

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

1998/0094(CNS) - 30/11/2006 - Follow-up document

PURPOSE : to present a report on pre-accession assistance in 2005.

CONTENT : this is the sixth report covering activities financed by the three pre-accession instruments, Phare, ISPA and SAPARD in 2005.

The report focuses on the coordination between these instruments in accordance with Article 13 of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1266/99 on the co-ordination of pre-accession assistance. In line with accession negotiations in Copenhagen 2002, an increased emphasis was put on creating the administrative capacity required for a successful implementation of the acquis and participation in present or future European Community programmes.

The actions of the pre-accession programmes may be summarised as follows:

Phare: Execution of the Phare programmes is subject to a structured monitoring and evaluation process. A Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) in each country is supported by Sectoral Monitoring Sub-Committees (SMSC) which meet twice a year. In 2005, all new Member States had set up their decentralised monitoring and interim evaluation (IE) functions. In Bulgaria and Romania, whilst the responsibility for monitoring was decentralised in 2001, the IE function remained centralised. As a preparation for decentralising the IE function, both countries started in 2005 to draft their Action Plans on decentralised monitoring and interim evaluation. Croatia started to prepare for decentralisation of monitoring.

The key messages derived from the reports are the following:

- objectives are too ambitious/vague/unclear, and require subsequent reformulation to become operational;
- there is insufficient capacity for, and preparation of, multi-annual programming/project fiche design;
- effectiveness of multi-annual programming is reduced as a result of cumulative implementation delays;
- sustainability is at risk due to limited institutional absorption capacity as well as lack of progress with public administration reform;
- Phare has had limited effect to date in preparing beneficiaries to the Structural Funds;
- on the whole, effectiveness of twinning projects is satisfactory.

ISPA: all ISPA projects are subject to the ISPA Regulation and the Financing Agreement provisions of both monitoring and evaluation. As no project had been completed by end 2005, no ex-post evaluation was launched in that year.

SAPARD: the Commission continued working closely with the beneficiary countries on adapting and running the monitoring and evaluation systems. The 14 Monitoring Committee meetings held in 2005 provided a useful opportunity to discuss and decide on: (i) monitoring the implementation of the programmes (ii) approval of modifications necessary regarding the closure of the programme and improving the absorption capacity of the programmes (BG, RO) as well as (iii) approval of the annual

reports on progress achieved in relation to the implementation of the Sapard programmes, before their official submission to the Commission.

Coordination of the 3 instruments: as required by the Coordination Regulation, the Commission ensures close co-ordination between the three pre-accession instruments. The Commission's Co-ordination Committee for the 3 pre-accession instruments, set at Directors level, has not officially convened during 2005, although an important number of meetings have taken place notably in view of creation of the new Instrument for Pre- Accession (IPA) and its relevant components. A General Assistance Document, through which the Commission informed the Phare Management Committee of the co-ordination of pre-accession aid in 2005 and planned assistance for 2006, was presented in May 2005. At the national level, the Commission strongly encourages the candidate countries to enhance inter-ministerial coordination, which is a key pre-condition for the candidate countries' successful future management of the Structural Funds.

Allocations for PHARE, ISPA and SAPARD in 2005: the principal operations financed were as follows;

- Bulgaria /Romania Roadmap (plus Kozloduy) (PHARE + SAPARD + ISPA) : EUR 1,502 million;
- Kozloduy Decommissioning: EUR 50 Million;
- Croatia: EUR 80 Million by PHARE ; EUR 25 million by ISPA.

Total (3 instruments, all operations) : EUR **1,653 million in 2005.**