COMMISSION DECISION  
OF 2002  

Establishing the Phare information and communications programme for all central European countries benefiting from the Phare Programme

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 Europe¹, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 2500/2001 of December 17, 2001², and in particular Article 9 thereof,

Whereas:

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

(2) 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,

HAS DECIDED 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, under the present decision, shall be 11.4 M€ to be financed in 2002 through Budget line B7-030A.

Done in Brussels,

For the Commission

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¹ OJ no. L375 of 23/12/1989

² OJ no. L342 of 27/12/2001
FINANCING PROPOSAL

1. Identification

Country: Multi-country
Programme: Phare Information and Communication Programme
Year: 2002
EC Contribution: €11.4 million
Sector classification: AA
Responsible Authority: European Commission
Budget line: B7-030A
CRIS number 2002/000-270 to 2002/000-281
Expiry date: Contracting: 31 December 2004
Disbursement: 31 December 2005
Programming Task Manager DG ELARG/02 - Benedictus Nieuwenhuis
Implementing Manager(s) Deconcentrated activities: EC Delegations in candidate countries / DG ELARG/02 - Benedictus Nieuwenhuis
Centrally-managed activities: DG ELARG/02 – Irene Mingasson

2. Summary

Enlargement of the European Union is an historic process, which will affect the lives of many people. It is, therefore, vital that the citizens of the present and future Union understand the reasons for enlargement, as well as the benefits it will bring and the challenges it poses.

On 10 May 2000, the Commission adopted an Enlargement Communication Strategy for the period 2001-2006 that established a comprehensive approach to communicating enlargement to all candidate countries and Member States. This communication strategy will be funded from a number of budget lines, including B7-030A.

3. Strategy

In the Strategy Paper accompanying the 2001 Regular Reports on candidate countries, adopted on 13 November 2001, the Commission underlined the need for a Communication strategy:

‘The Commission is developing its communication strategy on a decentralised basis, taking account of the particular needs and conditions of […] the candidate
countries. The Commission’s [...] delegations have the responsibility for drawing up programmes adapted to needs.”

This Financial Proposal covers the implementation of the communication strategy by the Commission Delegations in the ten central European candidate countries and by the Commission Services in Brussels. This amounts to € 11.4 million. At a later date, a proposal will be prepared to commit a total of € 1 million to cover similar activities in respect of Malta, Cyprus and Turkey for 2002 from their pre-accession assistance programmes.

4. Objectives & Description

Objectives

The major part of the expenditure will be dedicated to the deconcentrated part of the communication strategy programme, implemented by the Delegations in the countries concerned. The objectives of these activities are to:

- increase knowledge of the country’s accession process and its implications particularly among key target groups;
- increase general understanding of the EU, its policies and programmes among the population at large;
- increase understanding of the link between the pace of preparations for membership and the progress of the negotiations. This should encourage the acceleration of the transposition of EU laws and the creation of the necessary administrative structures. It will also increase public understanding of the reasons why negotiations may proceed at different speeds in different candidate countries.

The objectives of the centrally managed part of the programme are to provide:

- a number of strategic services to support the Delegations in the candidate countries including research, training and audio-visual production
- professional advice to the Commission on communication issues related to the communication strategy

Description

The activities carried out by the Delegations in the candidate countries are implemented in the framework of annual work programmes, and include the full range of information activities, such as management and staffing of dedicated EU Information Centres in capitals and, where appropriate, in the regions.

Specific activities to be carried out include:

- production of information material (in paper and electronic form) in local languages
• Dissemination of information via a network consisting of regional information centres, universities, chambers of commerce, etc.

• management of information events such as “Europe Days” throughout the country

• professional assistance to the Delegations in their press and information activities

• development of relations with key target groups

The services managed centrally by the Commission will include the following elements:

• management of the Phare / Tacis and Enlargement Information Centre in Brussels

• strategic advice and research, including public opinion and media research for Commission services in Brussels and in Delegations

• production of information products such as the Enlargement Weekly and the monthly Enlargement Research Bulletin

• maintenance of the principal database names and other databases of those in the EU and the candidate countries who have expressed interest in the accession process

• a publication programme, including:
  – promotional brochures, explaining detailed policies to a wider public
  – information on the candidate countries
  – electronic publishing on Internet

• event management, particularly to reach the media concerned with enlargement

• a media programme covering media in Brussels, the present and future member states and including support and training for journalists

• provision of short-term expertise (to supplement local expertise where this is lacking)

• provision of some common services, e.g. training, Extranet communication, comparative media analysis

• assistance with revising and updating the Delegations’ Information Officers Handbook

