COMMISSION DECISION
OF 2000

Establishing a multi-beneficiary Phare Statistical Co-operation Programme in 2000,

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 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 8.0 MEUR to be financed through Budget line B7-030.

Done in Brussels
For the Commission,
FINANCING PROPOSAL 2000

STATISTICAL COOPERATION

1. IDENTIFICATION

COUNTRY: Phare Countries candidate to accession
PROGRAMME: Phare Statistical Co-operation
YEAR: 2000
PHARE CONTRIBUTION: 8.0 MEUR
IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITIES: European Commission
EXPIRY DATE: October 31, 2002 (contracting)
October 31, 2003 (payments)
SECTOR: AA
GROUP: O
BUDGET LINE: B7-500
PROGRAMMING: DG Enlargement
IMPLEMENTATION: N. Wurm, Eurostat (in sub-delegation)

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The purpose of the Phare Statistical Co-operation Programme is to improve the provision of official statistics relating to candidate countries, particularly in the pre-accession context. Beneficiary countries will thus be Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Between 1991 and 1999, a total amount of ca 55 MEUR was allocated to the Programme, though largely shared among more beneficiary countries than now. For the last three years of this period, a contribution of 34 MEUR was envisaged. In consequence, 12 MEUR have been allocated from the 1997 budget, 5 MEUR from the 1998 budget and 15 MEUR from the 1999 budget. Stretching respectively compressing the speed of implementation, the process could be made as steady as is adequate for sound and constant work.

The current proposal represents the first allocation requested after this plan. This proposal is based on a strategic document designing the way candidate countries have to go until accession. It has been developed in a long discussion process, together with all intervening parties for statistics: beneficiary countries, Member States, other donors and international organisations.

2.2 The continuing objectives of programme, oriented towards accession are:

- To strengthen the institutions of CEC National Statistical Offices (NSOs), to enable them to better meet the needs of their customers by providing data that is
accurate, reliable and timely and compiled to international standards and methods - and is, at the time of accession, in full compliance with the acquis communautaire;

- To improve the provision of appropriate statistics to policy- and decision-makers (European Commission, governments, institutions, the private sector) in the context of pre-accession.
- To improve quality of existing statistics and to reinforce confidence in methods and professionalism, thus providing the international Community with unquestioned statistical data.

2.3 The Programme will finance co-operation activities involving the agencies responsible for collecting and disseminating official statistics in candidate countries, referred to here as the National Statistical Offices (NSOs). These activities will include participation in seminars and technical working groups, study visits and consultancies, specific sectoral pilot projects in several key areas, training secondments and courses, dissemination of statistical data. After the implementation of this programme the countries involved will have improved considerably their compliance with the acquis, especially in the domains where pilot projects are to be carried out and the general comparability of the statistics the partner countries provide to EU will be much higher than at present. Details of these activities and projects together with the outputs expected to be achieved are given in section 8 and Annex 2.

2.4 An independent assessment report on the Phare Multi-Beneficiary Statistics Programmes was carried out by the OMAS consortium in 1999/2000, and rated the Programmes as successful and well managed. Recommendations made in the report and corrective actions identified were already addressed in the 1999 Programme, and will be followed through into this Programme.

2.5 The Commission will be responsible for the Programme, with Eurostat taking delegated management responsibility from DG Enlargement. Eurostat itself is a key actor in statistical co-operation and deploys for this purpose considerable resources, without any financial impact to this programme.

2.6 The entire emphasis for candidate countries will be on the compliance with the acquis communautaire and with the strengthening of their administrative capacity. In particular the programme addresses three items:
- Maintain the achievements of compliance already reached through a programme of statistical assistance;
- Joint implementation of some sectoral projects corresponding to gaps still existing with the acquis communautaire;
- Coping, through a set of appropriate sectoral projects, with new pieces of statistical acquis coming up recently.

