COMMISSION DECISION
OF 2002

Establishing a Phare multi-beneficiary "Anti-Fraud programme for the protection of the financial interests of the Community" Programme in 2002

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY,

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 2500/2001² and in particular Article 9 thereof,

Whereas:

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

b) 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 shall be €15 Million to be financed through budget line B7-030 in 2002.

Done at Brussels,
For the Commission

¹ OJ n° L375 of 23 December 1989
² OJ n° L342 of 27 December 2001
FINANCING PROPOSAL

FIGHT AGAINST FRAUD AFFECTING THE FINANCIAL INTERESTS OF THE E.C.

1. IDENTIFICATION

Countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia
Programme: Fight against fraud affecting the financial interests of the EC.
Year: 2002
Phare contribution: € 15 million
Expiry Date: Contracting Expiry Date 30 June 2004
Disbursement Expiry Date 30 June 2005
Sector: FI, AD
Group: L
Budget line: B7-030
CRIS number: 2002/000-294
Task Manager:
Programming Mr. Kjell Larsson (OLAF)
Implementation Mr. Hendrik Van Maele (DG ELARG)

2. SUMMARY

According to Article 280 of the EC Treaty, the Community and the Member States shall counter fraud and any other illegal activities affecting the financial interests of the Community through measures which shall act as a deterrent and be such as to afford effective protection in the Member States. Moreover, Member States shall take the same measures to counter fraud affecting the financial interests of the Community as they take to counter fraud affecting their own financial interests. To this end they shall organize, together with the Commission, close and regular cooperation between the competent authorities.

The provisions of Article 280 of the EC Treaty will become directly applicable in the new Member States as from the day of accession.

The programme’s main objective is to help the Phare candidate countries meet the obligations ensuing from the Treaty and other legislative acts on the protection of the financial interests of the Community by putting into place effective protection mechanisms on the basis of experience gained by the Member States and the Commission.

The programme is composed of three components:
(a) **Anti-Fraud Structures**

Assistance to set up central structures able to respond without delay to **indications of fraud and irregularities or to requests emanating from the Commission to carry out in an independent manner**, co-ordinate or assist with the conduct of investigations into cases of suspected fraud and irregularities affecting the Community budget. The powers of administrative inspections conferred upon the Commission are carried out by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF);

(b) **Communication links and databases**

Assistance to

(i) enable the central structures to participate in secure and efficient exchanges of information concerning fraudulent and irregular operations with all competent national authorities as well as with the Commission (OLAF) and the competent authorities of the Member States;

(ii) develop anti-fraud databases;

(c) **Operational know-how**

Assistance to increase the effectiveness of the controls and enquiries conducted by the central structures and the law enforcement and prosecution services with which they co-operate, in particular at the future external border of the Union.

The programme foresees that the required know-how is transferred to the beneficiary countries by officials and agents from a variety of Member States. The participation of such Member State experts in individual assistance measures will be guided by the general rules of the Reference manual on “twinning” projects.

3. **STRATEGY**

The Community budget has gradually increased since the foundation of the European Community and currently amounts to approximately €100 billion (payment appropriations for 2002). It is financed from different sources: agricultural levies (charged on imports covered by the common market), customs duties (on import from third countries), the VAT rate and the GNP-based contribution by the Member States. Expenditure still goes chiefly to agriculture (47% of the total). Structural policies account for 36% of the total and expenditure directly managed by the Commission (external actions, research and development, etc.) for 13%, excluding administrative and staff expenditure.

The protection of the EU-budget must therefore apply to a large number of different financial regimes, and the services involved have to cope with very distinct administrative structures in the Member States on the own resources side as well as with regard to expenditure. Whilst it is up to the Member States and the Commission, working closely together, to detect cases of fraud and other irregularities detrimental to the Community’s financial interests, the principal obligation falls on the Member States, since they collect traditional own resources on behalf of the Communities and administer

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3 For example PHARE-programmes of aid for central and eastern European countries.
around 80% of Community budget expenditure. It is therefore essential that the candidate countries are well prepared for their future responsibilities in this respect.