5. Budget

The total amount of the budget is divided into two parts, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4
I. In-country activities (managed by Delegations) – B7-030A

The current funding under which the Delegations in candidate countries operate will expire between 8 August and 2 December 2002, depending on the strategy chosen by each Delegation. Therefore, the precise breakdown of the €8.9 million (I + III) to be implemented via the individual Delegations for a 12-month period following the end of their existing contracts will be made during the first half of the year 2002. It will be made on the basis of draft work programmes submitted by the Delegations concerned.

a) Experience illustrates the importance of being able to react to events and to adjust in consequence the resources available in particular candidate countries. Therefore, a minimum central reserve will be retained for later distribution to Delegations if the need so arises.

b) The main bulk of the €8.9 million (I + III) will be allocated in two parts:

3 The breakdown between Delegations in 2001 was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delegation</th>
<th>Sum allocated (€ million)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warsaw</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budapest</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prague</td>
<td>0.896</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ljubljana</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilnius</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riga</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bratislava</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallinn</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7.971</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 The reserve set aside in 2001 was €446,000, or 5.25% of the total sum available. As of November 2001, approx. 50% of the reserve had been allocated to the Delegations in Poland, Latvia and Estonia to meet costs incurred in the management of the Information Centres during the transition period leading up to the deconcentration of the programme, and for additional regional information activities.
(1) **A minimum allocation for each Delegation** to ensure continuity by covering necessary infrastructure. This includes the fees and running costs for the management of the EU Information Centres established in all capitals and, if appropriate, the regional affiliates, as well as their staff. This element should be a percentage of the amount granted to each Delegation in the preceding year, to be calculated precisely on the basis of the final report of the existing contracts;

(2) **A further allocation to Delegations** on the basis of a certain number of criteria:

- The state of public opinion in the country concerned, which must be a key factor in the communication strategy. The first Eurobarometer survey was carried out in the Central and Eastern European candidate countries in autumn 2001, and the results of this and subsequent surveys will be taken into account.

- The administrative capacity of the Delegation as indicated by previous expenditure patterns

- The quality of the work programme submitted by the Delegation

Therefore, the following indicative allocation is granted to each Delegation representing 40% of the amount granted in 2001. The reserve retained will be reallocated once the criteria under 2 are established.

**INDICATIVE ALLOCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>220.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Rep</td>
<td>358.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>210.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>400.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>260.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>272.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>580.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>340.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>260.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>288.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>5,711,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,900,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**II. Central activities (managed from Brussels)**
Given the dynamic nature of the enlargement process, it is important to maintain flexibility in the activities in this area. The allocation of funding across the various activities (Media relations; Training; Research; Enlargement / Phare and Tacis Information Centre; and Publications and Internet) will be made on the basis of an evaluation of the performance of the existing contractor. The existing contractor is to submit an interim report of activities in November 2001, and a renewal of the contract is foreseen to be signed in April 2002.

The funding of €2.5 million is foreseen in the Phare budget commentary (experts’ meetings, seminars, information and publication), that deals with information activities aimed at ensuring the successful implementation of the programmes.

6. Anti-fraud measures, audit, monitoring and evaluation

The accounts and operations of all activities carried out under the programme are subject to supervision and financial control by the Commission (including the European Anti-fraud Office) and the Court of Auditors. This includes measures such as ex-ante verification of tendering and contracting carried out and on-the-spot checks.

In order to ensure efficient protection of the financial interests of the Community, the Commission can conduct check-ups and inspections on site in accordance with the procedures foreseen in Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No. 2185/96 dated from November 11, 1996, concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities.

The procedures foreseen in Art. 15 para 3 of Commission Regulation No. 2222/2000 dated from June 7, 2000, on the communication in case of irregularities and the putting in place of a system to administrate the information in this field shall apply.

Recipients of support under specific actions are under the obligation to provide a report and financial statement, which are analysed from the point of view of content and eligibility of expenditure in accordance with the objective of Community funding, and bearing in mind the contractual obligations and the principles of sound and efficient management.

The Commission services shall ensure that an ex-post evaluation is carried out after completion of the Programme.

7. Implementation schedule

The central activities will be managed by the Commission services in Brussels. The existing contract (start date: 11 April 2001) is up for renewal for one more year on 11 April 2002.

Activities in the candidate countries will be managed by the Commission’s Delegations on the basis of work programmes approved by the Enlargement DG in Brussels. Deconcentrated activities will be contracted using the standard procedures for external assistance, with the exception that local contracts may, following the approval in May and December 2000 of DG Budget, continue to be service procurement contracts. For these activities calls for tender have taken place in 2001 and contracts started at various dates in 2001. All these contracts do foresee a renewal in 2002.