COMMISSION DECISION
OF …… 2000

Establishing a Programme for the Phare assessment scheme.

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 1266/99 of 21 June 1999 and in particular Article 9,

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 Annex to the present decision is hereby adopted.

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community assistance shall be 19.5 MEUR to be financed through budget line B7-030A.

Done in Brussels

For the Commission
1. Identification

Countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic, Romania and Slovenia.

Programme: Phare assessment scheme

Year: 2000

Cost: 19.5 MEUR

Implementing authority: Commission Operational Services in Brussels

Expiry dates: Commitments: 30 November 2002

Payments: 30 November 2003

Sector: AA (other)

Group: O (Other, including multi-beneficiary programmes)

Budget line: B7-030A

Task Manager: Martin PAV

2. Summary

The regular Monitoring and Assessment (M&A) of Phare programmes was introduced in 1996. Monitoring and Assessment reports were produced by a specialist consultant using a process and methodology developed and supervised by the dedicated unit in the directorate. M&A reports are essentially a management tool which provide Programme managers with:

a) facts on the implementation of on-going programmes;
b) an assessment of the progress and the likelihood of the programme’s success in achieving the objectives set.

Recommendations are put forward for improving management and delivery as well as the design of similar future programmes. The reports are also used when an ex-post evaluation is carried out on the sector.
In line with decentralisation, the responsibility for monitoring is being transferred to programme implementors (Implementing Agent, PMU etc.). They will be charged with reporting regularly on implementation in accordance with a template and criteria ensuring uniformity of approach. Since Monitoring of programme is a part of the project cycle there exists a certain capability in each Candidate Country (CC). Assessment will be carried out by an Assessment Cell established in each country. The specialist members of the cell will be able to review progress in the light the programme’s objectives and the absorption of the acquis communautaire to which it is linked. It will also allow for a transfer of this know-how which would to be used later by CC’s for Structural Funds projects. Both monitoring and assessment reports will be submitted the Joint Monitoring Committee at its annual meeting when it reviews all on-going Phare programmes. This Financing Proposal covers two and half years of work of the Phare Assessment Cells which is expected to extend to 2003.

3. Background

The Commission Services manage, since April 1996, a system of Monitoring and Assessment. By the end of 1999, some 300 reports have been produced covering all sectors in all Phare programme recipient countries. The system adopts an inclusive approach in which all parties involved in management participate and comment. It has developed over time, and is now an integral part of Phare Programme cycle. The specific management and design recommendations contained in each report are reviewed once an M&A report is issued. A Debriefing meeting is organised by the Commission Services Delegations (or Commission Services in Brussels in the case of Multi-country/Multi-Beneficiary Programmes) when the concerned parties agree on the ways and means as well as a timetable for applying the recommendations.

The present Financing Proposal takes into account the re-orientations of Phare towards pre-accession strategies and the decentralisation of implementation responsibilities, in line with the Structural Funds approach.

As a consequence of the above-mentioned reorientation, new monitoring structures have been established in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic, Romania and Slovenia:

- Joint Monitoring Committees (JMC) and Sectoral Monitoring Sub-Committees (SMSC) have been established. The JMC will review, annually, the progress of all Phare Programmes implemented in the country (the JMC has also responsibility for reviewing ISPA and SAPARD programmes). The SMSC will submit monitoring reports at least twice a year on all programmes in the sector. The JMC will have the possibility to put forward recommendation to the Commission concerning the development of on-going programmes.
The creation of the JMC (SMSC) structures require a standardised approach towards presentation of the Monitoring reports. This will enable the assessors to focus on the analysis of the programmes and assessment of the achievement of Programme objectives. The Assessment reports will put forward both concrete management and design recommendations.

The SCR has developed a Template for the Monitoring reports, these will be a principle basis for the Assessment activities.

For the Multi-country programmes and for atypical programmes, the existing Monitoring & Assessment scheme will be continued.

4. Objectives

The Wider Objective is to ensure that programmes are seen to deliver those objectives for which they were designed ensuring sustainability and impact. This through locally based monitoring of programmes and an independent and external assessment as a complementary activity. The latter is limited in time to allow for the development of a local capability which will have similar responsibility later, after accession, for Structural Funds.