The importance of ensuring the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities in the new Member States has repeatedly been underlined by the Council, the Commission, the European Parliament and various other institutions. For instance, the ECOFIN Council of 23 November 1998 emphasised that a level of protection of the financial interests of the European Communities equivalent to what existed within the Union today should be ensured from the first day of accession of the new Member States. Similarly, the “Enlargement Strategy Paper” of October 2001 recalled that in the field of financial control in all the candidate countries there was a need “… to strengthen administrative capacity for public internal financial control and for the fight against fraud”.

In May 2001\(^4\), the Commission adopted an “Action Plan 2001 – 2003 on the protection of the Communities’ financial interests and the fight against fraud”. The Plan foresees the involvement of the candidate countries in fraud prevention through the creation of multi-disciplinary administrative structures and cooperation in the operational field between these structures and the Commission (OLAF).

On the 27\(^{th}\) February 2002 the Commission adopted the "Annual Policy Strategy for 2003". The plan foresees under its key activities to set up gradually the structures necessary to extend to the applicant countries the Community mechanism of fight against fraud.

By setting up anti-fraud co-ordinating services or structures, the candidate countries can demonstrate their efforts to prepare for giving effective and equivalent protection to the Communities’ financial interests, as required by Article 280 of the EC Treaty.

These structures should be able to assist OLAF to carry out administrative checks and inspections in cases of suspected fraud and irregularities affecting EC resources or expenditure. Indeed, under current Community sectorial legislation\(^5\), OLAF can ask the Member States to carry out or assist with the conduct of administrative investigations whenever the Communities’ financial interests are at stake.

Even in the case of investigations carried out by the Commission (OLAF) in application of Council Regulation 2185/96 (“on-the-spot checks”), the Commission (OLAF) cooperates closely with Member States’ authorities, and this co-operation is essential in cases where an economic operator objects to the on-the-spot checks and police-enforcement is required. Member States are legally bound by this regulation to co-operate and to give all necessary assistance to the Community investigators.\(^6\)

\(^5\) This obligation is for instance foreseen by Council regulations 1552/89 (own resources), 515/97 and 595/91 (agricultural policy), 1258/99 (EAGGF-guarantee section), 4253/88 and 1260/99 (structural funds).
\(^6\) See also Article 280 (3) of the EC Treaty.
4. OBJECTIVES, DESCRIPTION & CONDITIONALITIES

Overall objective
The programme’s overall objective is to help the Phare candidate countries meet the obligations following from Article 280 of the EC Treaty and other legislative acts on the protection of the financial interests of the Community by putting into place effective protection mechanisms.

Programme purpose, activities and results
The programme’s immediate objective is to assist the candidate countries in creating central services or structures, responsible for the co-ordination of all activities related to the protection of the Communities’ financial interests, and in strengthening their operational effectiveness.
These structures should be entitled

- to conduct investigations relating to EC resources or expenditure under their own responsibility;
- to request other agencies to conduct such investigations, and to co-ordinate their activities in this respect;
- to support Community investigators where inspections and on-the-spot checks are led by OLAF;
- to monitor the follow-up of investigations;
- to disseminate information about national and EU anti-fraud legislation to all national services concerned.

The programme is made up of 3 components addressing the needs of the central structures in terms of legal advice, communication links, and operational know-how:

(a) Anti-fraud structures

Objective

The central structures should be able to respond without delay to indications of fraud and irregularities or to requests to carry out in an independent manner, co-ordinate or assist with the conduct of investigations into cases of suspected fraud and irregularities affecting the Community budget, and to take the necessary action.

Where a central structure is itself entitled to carry out the requested administrative investigations, it should be able to assist OLAF during all phases of the investigation, to request the support of other authorities, and to ensure that appropriate administrative or judicial follow-up procedures (administrative sanctions or criminal procedure) are initiated. Where not, the central structure should be enabled to exchange information with the competent governmental departments and bodies, to co-ordinate their activities, and to participate in investigations as an observer or expert.

