1. **Basic information**
   1.1. CRIS number: 2002/000-580-03-04
   1.2. Title: Eastern border Small Project Fund (SPF)
   1.3. Sector: Justice and Home Affairs
   1.4. Place: Poland; Euroregions: Baltyk, Niemen, Bug, Karpacki.

2. **Project Objectives**
2.1 **Overall Objectives**
   The Small Project Fund (SPF) aims at developing cross border co-operation of the Polish institutions situated on the eastern border with their foreign partners. To achieve this objective, all projects supported within the Fund will have to show clear benefits for inhabitants from the neighbouring country in the border region.

2.2 **Immediate Objectives**
   The projects shall support development in the fields of **small-scale people-to-people activities** across the border. In overall terms, the SPF will seek to:
   - contribute to the development of the eligible districts of the four Euroregions on the Polish eastern border;
   - enhance possibilities for cross-border tourism attraction
   - the development of cultural co-operation between neighbouring areas in the border region;
   - the support and increase in numbers of cross border meetings of various groups of the population, especially of youth;
   - the support of educational activities for institutions and individuals involved in local/regional development, in local government and in organisations of public interest;
   - the raising of the level of public awareness and information on cross-border co-operation affairs and on the process of European integration;
   - encourage local involvement in the Phare Integrated Polish Eastern Border Programme and to support small-scale actions which may form the basis for larger cross-border co-operation projects;
   - build and develop the specialist resources of local and regional institutions involved in regional development, groundwork and implementation of cross-border projects in line with EU practice;
   - stimulation and support to the creation of permanent structures among the local and regional organisations in the border region in question, particularly organisations with membership for both sides of the border;
   - develop and enhance co-operation between the communities on either side of the border with a view to joint improvement of economic development, living conditions and on-going contact.

2.3 **Relationship to EU Integration**
   The SPF plays a key part in the process of preparation of Poland for accession, in particular through the capacity building dimension of local/regional actors. These funds are part of a process of creating "integration-minded" border regions. The project represents thus an important element in the preparation of Poland for the adoption of Structural Funds. In addition, the project supports the social and economic integration between the border regions of candidate countries.

   **Accession Partnership:** JHA – “adopt and implement national integrated inter-agency border management strategy, with particular attention to the budgetary requirements of the eastern border”

   **NPAA:**
   - implementation of the document: “Poland. Strategy for Integrated Border Management”.
   - maintaining good-neighbourly relations with countries remaining outside the EU.

2.4 **Cross-border Impact of the Project**
   The Programme will contribute to the removal of existing disparities between areas in the Polish eastern border region and thus to the gradual alignment of economic and social development. This is particularly important in view of future integration into the European Union. Full membership will require the approximation of levels of economic activity and living standards in particular in border regions in order to avoid undue problems connected to the removal of borders and the introduction of the principle of free movement. All projects will have to involve at least one foreign partner from the border region in Ukraine, Belorus or Russia. Benefits resulting from project implementation for inhabitants from the other side of
the border as well as level of engagement of the foreign partner in carrying out the undertaking will be the basic criteria for project selection. Joint meetings, sporting competitions, festivals, training sessions, conferences, publications, promotional events, maps and other cross border projects will deepen common understanding, reduce mental barriers still existing in the minds of many inhabitants. Project implementation will attract people from the other side of the border willing to explore the traditions, culture and unique beauty of the region. The Evaluation Committee may invite representatives of the relevant partners from the Phare and Tacis countries (Russia-Belorus-Ukraine) within the Euroregions to participate in the meetings as observers. The SPF emphasises projects with a cross-border impact and encourages the development of linkages between the communities /organisations/ institutions on the Polish side with their counterparts in the Tacis countries.

3. Project Description

3.1 Project Background

Poland shares the border on the eastern part with 4 countries: Russia (210 km), Lithuania (102 km), Belorus (407 km) and Ukraine (526 km). In total, the whole frontier extends to 1245 km. Because Lithuania as an official candidate is expected to join the EU in the nearest time, the future EU border in Poland will amount to 1143 km. Measures being taken now aimed at tightening the eastern border due to the EU accession process should however not take shape of a new “curtain”, hampering cross border contacts among inhabitants from both sides of the border. That is why it is so important to facilitate direct co-operation between inhabitants above the frontiers. The SPF implementation would show that the border is difficult to cross above all for smugglers or illegal immigrants but the relations among ordinary inhabitants living in the border region are encouraged. In this way the SPF could become an important tool in combating the feeling of isolation and fears, very often expressed by inhabitants behind the future EU eastern border.

