early financing fund has been set up⁸ in 2005. It is designed for rapid response operations for which contributions are rapidly needed. Member States have the choice either to pay contributions to the fund in anticipation or to pay their contribution to a Rapid Response operation within five days.

19 Member States have participated in the provisional financing scheme and ATHENA is endowed with provisional appropriations exceeding 12 million euros. In addition, each of the 19 Member States may decide individually that its contribution to the provisional appropriations (up to 75%) can be used for an operation other than a Rapid Response operation.

Participating States and contributions

Participating States are the Member States of the European Union except Denmark (as it has opted out from actions with defence implications under the EU Treaty). Third States participating in a military operation may contribute to its financing.

In accordance with the Council Decision establishing ATHENA⁹, contributions to ATHENA are based on a GNI-scale¹⁰ (see Annex below).

Organisational structure

ATHENA is managed under the authority of a Special Committee composed of representatives of the Member States contributing to the financing of each operation. Third states which contribute to the financing of an operation may take part in its meetings, without taking a vote. The EEAS and the Commission shall be invited to attend the Special Committee's meetings, but cannot take a vote either.

⁸ Council Decision 2005/68/CFSP of 24 January 2005.

⁹ See footnote N° 3.

¹⁰ Gross national income (GNI) of Member States.

The Secretary General of the Council of the EU appoints an Administrator for ATHENA for a period of three years. The administrator coordinates work on financial questions relating to the Union's military operations. He/She is the contact point for national administrations and for international organisations. His/her tasks are *inter alia* drawing up a draft budget that he/she submits to the Special Committee as well as administering revenue and common costs that occur outside the active phase of operations.

Furthermore, the Secretary General of the Council appoints an accounting officer for ATHENA for a period of three years. He is responsible for keeping ATHENA's accounts and for implementing payments on behalf of ATHENA.

During the active phase of an operation, it is the Operation Commander who provides elements for the budget of the operation he commands. In this function, he/she can enter into contracts on behalf of ATHENA and can open a bank account on behalf of ATHENA for his operation.

Review

The Council Decision which established ATHENA can be reviewed, if necessary, at the request of a Member State or following each operation. It shall be revised at least every three years. The ATHENA Decision has been reviewed during the second half of 2011; the next review is planned to take place in the second semester 2014.

For more information about the Athena mechanism, see the [Athena website](#).

**GNI scale (in %) used for contributions to ATHENA in 2014
where 27 Member States are contributing**

Member State	GNI scale in percentage
Belgium	3,01
Bulgaria	0,31
Czech Republic	1,07
Germany	21,48
Estonia	0,13
Ireland	1,04
Greece	1,37
Spain	7,94
France	16,32
Croatia	0,33
Italy	12,10
Cyprus	0,11
Latvia	0,18
Lithuania	0,26
Luxembourg	0,25
Hungary	0,73
Malta	0,05
Netherlands	4,74
Austria	2,49
Poland	2,97
Portugal	1,22
Romania	1,13
Slovenia	0,26
Slovakia	0,57
Finland	1,56
Sweden	3,43
United Kingdom	14,81
Total 27 Member States	100,00