The Immediate Objectives are to provide programme management with clear information and assessment of on-going programmes, which will allow for greater transparency of the implementation phase, and, using recommendations made, lead to efficient management and ensure stated objectives are achieved and the connected acquis communautaire absorbed and to ensure that members of the JMC base their recommendations on professional and independent expertise.

5. Activities and outputs.

5.1. The assessors’ activities in the Candidate Countries will be to produce:

- Sectoral Assessment reports;
- Consolidated monitoring and assessment sectoral reports for the JMC meetings;
- Ad-hoc assessment reports as directed by the JMC.

The assessors will work on the basis of the relevant monitoring data (Monitoring reports). They will:

- Carry out interviews and field visits to assess the information contained in the Monitoring reports and other sources;
- Prepare the Assessment reports;
Present their findings to the JMC (SMSC);

Each Assessment Cell will submit to SCR a half yearly report which will detail activities of the past six months. The report will draw attention to overall trends in the implementation of Phare sectoral programmes. This information and other useful information will be circulated to other Assessment Cells as a way of exchange of experience and in order to increase a coherent approach.

5.2. Monitoring and Assessment (M&A) of Multi-country Programmes will be carried out by an M&A unit based in Brussels, much as they are implemented at the present time. Reports on on-going programmes will be submitted to SCR and through them to the competent and interested authorities.

6. Cost

For the two and half years of operation, the estimated cost is 19.5 MEUR.

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7. Implementation arrangements

The Commission services in concert with the authorities of the Candidate Countries will select a contractor via an official pre-qualification process and consequent restricted tender. The Assessment Cell set-up in each Candidate Country, and in Brussels for the Multi-country and atypical programmes, will include assessors as well as support staff. The contracted companies / institutions or Consortium of companies / institutions as well as each assessor will be independent from local authorities and will not be involved in the implementation of other Phare programmes.

The assessment activities will be carried out according to a workplan to be determined by the JMC of each Candidate Country, on an annual basis. The workplan will fix the timetable for the assessments so as to ensure that all on-going Phare Programmes are assessed each year. The activities for Multi-country Programmes will be carried out in accordance with an annual Workplan determined by the Commission services (SCR/A).
The Commission Services (SCR-A) will be responsible for the overall co-ordination and administration of the scheme. This includes *inter alia* creating a standard methodology for the Assessment reports; ensuring that it is formalised in the DIS Manual; checking that each report is drafted according to this methodology and carried out as per the established Modus Operandi.

8. Audit, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Programme is subject to the usual audit provisions for all EC financed programmes.

Towards the end of the implementation period, SCR will organise an independent assessment by an external expert of the Phare assessment Programme.

9. Special conditions

None

10. Assumptions and risks

The introduction of the assessment scheme is based on the assumption that an “assessment and evaluation culture” either may be starting to exist or will be rapidly established. Also, that implementing authorities in the Candidate Countries accept assessment as an integral part of the project/programme cycle and show willingness to act on recommendations made in order to improve their management and design.
11. Annexes

Annex A: Statistics of the current Monitoring and Assessment scheme.

Annex B: Logical framework
## Annex A

### Table 1: Main Sector / Country

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Country / Year</th>
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<th>HU</th>
<th>LE</th>
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* Albania and FYROM were included in the system, they are however not covered by the present Financing Proposal.
## LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX for Phare assessment Programme

<table>
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<th>Programme number:</th>
<th>Date of drafting: 03 March 2000</th>
<th>Expiry date for</th>
<th>Total Budget: 19.5 MEUR</th>
<th>Phare contribution: 19.5 MEUR</th>
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### Wider Objective

- Enhance the effectiveness and impact of the Phare Programmes with respect to the overall EU policy objective of accession of the CEEC’s.
- Opinions of stakeholders and comments by the CoA on the quality and achievements of Phare programmes in donor and beneficiary countries.
- Overall efficiency and effectiveness.

#### Indicators of Achievement

- Independent assessment of achievement of the objectives.
- Monitoring report data measuring achievement of indicators.
- Evaluation reports.