The inclusion of the SPF in the Phare 2002 Integrated Polish Eastern Border Programme reflects the evolution in the overall Phare Programme in Poland from an exclusively project–by-project approach to the gradual inclusion of flexible funding mechanisms, beginning with Small Projects Fund in 1995 on the Polish-German border. The success of the mechanism in addressing identified local needs, popularity with local/regional actors and relatively quick implementation record prompted the inclusion of more funds in the next Phare CBC Programmes (further editions of the Small Project Fund on the Polish-German border, Baltic Small Project Facility). Within the Integrated Polish Eastern Border Programme 1997, the Small Project Fund with allocation of 0.6 MEUR was established including Euroregions on the Polish eastern border. Thus all four eligible Euroregions: Baltyk, Niemen, Bug and Karpacki have already gained experience, showing a professional approach and efficiency in managing the Fund. In addition, within the 2000 edition of this programme, the next round of SPF with allocation of 1 MEUR was established, managed by the above four Euroregions (implementation of this edition started in autumn 2001, on having the “SPF 2000 Guidelines”, based on the new “grant” model, developed by the Phare CBC IA and approved by the EC Delegation in Poland). Continuation of activities under the SPF, with Phare allocation of 2 MEUR, was also approved within the next 2001 edition of the programme. The fund model closely mirrors the INTERREG approach to programming with indicative allocations identified across broad priority areas for intervention and projects decided later by committees of local/regional actors. This approach is particularly useful in the context of pre-accession and the preparation of local/regional administrations for access to the Structural Funds through providing the latter with a framework that more closely mirrors those of their EU counterparts. Moreover, funds are seen as ideal mechanisms for the “maturing” of cross-border co-operation through allowing greater possibilities for the definition and preparation of joint projects. To summarise, the inclusion of the SPF into the programme is a logical step forward in the overall context of the Poland’s future accession to the EU, and in the specific context of the development of cross-border co-operation and evolution of the Phare Integrated Polish Eastern Border Programme in the pre-accession context. **The SPF will support only such projects that will be implemented jointly with the foreign partners** (every applicant will have to find a foreign partner in the neighbouring country and describe in detail the role of the foreign partner in project implementation). A Small Project Fund has been in operation also within the Tacis CBC programme. The SPF within the Phare and Tacis programmes will be harmonised, in particular in terms of project eligibility, methods of selection procedures and schedule of actions. The Polish side has been making efforts aimed at approximation of actions under both Funds (such as the meeting on Phare/Tacis harmonisation with participation of the representatives from the EC Delegation in Russia and Poland, Tacis SPF office in Kaliningrad and the Phare CBC IA in Poland, held in August 2001 in Warsaw).
3.2 Linked activities
The small projects to be implemented within the Fund will complement and expand the cross border actions carried out under the aegis of the respective Euroregions. Currently the public institutions located on the Polish eastern border organise together with their foreign partners cultural events, conferences, study visits, economic fairs and other cross border projects taking advantage of their modest resources. The regional organisations (first of all – regional development agencies) have also gained some experience in implementing small scale projects by active participation in the Phare CREDO programme. In addition, several institutions have been benefiting from the Small Project Facility (main aim: promotion of the European Union and strengthening integration of Poland with the EU) directly being managed by the EC Delegation in Poland.

3.3 Results
Immediate results of SPF implementation will be several sub-projects fulfilling the objectives of the programme (e.g. festivals, sporting competitions, training, conferences, publications, promotional events, maps etc.). It is expected that the SPF will initiate cross border contacts among the inhabitants on both sides of the border that will be of long term character, sustainable even after the EU funds expire. The cross border contacts already in existence will be deepened so that a durable co-operative network will be established.

3.4 Activities
Within the Fund, the beneficiaries will perform all activities necessary for efficient implementation of each particular project (for example: hiring of the venue, employment of experts, promotion, drafting technical documentation). In particular, the actions will have to respect the provisions specified below.

