COMMISSION DECISION
OF 2003

Establishing a Phare multi-beneficiary programme on "Small Projects Programme" in 2003,

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 2500/2001, and in particular Article 8 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 shall be € 7.7 million to be financed through Budget line B7-030 in 2003.

Done in Brussels,

For the Commission

1 OJ no. L375 of 23/12/1989
2 OJ no. L342 of 27.12.2001
FINANCING PROPOSAL

MULTI-BENEFICIARY PHARE
SMALL PROJECTS PROGRAMME

1. IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiary states: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia

Programme: Small Projects Programme
CRIS-Number: CRIS-Sector: 43010
Year: 2003
Cost: € 7.7 million
Implementing Authority: European Commission
Expiry date: 31.12.2004, contracting
Sector: AA
Group: M
Budget line: B7-030
Programming Task Manager: Bénédicte Bronchart (DG ELARG)
Implementation Task Manager: Bénédicte Bronchart (DG ELARG)
Paschalis Papachristopoulos (DG EAC, for traineeship scheme)

2. SUMMARY

This programme shall be used to provide grants for the benefit of the ten Beneficiary countries mentioned in section 1 above. These grants shall support small scale activities related to the enlargement and accession process with the objective to create more visibility of the EU and facilitate integration between citizens of the current and future Member States. The activities supported under this programme will be complementary to the activities supported under the Enlargement Communication Strategy.

3. STRATEGY

Given the Commission’s activities aimed at closer involvement of the citizen within the European Union itself, it is appropriate for the Commission to support activities with a broadly similar aim for its future Member States. Whereas the national Phare programmes concentrate on large projects, this programme aims to support projects of modest cost, which have a potentially significant impact in terms of goodwill and awareness.

The programme should allow the Commission to support activities for the Beneficiary countries which complement the enlargement process by helping different actors be better prepared for, and informed about, accession. These activities will be small-scale by nature, but will
nevertheless be justified in that their knock-on effect will be far greater than the resources committed.
Given the approaching date of accession for all countries but Bulgaria and Romania, the Phare Small Projects Programme will play an important role in contributing to a smooth transition period during the pre-accession and post-accession time. Activities like those of the Phare Small Projects Programme, with a high visibility and awareness raising will constitute an effective tool to galvanise the countries around the theme of accession to the European Union.

4. OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

The objectives of the programme are:

a) to raise awareness in the Beneficiary countries on European integration, the Enlargement process and the impact of accession;

b) to contribute directly to closer European integration in the Beneficiary countries;

c) to increase the visibility of the European Union in the Beneficiary countries.

The programme will fund different types of actions, which are directly linked to the objectives of Enlargement, more specifically, its 31 chapters and the Accession Partnerships.

The final beneficiaries will be exclusively non-profit organisations including local or regional authorities (national authorities only in the framework of the Traineeship scheme), inter-governmental organisations, universities, research institutes, chambers of commerce, NGOs, regional development agencies and other non-profit institutions or associations of a social, economic or cultural character in the EU and the ten Beneficiary countries.

The programme will finance the following:

1. A traineeship scheme for officials of Phare candidate countries

In the context of institution building and assistance for integration and approximation of legislation, the programme will finance the costs of placing officials from the Beneficiary countries on traineeships within the European Commission for periods of up to 3 months. This scheme may be extended to other Institutions of the European Union. The individuals who will participate in this scheme will be selected by the Beneficiary countries.

The scheme will operate with three intakes per year of up to 30 officials each. The Commission will ensure that a fair geographical representation is obtained among the ten Beneficiary countries. The relevant budget will be sub-delegated to the Commission’s Education and Culture DG (Traineeships Office).

Indicative amount of grant per trainee:
€ 1,300 monthly plus travel expenses.

2. A small projects facility

Activities to benefit from this facility should comprise a wide variety of actions (e.g. seminars and conferences, public information and dissemination campaigns, documentation materials)
initiated by third parties\(^3\) within the objectives of the Enlargement and the priority areas set forth in the Accession Partnerships.

The following conditionalities shall apply to the Small Projects Facility:

1) **Financial:** the Phare contribution for every event shall not exceed € 50,000. For the requests submitted on a multi-country basis, it shall also be necessary that the Commission’s grant amount does not exceed 80 \% of the participation costs in the activity of the individuals from the Beneficiary countries. The relevant expenses which may be covered are travel, accommodation, conference and interpretation costs, publication and dissemination costs.