2.7 This Financing Proposal is a direct result of the strategic reflections resulting in the document attached hereto. It represents the first phase of the three year plan 2000-2002. Building on achievements of considerable quality, this first phase provides for significant budget reduction in comparison to the budget granted in 1999, continued over the three years from 8.0 over 7.0 to 6.0 MEUR. The slow but steady reduction
will be compensated by increasing autonomy of the statistical systems of candidate countries.
3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Reliable statistics are essential for the enlargement process, to manage and monitor the effect and the status of implementation of Community policies. They are a key component of a market economy, to assist the design of relevant and well-targeted national and local policies. Statistics, which are credible and trusted by citizens and the media, give transparency to democratic processes.

3.2 The Phare Programme has supported the development of statistics since 1990, initially through the transfer of the know-how required to adapt old-style command-economy methods to modern techniques and purposes and through the provision of equipment. Since several years programmes have been broadened to ensure that relevant and timely data is available to support the enlargement process, and to assist applicant countries in their efforts to comply with the statistical requirements of membership. This process has been accentuated by the screening exercise and the opening of negotiations covering all beneficiary countries. The results of the enlargement process are fully taken into account. This is mainly done by identifying common weak points amongst the countries and by designing as a consequence common projects and approaches to eliminate them. Eurostat, as responsible Directorate General for the statistical acquis, also takes utmost care in maintaining coherence of national Phare programmes, where they exist, with findings from the enlargement process.

3.3 Multi-beneficiary programmes result from the common interest of NSOs in acquiring standard European skills and methodologies. Allocations made so far are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget year</th>
<th>Amount MEUR</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Bridging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>Coverage of several years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>First of three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>Last of three years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 During this period, countries made significant progress in developing their capacity to meet the statistical needs of the market economy in accordance with EU standards. Phare interventions have improved the foundation for the production of statistical data, by providing computing infrastructure, enabling the introduction of internationally comparable classification systems, and introducing appropriate survey methods for data collection including sampling. All candidate countries, for example, have introduced labour force surveys for collecting employment data. More recently, Phare interventions have for example resulted in:

- the provision of statistical data for the Agenda 2000 communication;
- the provision of a statistical annex for the regular reports from the Commission to the Council concerning progress with respect to the acquis communautaire;
• expansion of Eurostat’s reference databases to include key statistical indicators of candidate countries (although much work still needs to be done to include detailed statistical data);

• A general statistical yearbook concerning Phare countries and various sector specific publications, mainly as result of pilot projects. Non exhaustive examples of these are a first publication of regional GDP estimates and demography of small and medium enterprises.

3.5 Following the independent assessment of previous Programmes by the OMAS consortium and independent experts, a new Strategy Paper titled “A Strategy for Compliance in Statistics in Candidate Countries 2000 - 2002” was developed by all involved actors in early 2000, based on experiences gained. This paper analyses remaining problems, determines objectives for a new three year indicative plan. Parties involved in using statistical data, and institutions delivering assistance through the plan (primarily the government statistical services of Member States and EFTA countries) were largely consulted during this process. (See annex).

3.6 The main issue of the strategy paper is its independence from the financing source. It is meant to provide an inclusive framework, to which all efforts can contribute: own funds, other programmes, other donors etc. The independence of the programme from its financing is required due to the fact that other candidate countries, not beneficiaries of Phare, shall be integrated. This will provide a large economy of scale effect. The proposed programme shall finance and organise the participation of Phare candidate countries only.

3.7 This Financing Proposal is a direct result of this process, and represents the first phase of the three year plan 2000-2002. Building on achievements of considerable quality, this first phase provides for significant budget reduction in comparison to the budget granted in 1999, continued over the three years from 8.0 over 7.0 to 6.0 MEUR. The slow but steady reduction will be compensated by increasing autonomy of the statistical systems of candidate countries.