The central structures should also be capable to provide assistance to the other national services with a view to the correct interpretation and application of the acquis concerning the protection of the Communities’ financial interests.

Assistance under this component supports the beneficiary countries in setting up central structures with these characteristics and in establishing mechanisms for co-operation between the central structures and other law enforcement agencies and control authorities, as well as between these structures and the Commission (OLAF), the Member States and AFCOS’s in other candidate countries.

Results

Results obtained under this component may include reports on the national anti-fraud and financial control systems, recommendations for the restructuring of the system and the legislative and administrative instruments required to this end, the legal basis for the creation of the central structure and other related legislation and arrangements setting out the terms for implementation and for co-operation between the central structure and
other national law enforcement agencies and control authorities, as well as between these central structures and the Commission (OLAF), the Member States and AFCOS’s in other candidate countries.

The achievement of these results will be verified on the basis of documentary evidence (legal instruments, administrative instructions, etc.) submitted by the beneficiary countries.

It is assumed that the beneficiary country governments propose or adopt the necessary legal instruments, instruct the administrative, law enforcement and judiciary services concerned to negotiate co-operation agreements with the central structure, and make available an adequate working infrastructure to the Member State experts participating in the assistance.

**Activities**

The assistance may comprise the following activities:

- review of the national anti-fraud and financial control systems, and advice on adjustments required and on the formulation, dissemination and implementation of a national multi-disciplinary anti-fraud strategy;
- advice on the powers, activities and resources of the central structures
- review of mechanisms for co-ordination between all governmental departments involved in the protection of the Communities’ financial interests and preparation of co-operation agreements;
- preparation of specific co-operation arrangements between the central structure, the Commission’s services (OLAF, in particular) and competent authorities of the Member States, as well as with other national services involved in the protection of the Communities’ financial interests;
- training the competent authorities on the legislative aspects of the protection of the Communities’ financial interests.

(b) Communication links and databases

**Objective**

The central structures should be able to exchange information concerning fraudulent and irregular operations with all competent national authorities as well as with the Commission and the competent authorities of the Member States efficiently and by applying the most advanced standards of security, whilst respecting the requirements of the *acquis* with regard to data protection and individual rights. The structures should also have access to international databases for the retrieval of relevant information, and be able to record information in their own anti-fraud databases.

Assistance under this component supports the beneficiary countries in endowing the central structures with adequate software applications.
Results

Results obtained under this component may include regularly up-dated data-bases with information about cases of suspected fraud and irregularities, well-functioning and secure electronic communication links between the central structures and national law enforcement agencies and control authorities, and interconnection between the central structures and the Anti-fraud Information System (AFIS) operated by OLAF.

The achievement of these results will be verified on the basis of database descriptions and manuals submitted by contractors, acceptance reports by the beneficiary countries, reports on the processing of “as-if” requests for the exchange of information addressed by the central structures to other national services, and by an OLAF report certifying the interconnectivity of national systems with AFIS.

It is assumed that the beneficiary countries make available or co-finance the IT hardware and equipment required for the installation of the database and communication applications mentioned above.

Activities

The assistance may comprise the following activities:

- feasibility studies or analyses regarding the installation of IT applications;
- development of IT applications allowing the central structures to link up with AFIS;
- raising awareness about the scope and functioning of the Early Warning System, the Customs Information System\(^7\) and AFIS;
- design and installation of anti-fraud databases and case-management systems in the central structures;
- advice on the introduction of security standards for IT supported transmission of sensitive data;
- advice about the respect of data protection requirements following from the acquis;
- preparation of technical specifications for procurement of IT hardware;
- training of IT and data management specialists;
- provision of the necessary IT equipment.

(c) Operational know-how

Objective

The central structures and the law enforcement agencies with which they co-operate should operate effectively and efficiently in detecting fraudulent and irregular activities and in pursuing the recovery of misused funds or of non-perceived own resources.