3.4.1 General Criteria for Eligibility
In general terms the eligible actions should meet the following conditions: directly involve at least one foreign partner from Ukraine, Belorus or Russia in project implementation (cross border impact will be the most important criterion for project evaluation and selection; projects co-financed jointly by Polish and foreign project partners within the Euroregion, will be particularly prioritised); funding will be used only on the territory of Poland; be financially assessed realistically and transparently; be ready for implementation; contribute to institution and capacity building; be supportive to, but under no circumstances be in contradiction with the long-term development plans of the municipality or the region (projects that are part of an overall strategy/plan for the development of the region/town/municipality will be prioritised); located in the Euroregions: Karpacki, Bug, Baltyk, Niemen (following the model of the SPF in force on all the Polish borders, the whole area of the Euroregions –which are cross border by nature- is eligible); contain innovative approaches (e.g. pilot projects). The support for one project will range from 5 000 EUR to 50 000 EUR. Eligible actions to be supported under the SPF are defined in more detail below. More detailed operational guidelines will be included in the “Guidelines for the Small Projects Fund” in Poland. The guidelines will respect the provisions of the Phare CBC Regulation, of the chapter 6 of the “Practical Guide for Phare, Ispa and Sapard” and the Communication “Phare 2000 Review”. They will be based on the “SPF Guidelines in Poland 2000”, developed on the “grant” model and already approved by the EC Delegation in Poland. No small-scale infrastructure projects will be eligible under the SPF. Costs eligible within the SPF will be defined in detail in the “Guidelines for Applicants” that will have to be approved by the EC Delegation.

3.4.2 SPF priorities
The Fund will support small-scale actions across the following priority areas.

Local Economic Development, including tourism: support for small projects focusing on economies, which enhance the economic base of the border region. For example proposals for the development of small-scale enterprise, marketing initiatives, markets, exhibitions and advertising events, and so forth; the creation of cross-border co-operation structures and partnerships among supporting organisations; studies, institutional strengthening measures, capacity building of the tourist information centres, specific SME training and related HRD programmes.

Health – particularly sharing of resources and facilities on a cross border basis

Information and communication (development of resources to improve the flow of information and communications between border regions, including support for cross-border radio, television, newspaper and other media)
Cultural Exchanges: Those cultural exchanges that already exist and that are being newly established between local groups on both sides of the border region. Meetings and exchanges among youth; artistic and supporting activities; folk events and similar actions with the emphasis on the establishment of traditions and long-term co-operation, social service projects for family unification;

Training, Employment, Education (training initiatives, exchange of know-how and experience in education at various levels, seminars, conferences etc.)

3.4.3 Procedures
The SPF will operate under the “Guidelines for the Small Projects Fund in Poland” which will be developed basing on the provisions of the chapter 6 of the “Practical Guide for Phare, Ispa and Sapard”. The SPF will be oriented towards the Tacis SPF and in so far as possible jointly supported projects (Tacis / Phare) will be given priority. It is intended to continue works currently carried out towards harmonisation of actions under both Funds (aimed at developing similar principles on project eligibility, project submission and selection as well as the establishing a similar time schedule of activities). The main responsibility for project implementation rests with the beneficiaries (e.g. communities, counties, NGO-s, schools, etc.) under the supervision of the CBC IA. If it is necessary to engage an external executor of the activities within the scope of the grant, the contractor will be selected according to the Polish Procurement Law and the contract will be signed between the contractor and the project beneficiary. The selection procedure will be as follows: the Secretariat announces the call for proposals and collects the projects; the Evaluation Committee evaluates projects and makes recommendations; the CBC IA verifies the recommendations; the EC Delegation approves the reports on project selection and makes the final decision. After that the Secretariat signs agreements with the beneficiaries and the beneficiaries implement project according to the Polish Procurement Law.

4. Institutional Framework
4.1 Division of responsibilities
The Implementing Authority for the Phare Cross Border Co-operation Programme (IA CBC Phare), located within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, will be the Implementing Agency of the Fund, bearing the overall responsibility for proper implementation of the SPF. The IA CBC Phare is finally responsible for the management of funds allocated to the SPF and reserves therefore certain rights with respect to approving the SPF projects and supervise them: issuing of guidelines; definition of the responsibilities of institutions involved in the SPF; approval of the institutional set-up; specification of the rules for financial management and for regular submission of reports; monitoring of project implementation; the IA CBC Phare has the right of veto over certain projects that have been approved in contravention of the established rules; and finally the IA CBC Phare is responsible for the provision of on-going support to institutions in the regions in the form of training or consultation through experts chosen by the IA CBC Phare. Specifically the IA CBC Phare will manage the implementation of horizontal actions in support of institutional development.