4. THE NEED TO MAINTAIN A MULTI-BENEFICIARY APPROACH IN STATISTICS

4.1 Statistics are an essential part of the enlargement process, to help design, manage and monitor appropriate EU, national and local policies, and to give transparency to democratic processes. Relevant and timely data is required to assist the enlargement negotiations and to accompany the pre-accession strategy of the Commission. In addition, countries require assistance in their efforts to comply with the statistical requirements of membership.

4.2 Statistics is identified as a priority in many Accession Partnerships and National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire. The aim of this multi-beneficiary programme is to ensure the transfer of know-how following a common methodology, where the delivery mechanisms are multilateral, whereas national Phare programmes normally support operations within the countries. In fact, the multi-beneficiary programme for statistics has many characteristics of a Community Programme, can thus not be replaced by a set of national programmes.
4.3 To underline the importance of the multi-beneficiary approach in statistics, the Liaison Group signed a declaration in November 1997, which is still valid. Arguments are largely and in detail developed in the strategy paper attached hereto. Main arguments are in brief:

- Timing aspects: statistics require a long lead time, continuous and steady work. To be available in good quality by 2005 for reference years 2002-2004, needs appropriate efforts now;
- New acquis communautaire in statistics is constantly coming up as a consequence of other Community and EU policies. Dynamic elements exist also in current acquis, filling of gaps is still required in candidate countries;
- Co-ordination among statistical institutes and with other statistics producers: this is an important issue, as in each country a variety of institutions contribute to statistics production. Furthermore do many statistics have international and bilateral aspects (external trade, balance of payments, ...);
- Strengthening of the statistical infrastructure;
- Economy of scale effects: a dominant reason, statistics co-operation has by nature a multi-lateral character, resembling very much the operating mechanisms of Community Programmes. Delivery mechanisms in use, like working groups, seminars, training etc function on a multi-lateral basis. The participation of candidate countries not being Phare beneficiaries still increases the economy of scale effect;
- Several previous multi-beneficiary programmes have delivered good results, testified by external assessments. Also the maintenance of the achievements requires some efforts, similar to Member States.

In summary it can be said that the multi-beneficiary statistics programme has wide similarities with Community Programmes. The participation in those was an early goal of the enlargement process. The abrupt suspension of such programme would have a totally disproportionate negative effect.

5. **POLICY ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The EU and the candidate countries need impartial, reliable and timely statistics on which to base policy decisions during the pre-accession phase and beyond. The need for further work to improve the comparability of their statistics with those of the EU was clearly expressed in the Commission opinions on the applications for membership in Agenda 2000 and in subsequent progress reports. The need is furthermore strengthened by the results of the European Council of Berlin applying structural mechanisms to Phare partners already in the pre-accession phase (ISPA and SAPARD).

5.2 The Governments of the 10 Phare candidate countries have signed Europe Agreements with the European Union and its Member States. Statistical data are needed to monitor these agreements. Co-operation in statistics is integral part of the Agreements.
Already in the pre-accession phase, e.g. because of participation in various Community programmes, a set of reliable high quality statistics is required, in steadily extending domains. NSOs from all the Phare candidate countries have signed a Common Declaration of Statistical Co-operation with Eurostat. Through these agreements, NSOs have given their commitment to work closely with Eurostat, to use international and EU standards. They have declared their commitment to the objective of providing the same data that is currently provided by Member States with the same comparability and quality.

6. **Institutional Assessment**

6.1 The main beneficiaries of this Phare Statistical Cooperation Programme will be the NSOs in the Phare candidate countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Although there are various statistics collection and dissemination agencies in any country, the central body responsible for official statistics in each country (the NSO) will be the primary beneficiary of the Programme. Other agencies will, however, be involved in the Programme activities as appropriate. This programme will contribute to establish efficient working relations between the different institutions.

6.2 Generally, NSOs dispose of competent professional statisticians who demonstrate drive and commitment to their task - although retaining these professionals, as opposed to the less skilled members of staff, can be difficult, particularly where public sector salaries compare unfavourably with the private sector. Indeed, the current state of NSOs, whether with regard to their internal organisation, their relationships with other national/international, public/private actors, cannot be dissociated from the general context of public administration (reform) in the countries. The multi-beneficiary programme increases scope of the NSO’s and thus strengthens their capacity to recruit and retain skilled staff.

