COMMISSION DECISION
OF 1998

Establishing a Small projects Programme for 1998,

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EEC) No 3906/89 of 18 December 1989 on economic aid to certain countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 753/96 of 22 April 1996 and in particular Article 9 thereof,

Whereas Regulation No 3906/89 lays down the rules and conditions for the granting of economic aid to certain countries of Central and Eastern Europe,

Whereas the measures provided for by this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee on Aid for Economic Restructuring in certain countries of Central and Eastern Europe,

HEREBY DECIDES AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The programme described in the Annex to the present decision is hereby adopted.

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community assistance shall be 4 MECU to be financed through Budget line B7-500.

Done in Brussels,

For the Commission
FINANCING PROPOSAL

GLOBAL AUTHORISATION UNDER THE PHARE PROGRAMME FOR A SMALL PROJECTS PROGRAMME

1. IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiary states: The Phare partner countries
Programme: Small Projects Programme
Year: 1998
Cost: 4 MECU
Expiry date: 31.12.1999, contracting
31.12.2000, disbursement
Sector: AA
Group: M
Budget line: B7-500
Task Manager: Ruud van Enk

2. SUMMARY

The funds authorised under this proposal will be used to supply grant support for projects in favour of the Phare partner countries, which fall outside the direct scope of national or multi-beneficiary Phare programmes, but support the implementation of the Phare programme in general and aim in particular to contribute to closer European integration of the beneficiary countries, and greater awareness within these countries of EU activities, accession and enlargement.

3. BACKGROUND

Given the Commission’s activities aimed at closer involvement of the citizen within the European Union itself (eg. Citizens First), it is appropriate for the Commission to support activities with a broadly similar aim in the countries that have applied for EU membership. Whereas the national Phare programmes concentrate on large projects, this programme aims to support projects of modest cost, which have a potentially significant impact in terms of goodwill and awareness.

The programme will, within the framework of pre-accession, allow the Commission to support activities, which complement the Phare programme by helping different actors to prepare for accession. These activities will be small-scale by nature, but will nevertheless be justified in that their knock-on effect will be far greater than the resources committed.
4. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the programme is to provide modest financial support for projects in support of the Phare partner countries, which (a) raise awareness in these countries on European integration and associated issues, (b) contribute directly to closer European integration of the beneficiary country, and (c) increase the visibility of the European Union in the partner countries.

5. DESCRIPTION

The programme will finance a number of different types of actions directly linked to the objectives of the Phare programme, and in particular in line with the pre-accession strategy. The final beneficiaries will be institutions, agencies, social, economic, political, or cultural actors in the partner countries.

The programme will finance the following:

1. **A traineeship scheme for officials of Phare partner countries**

In the context of institution building and assistance for integration and approximation of legislation, the programme will finance the costs of placing officials from the partner countries on traineeships within the European Commission for periods of up to 6 months. This scheme may be extended to other Institutions of the European Union. The individuals who will participate in this scheme will be selected by the partner countries.

The scheme will operate with two intakes per year of up to 50 officials each.

2. **A small projects facility**

Projects to benefit from this facility comprise a wide variety of activities initiated by third parties (eg. international organisations, professional organisations, chambers of commerce, local authorities, universities, etc.) within the wider framework of the objectives of the Phare programme. Projects should complement the Phare programme and be closely related to priority areas selected in the Accession Partnerships or the multi-annual programmes, and be complementary or subsequent to main Phare projects.

Requests submitted on a multi-country basis are to be managed centrally by the Commission in Brussels. Such requests should comply with existing criteria and procedures relevant to previous multi-disciplinary programmes and the 1997 Small Projects Programme (see Annex 1). Projects aimed at meeting local needs in the partner countries will be managed by the Delegations of the Commission on a de-centralized basis. The Phare contribution to such projects should not exceed 50,000 ECU, and it should be clearly demonstrated that their purpose is to raise awareness on European integration and related issues, contribute directly to closer European integration of the beneficiary country, and increase the visibility of the European Union in the partner country.
Commission Headquarters in Brussels will be responsible for quality control and coherence, and will ensure that duplication of effort is avoided. The Commission will operate a rapid clearance system, whereby the Head of Delegation ensures both selection and management of projects to benefit from the facility on a case-by-case basis. General supervision along the lines of the budgetary comments will be ensured.

6. COST

The total budget of the programme will be 4 MECU.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

The programme will be implemented by the Commission. The traineeship scheme will be managed centrally by the Commission through its Headquarters in Brussels. Implementation of the small projects facility will be based on existing internal procedures relevant to previous multi-disciplinary programmes, and be managed by the Commission. For projects submitted on a national basis, the Commission Delegations will manage the projects directly, with Headquarters ensuring quality control, co-ordination and supervision.

8. BUDGET BREAKDOWN

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Budget in ECU</th>
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<tr>
<td>Traineeship Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Projects Facility: HQ</td>
<td>800,000</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2,600,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
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9. DISBURSEMENT SCHEDULE (4 MECU ACCUMULATED)

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10. AUDIT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Commission Services shall:

a. monitor the implementation of the programme on the basis of regular reports from all relevant Delegations.

b. follow the progress of the programme and its components and carry out an ex-post evaluation after completion of the programme.

The Commission shall ensure that it is able to supply to the budgetary authorities on request all relevant information relating to the implementation of the programme.