2) **Type of activities:** the activities submitted for funding should aim at:
   a) raising awareness in the Beneficiary countries on European integration, the Enlargement process and the impact of accession,
   b) contributing directly to closer European integration of the Beneficiary countries,
   c) increasing the visibility of the European Union in the Beneficiary countries.

5. **BUDGET**

The total budget of the programme will be € 7.7 million.

**Allocation for each action**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Budget in €</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Traineeship Scheme</td>
<td>400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Small Projects Facility: HQ</td>
<td>2,950,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Small Projects Facility: Delegations</td>
<td>4,350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,700,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Small Projects Facility: Delegations – Indicative allocation per country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Allocation in €</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.01 Bulgaria</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.02 Czech Republic</td>
<td>325,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.03 Estonia</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.04 Hungary</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.05 Latvia</td>
<td>225,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.06 Lithuania</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.07 Poland</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.08 Romania</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.09 Slovakia</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10 Slovenia</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) The Final Beneficiaries as described in section 2 should be non-profit organisations including local or regional authorities (national authorities only in the framework of the Traineeship scheme), intergovernmental organisations, universities, research institutes, chambers of commerce, NGOs, regional development agencies and other non-profit institutions or associations of a social, economic or cultural character in the EU and the ten Beneficiary countries.
6. IMPLEMENTATION

a.) Financial and project management

The programme will be implemented by the Commission, in accordance with the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and the respective Implementing Rules.  

- The Traineeship scheme will be managed by DG Education and Culture (Traineeships Office) in the Commission headquarters in Brussels.

- The Small Projects Facility Headquarters will be managed centrally by the Commission headquarters of DG Enlargement.

- The Small Projects Facility Delegations will be managed locally the EC Delegations in the beneficiary countries.

This means that for the Small Projects Facility, selection of projects, contracting and disbursement will be the responsibility of Commission headquarters for multi-country projects, and of Commission Delegations for projects submitted on a national basis. In both cases, Commission services will award contracts using the procedures and standard documents defined and most recently published by the European Commission for the implementation of External Actions.

b.) Deadline for contracting and execution of contracts; programming deadline

All contracts must be concluded by 31/12/2004. Execution of all contracts must end by 31/12/2005. Budgetary commitments which have not given rise to payments during three years counted from the date of the legal commitment will be decommitted.

7. AUDIT, ANTI-FRAUD AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES

a) Communication obligations by the beneficiary states

Beneficiary states shall inform the Commission services without delay of any element of information indicating the possible existence of irregularities or fraud.

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Irregularity shall mean any infringement of the Financing Proposal, resulting contracts or Community legislation resulting from an act or omission by an economic operator, which has, or would have, the effect of prejudicing the general budget of the Communities or budgets managed by them, either by reducing or losing revenue accruing from own resources collected directly on behalf of the Communities, or by an unjustified item of expenditure.

Fraud shall mean any intentional act or omission relating to:

i. The use or presentation of false, incorrect or incomplete statements or documents, which has as its effect the misappropriation or wrongful retention of funds from the general budget of the European Communities or budgets managed by, or on behalf of, the European Communities,

ii. Non-disclosure of information in violation of a specific obligation, with the same effect;

iii. The misapplication of such funds for purposes other than those for which they are originally granted.

b) Audit and anti-fraud measures

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.

In order to ensure efficient protection of the financial interests of the Community, the Commission can conduct on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with the procedures foreseen in Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 dated from 11 November 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 controls and audits described above are applicable to all contractors and subcontractors who have receive Community funds.

The Commission will monitor the implementation of the programme on the basis of reports from the parties managing the programme.

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

c) The applicability of the Financial Regulation as referred to in Section 6 a) includes the application of administrative and financial sanctions, as provided for in Articles 93 to 96 and 114 of the Financial Regulation, and Article 133 of the Implementing Rules.

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5 Defined as the entirety of Community rules applicable between the Commission and the Beneficiary States (for example the Europe Agreements, the Framework Agreement, the letters of exchange by which the Financing Proposal is agreed upon by the Beneficiary States, this Financing Proposal and all the ensuing contracts).
8. VISIBILITY

In implementing this Programme, the Commission and its Delegations shall provide for the maximum visibility of all activities financed in the Phare candidate countries. The costs of information and publicity relating to individual projects shall be met from the budget of those projects. The organisers of information events such as conferences and seminars 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. Publications co-financed by Phare 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.