6.3 In order to use the available human and financial resources to provide the best possible service, careful prioritisation of NSO work plans and strategies is necessary. Thus the NSO’s, in partnership with the Commission, with the assistance of the statistical services of EU Member States, and based on the policy context described above, will constantly update their strategic plans for their medium term operations (three to five years). In coherence with these strategic plans, the NSOs will also produce annual work programmes (covering all areas of statistics and independently of the resources provided through Phare), again in partnership with the Commission and underlining the accession character of the programme. This strategic approach clearly strengthens the institutional capacity of all institutes.

7. **Objectives**

7.1 It is proposed that the objectives of the 2000 programme remain fundamentally in line and will naturally prolong the objectives of the previous programmes, in line with long term strategic approaches. The Programme’s overall objectives are therefore with an aim of achieving sustainability in all of them:
1. To strengthen the institutions of NSOs, to enable them to better meet the needs of their customers by providing data that is accurate, reliable and timely and compiled to international standards and methods - and is, at the time of accession, in full compliance with the *acquis communautaire*;

2. To improve the provision of appropriate statistics to policy- and decision-makers (governments, institutions, the private sector) in the context of pre-accession.

3. To prepare progressively the integration into the European Statistical System, due at the moment of accession.

Priority areas of work should correspond to areas of weakness, including those identified during the enlargement process and those identified in National Programmes for the Adoption the Acquis communautaire.

7.2 To meet these objectives, the **immediate objectives** for the 2000 Programme will be to:

1. Improve the production, collection and dissemination of statistics comparable with Community methods in key areas described, which have been identified as pre-accession priorities. (see programme description);

2. Improve the ability of candidate countries to programme and plan their activities in relation to their obligation to meet the Community acquis in the area of statistics.

8. **PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**

8.1 This Phare Statistical Cooperation Programme is based on a multi-annual indicative approach. It is the first of three proposed annual programmes (2000-2002), and will finance statistical assistance and training activities in priority sectors, and specific sectoral projects (including projects of a pilot nature). It will aim to achieve the following specific **results**:

- Production of statistics in certain key areas comparable with EU standards for statistics, including the publication and dissemination of these statistics.

- Transfer of know-how concerning all EU requirements in statistics, and increase the coverage of Eurostat’s regular databases. This will require close monitoring of the development of the EU statistical system, which is expanding rapidly, with (for example) up to 20 legal texts in preparation at any one time.

8.2 The activities to be undertaken to improve comparability and disseminate statistics in specific areas will be sectoral projects of a pilot nature. These projects will normally include an assessment of existing compliance with EU requirements, specific statistical assistance and training to assist countries develop appropriate techniques, and publication and dissemination of results. In all cases they are used to start new statistics or to reform an existing one aligning it to EU requirements. Where and as far as appropriate, pilot surveys will be used to collect data. Projects will employ common methodology in all candidate countries and conform with EU standards. They will produce results in the form of useful statistics in priority sectors within a relatively short time period (months rather than years).
8.3 Pilot projects will be proposed by Eurostat, working closely with the other services of the Commission, according to the priority areas for the pre-accession period and deficiencies stated in the pre-accession process. Project proposals will be presented to the Policy Group for Statistical Co-operation in order to receive their commitment for participation. Criteria for selection are their relevance to the enlargement negotiations as part of the core areas of statistics, availability and quality of existing statistics, and the relationship to the *acquis communautaire*. For the 2000 Programme, projects shall cover the following areas (see annex 2), although a flexible approach will be adopted to accommodate changing circumstances and priorities as the enlargement process requires it:

**Macro-economic statistics**
- Improvement of national accounts, various projects;
- Purchasing Power Parities and HICP;
- Short term public finance (improvement of Government finance statistics);
- Foreign Direct Investment;

**External trade and INTRASTAT**
- Further harmonisation of external trade statistics and first phase Intrastat preparation;

**Business statistics**
- Short term business statistics;
- Prodcom classification and survey;

**Social statistics (including employment statistics)**
- Local territorial units: classification and data;
- Employment data reconciliation;
- Social Cohesion Indicators.