The Evaluation Committee will be established according to the “Guidelines for the Small Project Fund in Poland” based on the provisions of chapter 6 of the “Practical Guide for Phare, ISPA and SAPARD”. The Committee will consist of representatives of the local/regional public administration in the SPF eligible areas. Representatives of the IA CBC Phare will chair the meetings of the Evaluation Committee and the representatives of the EC Delegation and foreign partners must be always invited to the meetings. In this way the partners from the neighbouring country will not only have full information on the projects selected but their participation and opinion will guarantee that the projects have an authentic cross border impact. The Committee will evaluate projects and give recommendations that will have to be approved by the EC Delegation.

The Secretariat represents the executive SPF body in the region. Its chief function is to provide technical and specialist support to the Evaluation Committee and to ensure the everyday implementation and operation of the SPF. The secretarial services will be performed by Polish secretariats of Euroregions (up to 5% of the Phare assistance may be used to support implementation of their tasks). The responsibilities of the Secretariat include: provide information to beneficiaries on the 2002 Phare Programme and its Sub-Programmes; provision of support for the preparation of Evaluation Committee meetings; organisation of individual round of public calls for the submission of proposals; supporting applicants with project preparation; assist in the preparation of Terms of Reference and associated tender and contracting documents as required; conclusion and control of sub-contracts; monitoring and...
inspection of implementation; evaluation of benefits; the complete financial management of the SPF; reporting to the IA CBC Phare. The Secretariat will in particular ensure sound and professional financial management of the funds in line with Phare requirements. As mentioned above, all 4 Euroregions have already successfully managed at least one edition of the Small Project Fund in the previous years and their capacity (employees, equipment etc.) is sufficient to ensure the proper functioning of the SPF in the region. Overall, the IA CBC Phare through the provision of on-going advice and support and specialist consultancy and training inputs will assist the Secretariat in performing their role. In particular in the case of more complex services or supply procurement, the Secretariat will co-operate closely with the IA CBC Phare. The Secretariat will need to report regularly to the IA CBC Phare, in particular on the financial management and implementation record of the SPF.

4.2 Involvement of Local/Regional Authorities and Tacis partners
Due to the decentralised nature of the SPF, local/regional authorities will be directly involved in project selection and responsible for the management of the Fund and for the preparation and implementation of the projects. Moreover, local and regional authorities through their participation in the Evaluation Committees will need to integrate the actions funded through the SPF with those supported through the TACIS programme. The IA CBC Phare in close co-operation with the EC services will carry on contacts with the relevant institutions responsible for the managing Tacis CBC Programme in order to ensure the creation of the appropriate joint programming structure.

4.3 Institutional Assessment
Representatives of the eligible border regions have acquired experience of the operations of Evaluation Committees and the associated project selection and evaluation processes within the framework of the Small Project Fund. There is a strong commitment on the part of regional/local public administration and other actors in this type of funding mechanism and enthusiasm for their active involvement in an EU Programme. In terms of the technical evaluation of the projects there is a pool of know-how on the defined themes which the SPF will address. Experts from regional/local level should be involved in the project evaluation exercise (as members of the Evaluation Committee and -when necessary- as Assessors). This will help ensure that information on good practice experiences from elsewhere in Poland and other possible funding sources can be available to each committee. The Implementing Authority will sign four contracts with the Euroregions: Baltyk, Niemen, Bug and Karpacki on transferring to them the direct responsibility for the SPF management covering the whole SPF amount of 2 million EURO. The number and size of the projects to be implemented within the SPF will be determined after completion of the project selection procedure. It is assumed to implement about 150-250 small projects within the SPF.

Implementation of the SPF will not influence the institutional framework.

5. Budget (MEUR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Location</th>
<th>Phare</th>
<th>Poland*</th>
<th>Foreign partners**</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Baltyk Euroregion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niemen Euroregion</td>
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<td>0.670</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bug Euroregion</td>
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<td>0.670</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karpacki Euroregion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total SPF</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>0.680</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.680</td>
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</table>

*) This is the minimum Polish contribution required (25% of project value). All beneficiaries must confirm in writing their self-contribution before the first payments from the Phare programme are transferred to them.

**) There is no formal requirement for financial support of foreign partners in the SPF. However, projects with financial contribution of foreign partners will be given priority in the Fund.