Assistance under this component supports the beneficiary countries in enhancing the operational skills of investigators and of administrative and judicial staff concerned, and in operating IT-supported “case management systems”.

\(^7\) Title V of Regulation (EC) No 515/97.
Results

Results obtained under this component may include fully operational “case management systems”, appropriately trained staff and the conduct of “pilot operations”, where appropriate.

The achievement of these results will be verified on the basis of manuals of operations for the “case management systems” and acceptance reports for these systems issued by the beneficiary countries, assessment tests for beneficiary staff participating in training measures and the results of the “pilot operations”.

It is assumed that the beneficiary countries nominate experienced staff to serve in the central units, that the IT hardware and equipment required for the installation of the “case management systems” is available or included for procurement under the 2002 and 2003 national Phare programmes and that trained staff remain in their job assignments for at least 2 years after having participated in training measures.
Activities

The assistance may comprise the following activities:

- development and installation of IT-supported ‘case management systems’ for the investigation of irregularities and follow-up actions in view of recovering funds unduly paid or enforcing the reimbursement of any amount liable to the Communities or to the national budget;
- “on-the-job” training of central structure staff in the use of the “case management system”;
- specialised joint training seminars (case studies) for staff of the central structure and of law enforcement agencies;
- advice to operational staff of the central structure and of law enforcement agencies during administrative investigations concerning the use of PHARE, SAPARD and ISPA conducted upon an OLAF request under the responsibility of the beneficiary country (on-the-job training);
- advice to operational staff of the central structure on how to support investigations led directly by OLAF (on-the-job training);
- training for law enforcement services charged with the recovery of misused funds.

Conditionality

The delivery of assistance under components (b) and (c) is conditional on the establishment in right of the central structures, the adaptation of existing legislation so that the components’ objectives can be fulfilled and on the existence of operational arrangements between the programme’s beneficiaries in the candidate country and the Commission (OLAF).

5. BUDGET

The following table specifies the budget for the Anti-fraud Programme components (amounts in thousand EUR).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Institution Building</th>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-fraud structures</td>
<td>Technical assistance And training</td>
<td>12.25</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication network and databases</td>
<td>Development of applications</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical equipment</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and audit</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingencies</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

An operationally independent anti-fraud co-ordinating service or structure, responsible for all the activities related to the protection of the EU’s financial interests will need to be set up within the candidate country's administrations.

It is left to the candidate countries to decide whether the central structure should come under the authority of any particular ministry, or whether it should be a body in its own right.

Annex V gives an overview of the institutional background and the state of play in each of the participating countries.

7. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS


OLAF will undertake a needs assessment for each of the participating countries as the basis for country-specific assistance measures that will be further detailed in the terms of reference of individual contracts under this Programme. Any particular contract may be designed to provide assistance to all beneficiary countries or to country sub-groups.

The Commission may award contracts by private treaty after consulting the Member States and specialised non-profit making institutions as to their willingness to act as contractor for the activation of expertise from Member State administrations and for the delivery of the assistance where warranted by the sensitive nature of the measures, such as support for developing the operational capacities of law enforcement agencies. It is expected that a Member State or organisation offering to act as contractor will be able to mobilise the know-how of officials and agents from different Member States.

The assistance may, amongst other things, be delivered through the presence of long-term experts seconded to the beneficiary countries from Member State administrations. This will be complemented if necessary by short-term or medium-term assistance, as well as by local project assistants.
8. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

The accounts and operations of all activities carried out under the programme may be checked at regular intervals by an outside auditor contracted by the Commission without prejudice to the responsibilities of the Commission and the Court of Auditors. Also the Commission may carry out any necessary audits and on-the-spot checks in accordance with the Practical Guide to EC external aid contract procedures.

To facilitate this, the Commission will keep accounting, financial and operational documents concerning all activities financed under this Programme, and will make available to the competent bodies of the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors on request all relevant financial information.

The Commission will monitor the implementation of the Programme on the basis of reports from the selected contractors and independent assessments.