**Agricultural and environment statistics**
- Land use area frame sampling;
- Harmonised environment statistics phase II.

8.4 Appropriate activities to **transfer know-how and deliver harmonised data to Eurostat** will normally be selected, according to the annual work programmes of participating institutions, by Eurostat or the partner institutions from the following menu. Other types of activities may be used on an exceptional basis.

- **Study visits and consultancies.** The main purpose of these activities in previous programmes has been to help countries undergoing the transition to a market economy understand European statistical systems, and to provide very specific technical help in certain areas. For all candidate countries, evidence suggests that these activities now have lower priority, at least in a strict bilateral framework. Consequently, it is proposed to concentrate the amount of funding available for these activities within the multi-beneficiary programme to activities with multi-beneficiary character, e.g. pilot projects. Clearly, some beneficiary countries will
still require bilateral assistance, but much should be delivered part of pilot projects or other multi-country initiative. Expertise will normally be drawn from Community and EFTA NSOs and, on a more limited basis and where appropriate, from other beneficiary NSOs and from independent experts.

- **Participation of statisticians of candidate countries in seminars and working groups**, including seminars organised specifically in the candidate countries and technical working groups routinely organised for EU NSOs and which serve to update beneficiary institutions on current developments concerning the acquis communautaire. Many Eurostat working groups now include specific agenda items relevant to Phare candidate countries, and in some cases task forces aimed specifically at Phare countries have been set up. In Eurostat working groups countries will become familiar with the acquis communautaire in statistics, they will also debate its development and explain their specific situation in the country. These working groups are also the ideal forum for reviewing the situation of compliance, as specialists from all countries are present. Technical experts from Member States or elsewhere shall participate in certain activities or task forces, to advise countries on specific issues.

- **Formal training courses**, covering techniques and methods used to compile official statistics in the Community. Previous programmes have delivered formal training in statistical techniques and methods, particularly those used in the EU, through the TES institute and other training institutions in Member States. This has produced good results in terms of number of staff trained, but there is a need to continue formal training due to the high level of turnover of staff in many of the statistical offices of Phare candidate countries on one side and due to the rapid development of the acquis on the other side.

- **Secondments of trainees to Eurostat**, (or other appropriate institutions, also those in Member States) to familiarise statisticians from NSOs or other national statistics producers from the candidate countries with Eurostat strategies in each sector, and to familiarise Eurostat with specific national problems and environments. This scheme was first introduced during the 1994 programme, and has been expanded in the 1997 until 1999 programmes. It is felt that it was very successful, but no more expansion is required now. It is therefore proposed to continue the scheme during the 2000 programme at an appropriate level of activity. Consideration should be given to extend the period of stay in exceptional cases to a maximum of one year.

8.5 Like pilot projects, priorities for the use of the above technical assistance activities will be based on their relevance to the accession process, and to the *acquis communautaire*. Each country will constantly update a medium term strategic plan, outlining their plans to adopt the *acquis* in statistics. From these plans, annual work plans outlining specific objectives and tasks to be accomplished each year, consistent with medium term strategies, will be provided for discussion and approval by Eurostat prior to the use of this fund. Of course, these strategy plans are part of the general Accession Partnerships where applicable.

8.6 At least annual progress reports, outlining the implementation of the *acquis communautaire*, and reviewing achievements in the context of each annual plan, will be delivered by each NSO to Eurostat.
8.7 In summary the work under this part of the programme will continue activities foreseen at the beginning, along three major components:

a) New pilot surveys and projects as above, also covering newly adopted acquis communautaire.

b) Specific pilot projects covering newly adopted acquis, wherever possible in parallel with member States

c) Technical assistance for:
   Activities to improve comparability and dissemination,
   Know-how transfer,
   Planning and accompanying national Phare programmes for statistics.