6. Implementation Arrangements
The project will be implemented under the overall responsibility of the Implementing Authority for the Phare Cross Border Co-operation Programme at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration in Poland (the IA CBC Phare). Address: Krucza 36; 00-522 Warsaw; phone: +48 (0)22 695 99 10/11; fax: +48 22 695 99 12-13; e-mail: Phare@wwpwp.it.pl

PAO: Mr. Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration; Address: S. Batorego 5; 02-591 Warsaw, phone: +48 (0)22 621 03 91; fax: +48 22 849 52 13, e-mail: wydzei@die.mswia.gov.pl
The project will be managed in accordance with the “Practical Guide for Phare, ISPA, SAPARD contract procedures” (to make concluding of very small contracts more friendly for the beneficiaries, the Polish procurement procedures will be used. The Implementing Authority for the Phare CBC Programme at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration will be the Implementing Authority (IA) for the project. The NF will transfer funds to the IA in accordance with the Financing Agreement signed between the NF and the IA. The IA will be headed by a Programme Authorising Officer (PAO) nominated by the responsible Minister and appointed by the National Authorising Officer. The PAO will be responsible for all the operations carried out by the IA. In addition, the SPF will operate under the “Guidelines for the Small Projects Fund in Poland” which will be prepared in accordance with the chapter 6 of the “Practical Guide for Phare, ISPA and SAPARD”.

7. Implementation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracts with Secretariats:</td>
<td>First quarter 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First calls for proposals:</td>
<td>Second quarter 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of projects:</td>
<td>Third quarter 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Equal Opportunity
Equal opportunity principles and practices in ensuring equitable gender participation in the project will be guaranteed.

9. Environmental Impact
Concerns of the environment will be taken into consideration in all regional/local projects to be funded under the SPF. Tourism projects will respect the need to protect the environment and natural heritage.

10. Conditionality and sequencing:
The following conditions must be fulfilled in order to implement this project:
- Continued commitment towards the priorities of the Phare Programme
- Continued commitment of regional and local actors
- Availability of qualified experts and contractors;
- Co-ordination of the regional authorities and IA Phare CBC
- Approval of the EC Delegation of the SPF Guidelines

The Phare support for one project will range from 5 000 EUR to 50 000 EUR. The IA Phare CBC responsible for implementation of the project is prepared to carry out this task. The employees have been gaining experience in this field since 1995, when the first SPF in Poland was established. All 4 Euroregions, which will directly manage the Fund in the regions, have already successfully managed at least one edition of the Fund in the past years.

Milestones of the project:
Approval of the SPF Guidelines by the EC Delegation – 1st quarter 2003
Contracts (IA Phare CBC with SPF Secretariats) – 1st quarter 2003
Calls for proposals (to be issued by SPF Secretariats) – 2nd quarter 2003
Start of implementation of small projects by the beneficiaries – 3rd quarter 2003
Completion of projects, final report on SPF implementation - to be prepared by IA Phare CBC – 3rd quarter 2005
## Annex 1 - LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR

### 03.04 Eastern border Small Projects Fund

**Date of Drafting:** 04/2002  
**End Contracting:** 30/11/04 - **End Disbursement:** 30/11/05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>Total Budget (MEUR): 2,680</th>
<th>Phare: (MEUR): 2,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Objective</td>
<td>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</td>
<td>Sources of verification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Development of cross border co-operation in the Polish eastern border regions | Sustainability of projects implemented by cyclical events as well as cross border co-operation agreements (at least 50% of projects are sustained) | How: adequate reports  
When: 3 years after project completion  
By whom: SPF Secretariats and CBC IA | |
| Immediate objectives | • At least 30 cross border co-operation agreements signed (within the field of local bodies and economic development)  
• At least 10 events from those financed through SPF are organised for the first time and are of cyclical character. | How: adequate reports  
When: 1 year after project completion  
By whom: SPF Secretariats and CBC IA | Continued commitment towards the priorities of the Phare Programme |
| Results | 40 – 60 publications (maps, guides, research studies, analyses, conceptual studies, and similar)  
At least 60 events (of different character) | How: adequate reports  
When: immediately after project completion  
By whom: Beneficiaries, SPF Secretariats and CBC IA (summary on SPF) | Continued commitment of regional and local actors |
### Activities

All activities necessary for efficient implementation of each particular project (for example: hiring of the venue, employment of experts, promotion, drafting technical documentation)

### Means

It is anticipated that:

- 150-250 contracts will be signed for SPF implementation

### Costs

- Phare Funds – 2 MEUR
- Local Funds - 0.680 MEUR

### Availability of qualified experts and contractors; Co-ordination of the regional authorities and IA Phare CBC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preconditions:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Approval of the EC Delegation of the SPF Guidelines</td>
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### Annex 2 Cumulative implementation, contracting and disbursement schedule - 03.04 Eastern border Small Projects Fund

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D: Design / C: Contracting / I: Implementation