

Agenda 2000: pre-accession, coordinating aid to the applicant countries

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The European Commission has presented its fourth report on the three preaccession instruments and their co-ordination. In line with the positive accession negotiations in Copenhagen 2002, an increased emphasis was in 2003 put on creating the administrative capacity required for a successful implementation of the acquis and participation in present or future European Community programmes as of membership.

- PHARE: an ex-ante evaluation report was conducted in 2003, which revealed needs for more strategic programming, increase of resources for project design and the introduction of a more systematic quality control. Overall, evaluation results concluded satisfactory Phare performance. Good progress was made in meeting objectives in cross border co-operation, environment, justice and home affairs, public administration/finance, transport and the social domain. Outcomes were more mixed in agriculture, economic and social cohesion/regional policy. Results in the SME and in the internal market sectors have been uneven but improving.

- ISPA: given the early stage of ISPA implementation, no ex-post evaluation was launched in 2003.

- SAPARD: the Commission continued working closely with the beneficiary countries on adapting and

running the monitoring and evaluation systems. Meetings provided a useful opportunity to reinforce Commission Guidelines on the mid-term evaluation; to ensure that the evaluation exercise would be undertaken in a comprehensive and timely fashion; and to address specific queries which the evaluators wished to raise in the early stages of their work. The Commission also organised a seminar on the theme 'Developing and promoting local initiatives in the Candidate Countries (Pardubice, Czech Republic, 8-11 May) aiming to provide a forum for the exchange of views on the implementation of the SAPARD programme.

As regards cooperation with EIB and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the report states that co-operation with the EIB and other IFIs in 2003 therefore continued under the framework of the

"Memorandum of Understanding on co-operation in the pre-accession assistance". Figures available for the years 2000 to 2003 show that the yearly operations of the IFIs are in excess of EUR 22.8 billion in loans signed with the 10 enlargement countries. This amount also demonstrates the leverage effect of Community pre-accession assistance having been reinforced since 2000.

On the issue of the financial overview, the report highlights that the allocations for PHARE, ISPA and SAPARD in 2003 amounted to EUR 3389 million (PHARE: EUR 1699 million; ISPA: 1128 million and SAPARD: EUR 561 million).

The breakdown by country was as follows: Bulgaria EUR 268 million; Czech Republic EUR 195 million; Estonia EUR 84 million; Hungary EUR 244 million; Latvia EUR 124 million; Lithuania EUR 152 million; Poland EUR 963 million; Romania EUR 695 million; Slovakia EUR 128 million; Slovenia EUR 60 million; others EUR 476 million.