9. LINKS WITH OTHER DONORS & OTHER PHARE PROGRAMMES

9.1 Whilst many international organisations (e.g. EFTA, EBRD, IMF, OECD, UN-ECE, UN-ILO and UN-FAO) co-operate with the beneficiaries’ statistical bodies, the European Commission, through Eurostat, has the official role of Co-ordinator. Some EU Member States have their own bilateral statistical TA programmes with certain countries, and these are also communicated to Eurostat to avoid duplication and ensure proper co-ordination. This is made easier since Member State NSOs are the key providers of know-how under both Phare and bilateral Programmes.

9.2 The role of the Commission as Co-ordinator is particularly necessary given that the Community, through the Phare Programme, accounts for at least 90% (in financial terms) of external assistance provided to the candidate NSOs. Nevertheless, co-ordination with other international organisations remains crucial in avoiding duplication, and in reducing where possible incompatibility, in requests to NSOs for information.

CO-OPERATION WITH EFTA

9.3 The involvement of EFTA in the Phare Statistical Programme has been increasing gradually since 1992, partly through direct contributions from the EFTA Secretariat (expected to be around 250,000 EUR per year), and partly through the involvement of EFTA NSOs in delivering technical co-operation. EFTA remains strongly interested in contributing to the development and integration of the candidate countries in the European Statistical System. A new decision has already been made for the period starting with the calendar year 2001, but main focus will lie on West Balkan countries, without though excluding candidate countries totally.
LINKS WITH PHARE NATIONAL STATISTICS PROGRAMMES

9.4 In the early years of national Phare programmes for statistics, about 75% of funds have been used to upgrade the data processing infrastructure of NSOs. This has been an essential complement to the general transfer of know-how provided by the multi-beneficiary Programmes, and has increased the data production and analysis capacity of NSOs. The remaining funds have typically been used to finance specific national surveys. National Programmes have thus provided the means to implement operational activities, whilst the multi-beneficiary Programmes have transferred specific know-how on EU methods. This resulted in the implementation of statistical activities at the national level consistent with both national and EU requirements.

Newer national programmes for statistics do as a tendency have more purely statistics content like surveys, classifications, introduction of new methods. The main funds are directed to support operations in the countries, which are appropriate to improve the general compliance situation. The basic complementary nature though of national and multi-beneficiary programmes for statistics is more valid than ever.

9.5 The Commission, through Eurostat, will ensure that all these actions are co-ordinated and coherent. In particular, NSOs in the candidate countries will outline objectives and activities for all Phare programmes in statistics, whether National or Multi-beneficiary, in the annual work programmes for participation in this Programme. Eurostat will review these plans at least once a year.

9.6 Detail of links and co-ordination between national Phare programmes in statistics and this multi-beneficiary programme can be found in the strategy paper attached hereto. It underlines the complementary character of both programme types.

10. COST AND FINANCING PLAN

10.1 The Phare contribution to the Statistics Programme will be 8.0 MEUR for 2000. The programme will expire on 31 October 2002 for commitment and on 31 October 2003 for disbursement. An indicative timetable, with a breakdown of activities, is given in Annex 2.

10.2 Allocations for 2000 are planned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot and sectoral project activities</td>
<td>4.0 MEUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical assistance activities</td>
<td>4.0 MEUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0 MEUR</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Details on planned activities are given in Annex 2.

10.3 The disbursement of this programme allocation is expected to follow the indicative schedule below (Cumulative amounts in MEUR):

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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. **IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

11.1 The Commission will have overall management responsibility for the programme. Implementation structures developed since the 1997 Programme will be used as far as possible. Should be mentioned specifically the increased involvement of the candidate countries themselves in the administrative implementation of these programme. This materialises e.g. in giving them, through appropriate sub-contracts, responsibility to organise and pre-finance travel of their statisticians, which results also in some savings of funds.