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

9. AUDIT

The Financing Decision for the Anti-Fraud Programme as well as the resulting contracts are subject to supervision and financial control by the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF), and the Court of Auditors. This includes measures such as ex-ante verification of tendering and contracting carried out by the Commission. 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, 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 Article 15 (3° of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2222/2000 of 7 June on the communication in case of irregularities and the putting in place of a system to administrate the information in this field shall apply.

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

10. VISIBILITY/PUBLICITY

The programme will be implemented in such a way as to ensure maximum visibility for the European Community’s involvement at all times.
11. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

In the event that agreed commitments are not met, the Commission may review the programme with a view, at the Commission's discretion, to cancelling all or part of it and/or reallocate unused funds for other purposes consistent with the objectives of the Phare programme.
ANNEX ON
INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY FOR THE PHARE, ISPA AND SAPARD PROGRAMMES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

1. Objective and scope

Information and publicity measures concerning assistance from the European Community Phare Programme are intended to increase public awareness and transparency of EU action and to create a consistent image of the measures concerned in all applicant countries. Information and publicity shall concern measures receiving a contribution from the Phare Programme.

2. General principles

The appropriate Programme Authorising Officer in charge of the implementation of Financing Memoranda, and other forms of assistance shall be responsible for publicity on the spot. Publicity shall be carried out in co-operation with the EC Delegations, which shall be informed of measures taken for this purpose.

The competent national and regional authorities shall take all the appropriate administrative steps to ensure the effective application of these arrangements and to collaborate with the EC Delegations on the spot.

The information and publicity measures described below are based on the provisions of the regulations and decisions applicable to the Structural Funds. They are:


Specific provisions concerning ISPA are included in:


Information and publicity measures must comply with the provisions of the above mentioned regulation and decision. A manual on compliance is available to national, regional and local authorities from the EC Delegation in the country concerned.

3. Information and publicity concerning Phare programmes

Information and publicity shall be the subject of a coherent set of measures defined by the competent national, regional and local authorities in collaboration with the EC Delegations for the duration of the Financing Memorandum and shall concern both programmes and other forms of assistance.
The costs of information and publicity relating to individual projects shall be met from the budget for those projects.

When Phare programmes are implemented, the measures set out at (a) and (b) below shall apply:

(a) The competent authorities of the applicant countries shall publish the content of programmes and other forms of assistance in the most appropriate form. They shall ensure that such documents are appropriately disseminated and shall hold them available for interested parties. They shall ensure the consistent presentation throughout the territory of the applicant country of information and publicity material produced.

(b) Information and publicity measures on the spot shall include the following:

(i) In the case of infrastructure investments with a cost exceeding EUR 1 million:
   - billboards erected on the sites, to be installed in accordance with the provisions of the regulation and decision mentioned in paragraph 2 above, and the technical specifications of the manual to be provided by the EC Delegation in the country concerned.
   - permanent commemorative plaques for infrastructures accessible to the general public, to be installed in accordance with the provisions of the regulation and decision mentioned in paragraph 2 above, and the technical specifications of the manual to be provided by the EC Delegation in the country concerned.

(ii) In the case of productive investments, measures to develop local potential and all other measures receiving financial assistance from Phare, Ispa or Sapard:
   - measures to make potential beneficiaries and the general public aware of Phare, Ispa or Sapard assistance, in accordance with the provisions cited at paragraph 3(b)(i) above.
   - measures targeting applicants for public aids part-financed by Phare, ISPA or SAPARD in the form of an indication on the forms to be filled out by such applications, that part of the aid comes from the EU, and specifically, the Phare, ISPA or SAPARD Programmes in accordance with the provisions outlined above.

4. **Visibility of EU assistance in business circles and among potential beneficiaries and the general public**

4.1 Business circles

Business circles must be involved as closely as possible with the assistance, which concerns them most directly.
The authorities responsible for implementing assistance shall ensure the existence of appropriate channels for disseminating information to potential beneficiaries, particularly SMEs. These should include an indication of the administrative procedures to be followed.