#### Sources of information

- All other conditions for a good implementation of Phare are in place. Assessment can not function well unless Programming, implementation and monitoring are done appropriately.

#### Assumptions (A) / Risks (R)

### Immediate Objectives

- Assessment reports are used as a tool for: design of future programmes; effective implementation to achieve objectives of on-going programmes; and tool for transparency:

#### Indicators of Achievement

- Design: Financing Proposals (FPs) can highlight precisely how they build on past Programme achievements and lessons learned.
- Design: FPs include a specific section referring to the conclusions of the relevant assessment reports and their analysis of the achievement of objectives and fulfilment of the relevant indicators of achievement.

#### Sources of information

- Financing Proposals.
- Minutes of JMC/SMSC meetings.
- Commission reports on Phare; Court of Auditors reports.

#### Assumptions (A) / Risks (R)

- (A) All other programme designers are trained to apply the relevant programming techniques in a coherent way.
- (A) The programming framework stays stable, allowing for comparisons over the years.
- (A) The assessment workplan is constructed in such a way that the planning for the year N+1 can take into account report conclusions of the year N.
- (A) All sectors benefiting of Phare support are assessed once a year.
- (R) Phare policy, structures, processes and/or personnel continue to change rapidly, jeopardizing the
objectives on professional & independent expertise. For Multi-country Programmes, the JMC is replaced by any relevant steering committee or similar management body, to be defined on a case-by-case basis.

- **TRANSPARENCY**: dispose of an independent information source as a basis for relations with other institutions (Court of Auditors, EP, Member States…)

- **TRANSPARENCY**: Commission reporting towards other institutions, and general reports on Phare, use assessment reports as one of their references.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
<th>Assumptions(A) /Risks (R)</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| - Independent reports comparing achievements with objectives on a regular basis and providing relevant practical advice | - All Programmes covered annually by an Assessment report and by a M&A report for Multi-country programmes | - Sum of all assessment Workplans, compared to official information on live Phare programmes
- Annual report by the assessment team. | - (A) JMCs meet sufficiently early before the start of the calendar year to prepare, discuss and approve the annual Workplans. For Multi-country programmes the management finalises the Workplan before the start of the year. |

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<tr>
<th>Inputs and activities</th>
<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
<th>Assumptions(A) /Risks (R)</th>
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| - **Drafting of reports.**
  Assessors:
  - Are provided with and analyse all relevant written information on | - One assessment team in Brussels and in each Candidate country, including both national and EU experts + administrative staff | - Annual reports of the assessment teams. | - (A) Monitoring data is available on time and is of sufficient quality: it includes a clear description of targets set for each “project” and relevant |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmes and projects</th>
<th>Infrastructure and other means to allow communication between all the relevant actors</th>
<th>Measurement method, activities foreseen, activities actually undertaken, management and implementation structure at project and programme level, and any significant developments in the “environment” of the project which influenced or could influence it.</th>
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<td>- Carry out interviews and field visits</td>
<td>- Infrastructure and other means to allow communication between all the relevant actors</td>
<td>- (A) Assessors have the power to access documents as they see fit, and to carry out interviews in due time.</td>
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<td>- Draft the reports</td>
<td>- (A) The assessors have clear and consistent guidelines on how to draft reports. They have been trained along these lines before starting their first assessment.</td>
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<td>- Analyse comments received and modify drafts accordingly, in liaison with the relevant services of the Commission</td>
<td>- (A) The independence of assessors is guaranteed during the whole exercise. In operational terms, reports are quality-controlled by a Commission unit not involved in implementation: SCR/A1</td>
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<td>- Participate in SMSC/JMC meetings to present conclusions and recommendations</td>
<td>- (A) All staff of Delegations, Beneficiaries and implementing parties are regularly informed on objectives and methods of assessment, so as to cooperate fully: role of SCR/A1.</td>
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<td>- Conduct regular checks on the implementation of the accepted recommendations and inform all parties.</td>
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<td>For Multi-country programmes they additionally prepare the monitoring sections of the M&amp;A report</td>
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