11.2 In particular some parts of this or previous programmes, like the evaluation and compliance monitoring function, will provide certain co-ordinating and monitoring services and will commission sectoral studies. One or more contractors will be appointed through normal Phare procedures to implement the proposed projects and manage the statistical assistance facility. Coherent contracting packages are chosen to guarantee wide market presence by admitting some limited scope for companies. On the other hand, the number and size of contracts shall be kept small, in order to avoid redundant administrative burden.

11.3 A Policy Group for Statistical Co-operation PGSC, where top management of each NSO meet normally once a year, will act as a forum for discussing issues relating to statistical cooperation between the partner candidate countries and the Commission. Details of implementation structures are described in the strategy paper attached hereto.

12. **AUDIT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

12.1 The accounts and operation of any contractor may be checked at regular intervals by an outside auditor contracted by the Commission and financed under the present programme, without prejudice to the responsibilities of the Commission and the Community’s Court of Auditors as referred to in the General Conditions.

12.2 The Commission services shall:

- Monitor the implementation of the programme on the basis of regular reports prepared by the contractors;
- Organise assessment and evaluation reviews to provide better insight into the performance of contractors and the impact of the activities as appropriate;
- Sign contracts with independent experts, if appropriate, to follow the progress of the programme and its components and carry out an ex-post evaluation after completion of the programme or parts thereof.

12.3 In order to facilitate these activities, a detailed set of indicators of achievement will be defined according to the objectives and targets of the Programme (see Log Frame Matrix in Annex 1 and project fiches in Annex 2).

12.4 In-depth monitoring of the success of this programme will be provided through the yearly compliance progress reports for candidate countries, which constitute the ultimate success factor of the efforts deployed.
12.5 Through the evaluation and monitoring function of the Programme Secretariat, within the limit of finance available, will be provided for global and sectoral evaluations of the whole statistical systems including the institutional position of the beneficiary institutions. These evaluations will also provide good evidence of overall success of the programme. The information gained through this process will enhance the public authority task of the Commission, Eurostat for the statistical part of the acquis, to report at least yearly upon the status of compliance of candidates with respect to the acquis communautaire.

13. **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

13.1 NSOs in the countries participating in the Statistics Programme shall ensure that appropriate staff, budgetary provisions and support facilities necessary for the implementation of the programme are provided. Furthermore appropriate institutional (and legislative) measures are to be taken.

13.2 The Governments of the countries concerned accept the responsibility to carry out the projects specified under the programme to a good end.

13.3 In those programme components in which the Community grant contributes to the financing of revenue-generating activities, the Commission shall determine, in conjunction with the authorities of the recipient countries, specific arrangements for financing which could include co-financing by the project revenues of reimbursement of the initial grant.

14. **RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS**

14.1 In view of the excellent co-operation in the past, the tightly defined implementation structures and the horizontal nature of the programme, the Commission does not foresee any (financial) risks in implementation.

14.2 Nevertheless, assumptions have been made that (see Programme Identification Log Frame Matrix, Annex 1):

- Governments continue to understand and support the role of statistics in a market economy and a democracy, particularly in the pre-accession context; and that they are able to clearly define data collection and dissemination responsibilities (e.g. through appropriate legal and institutional frameworks);

- Candidate countries’ NSOs are willing to use new methods for statistical work, that they can provide good quality staff for the activities of the Programme, and that these persons can be retained;

- Member States’ governments, through their NSOs, continue to make available appropriate and timely expertise for statistical co-operation.
The following Annexes are attached hereto and form part of this Financing Proposal:

- **Annex 1** Log Frame Table
- **Annex 2** Programme description
- **Annex 3** Executive summary of OMAS evaluation report of 2000
- **Annex 4** Strategy Paper on Statistics in Candidate countries