4.2 Other potential beneficiaries

The authorities responsible for implementing assistance shall ensure the existence of appropriate channels for disseminating information to all persons who benefit or could benefit from measures concerning training, employment or the development of human resources. To this end, they shall secure the co-operation of vocational training bodies involved in employment, business and groups of business, training centres and non-governmental organisations.

Forms

Forms issued by national, regional or local authorities concerning the announcement of, application for and grant of assistance intended for final beneficiaries or any other person eligible for such assistance shall indicate that the EU, and specifically the Phare, Ispa or Sapard Programmes, is providing financial support. The notification of aid sent to beneficiaries shall mention the amount or percentage of the assistance financed by the Programme in question. If such documents bear the national or regional emblem, they shall also bear the EU logo of the same size.

4.3 The general public

The media

The competent authorities shall inform the media in the most appropriate manner about actions co-financed by the EU, and Phare, ISPA or SAPARD in particular. Such participation shall be fairly reflected in this information.

To this end, the launch of operations (once they have been adopted by the Commission) and important phases in their implementation shall be the subject of information measures, particularly in respect of regional media (press, radio and television). Appropriate collaboration must be ensured with the EC Delegation in the applicant country.

The principles laid down in the two preceding paragraphs shall apply to advertisements such as press releases or publicity communiqués.

Information events

The organisers of information events such as conferences, seminars, fairs and exhibitions in connection with the implementation of operations part-financed by the Phare, Ispa or Sapard Programmes shall undertake to make explicit the participation of the EU. The opportunity could be taken of displaying the European flags in meeting rooms and the EU logo upon documents depending on the circumstances. The EC Delegation in the applicant country shall assist, as necessary, in the preparation and implementation of such events.
Information material

Publications (such as brochures and pamphlets) about programmes or similar measures financed or co-financed by Phare, Ispa or Sapard should, on the title page, contain a clear indication of the EU participation as well as the EU logo where the national or regional emblem is used.

Where such publications include a preface, it should be signed by both the person responsible in the applicant country and, for the Commission, the Delegate of the Commission to ensure that EU participation is made clear.

Such publications shall refer to the national and regional bodies responsible for informing interested parties.

The above-mentioned principles shall also apply to audio-visual material.

5. Special arrangements concerning billboards, commemorative plaques and posters

In order to ensure the visibility of measures part-financed by the Phare, Ispa or Sapard Programmes, applicant countries shall ensure that the following information and publicity measures are complied with:

Billboards

Billboards providing information on EU participation in the financing of the investment should be erected on the sites of all projects in which EU participation amounts to EUR 1 million or more. Even where the competent national or regional authorities do not erect a billboard announcing their own involvement in financing the EU assistance must nevertheless be announced on a special billboard. Billboards must be of a size which is appreciable to the scale of operation (taking into account the amount of co-financing from the EU) and should be prepared according to the instructions contained in the technical manual obtainable from EC Delegations, referred to above.

Billboards shall be removed not earlier than six months after completion of the work and replaced, wherever possible, by a commemorative plaque in accordance with the specifications outlined in the technical manual referred to above.

Commemorative plaques

Permanent commemorative plaques should be placed at sites accessible to the general public (congress centres, airports, stations, etc.). In addition to the EU logo, such plaques must mention the EU part financing together with a mention of the relevant Programme (Phare, Ispa or Sapard).

Where a national, regional or local authority or another final beneficiary decides to erect a billboard, place a commemorative plaque, display a poster or take any other step
to provide information about projects with a cost of less than EUR 1 million, the EU participation must also be indicated.

6. Final provisions

The national, regional or local authorities concerned may, in any event, carry out additional measures if they deem this appropriate. They shall consult the EC Delegation and inform it of the initiatives they take so that the Delegation may participate appropriately in their realisation.

In order to facilitate the implementation of these provisions, the Commission, through its Delegations on the spot, shall provide technical assistance in the form of guidance on design requirements, where necessary. A manual will be prepared in the relevant national language, which will contain detailed design guidelines in electronic form and this will be available upon request.