Title:
Establishment of a Legal and Administrative Basis for Structural Funds / Cohesion Fund
Special Preparatory Programme (SPP) for the Structural Funds in Poland

Sub-programme: Regional Policy and Cohesion

Location: Poland

Objectives:
The SPP Programme is an institution-building programme in line with the priorities identified in the Polish National Programme for Preparation for Membership (originally: National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis) and the Accession Partnership for Poland. This component will contribute to the Accession partnership’s short-term priority “Reinforcement of institutional and administrative capacity”.

For Structural Funds and cohesion Fund assistance to be effective, the Polish legal and administrative structures must be capable of absorbing its full indicative allocation. This requires that the systems of public administration develop the structures and institutions necessary to implement the approved programmes. As a priority, an efficient and effective administration is required in the key ministries which will be involved in formulating and implementing Operational Programmes as part of a future Community Support Framework. The administration and implementation of the pre-accession financial aid instruments will act as a preparation for the post-accession approach. Particular accession will be paid to the adjustment of systems to allow multi-annual planning and budgeting, the integration of activities involving different ministries, and procedures for monitoring and evaluation.

The general objective of the programme is to enhance Poland’s capacity to implement European Structural Fund programmes and the co-financing of large projects under the Cohesion Fund.

The immediate objective of this component is to establish a legal and administrative basis for future Structural / Cohesion Fund programmes.

Description:
Outputs: This project will contribute to the establishment of a legal and administrative basis for future Structural Fund programmes and for the implementation of the Cohesion Fund.

A comparative analysis of existing EU Member state systems for the co-ordination and implementation of structural funds will be undertaken to identify the key characteristics of the different internal administrative arrangements for structural funding applications and will make reasons recommendations for appropriate structures within the Polish context which will give maximum efficiency of administration. Work will also identify the levels of additional human and financial resources required for information management, in particular for economic analysis and for management of financial information and monitoring of project outcomes.

Training and work on legal aspects will establish, at a minimum:

- division of responsibilities between line ministries
- division of competences between central and local government
- provisions for the granting of public money / EU structural funding
- clarification of reporting responsibilities to EU authorities
- clarification of competences in project selection
- training on EU public procurement and competition rules

Training and work on administrative aspects will cover, at a minimum:
- budgeting procedures, including the elaboration and implementation of multi-annual financial tables (broken down by measure)
- financial control mechanisms,
- pre-evaluation and monitoring procedures
- additionality and the establishment of national co-funding procedures
- establishment of payment procedures

Information on structural funding and its implications will be disseminated to agencies outside the national administration; a seminar on Structural Funds with specific reference to global grants will be carried out for NGOs, and one for the national level social partners will explain the implications of pre-accession aid, Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund, with particular reference to public procurement.

Inputs: The objectives of this component will be achieved through projects involving twinning actions, technical expertise-transfer, seminars and training and best-practice exchanges (cf. Financing Proposal.)

Institutional Framework:
In keeping with EU programmes co-financed under the Structural Fund regulations, a SPP Monitoring Committee will also oversee implementation of this programme. The Polish co-ordinating authority will chair this body. The responsible Polish ministries and the Commission services will be full members of this Monitoring Committee. Sub-committees of the SPP Monitoring Committee will be established to follow-up on specific actions, including preparation for ISPA and SAPARD.

Component actions in particular areas will be proposed by relevant line ministries in Poland in consultation with the Commission services and approved by the national co-ordinator responsible for the SPP programme within four weeks from the date of submission to the co-ordinating authority. Each line ministry will report to the Monitoring Committee at six-monthly intervals on actions approved and on those actions being undertaken.

The Ministry of Finance and the Public Procurement Office will be specific beneficiaries under this project.
Budget (MECU):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 2) Legal-admin</th>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Institution-Building</th>
<th>Total PHARE</th>
<th>Polish Co-Financing</th>
<th>Total (PHARE + Nat. Co-Financing)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Input b) Technical Expertise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Input c) Seminars / Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Input d) Best Practice Exchanges</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>4.000</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>8.000</td>
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Implementation Arrangements:
The CFCU is responsible for handling tendering, contracting and payments of contracts on behalf of various ministries, agencies and institutions, which themselves shall be responsible for preparing projects and managing their technical implementation.

Implementation Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of Tendering</th>
<th>Start of Project Activity</th>
<th>Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Equal Opportunity:
The dimension of gender equality will be integrated into all levels of the component objectives. It is anticipated that this will set an appropriate foundation for future gender mainstreaming in the application of Structural Fund policies in Poland.

Environment:
Not applicable

Rates of return:
Not applicable

Investment Criteria:
Not applicable

Conditionality and Sequencing
Funding will be conditional on Poland’s continuing implementation of the provisions of the Accession Partnership and the Acquis Communautaire.

A programme Monitoring Committee must be established and must meet for the first time before the end of June 1998 in order to establish its operational rules, discuss inter-ministerial arrangements and other relevant business.