

COMMISSION DECISION

of 5.11. 2007

adopting a Regional programme on financing preparatory measures for the participation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Turkey in certain Community Agencies under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component in 2007

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)¹, and in particular Article 14(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries;
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) N° 1085/2006, the assistance should be provided through multi-annual or annual programmes, which can be established by country and by component, or, as appropriate, by group of countries or by theme. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the general policy framework referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1085/2006 and the relevant multi-annual indicative planning document referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation;
- (3) The Council established for all candidate and potential candidate countries an Accession Partnership or a European Partnership. The Commission has adopted on 29 May 2007 a multi-beneficiary multi-annual indicative planning document 2007 – 2009 which presents indicative allocations for the main priorities for pre-accession assistance to the countries concerned²;
- (4) The European Council in Luxembourg in December 1997 made participation in the Community programmes and agencies a way of stepping-up the enhanced pre-accession strategy for the Central and East European Candidate countries, such participation being determined case-by-case.
- (5) The European Council in Helsinki in December 1999 stated that Turkey is a candidate country that may benefit from the opportunity to participate in Community programmes and agencies.
- (6) The Commission in its Communication to the Council of 20 December 1999 on "Participation of Candidate Countries in the Community programmes, agencies and committees" proposed that bilateral agreements should be concluded with the

¹ OJ L210, 31.07.2006, p. 82

² C(2007)2205

Candidate Countries defining the terms of their full participation (but without voting rights) in the activities of those Agencies whose features make an early participation desirable; one agreement between the Community and Turkey on membership in the European Environment Agency was signed³ and one between the Community and Turkey on membership in the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction was signed already by the Community⁴. Further such agreements are envisaged;

- (7) The European Council in Thessaloniki of June 2003 endorsed the Thessaloniki Agenda for the Western Balkans which allows these SAP countries the possibility to participate in Community agencies, in ways similar to those established for candidate countries;
- (8) The Commission in its Communication to the Council and the Parliament of 3 December 2003 on "Preparing for the participation of the Western Balkan countries in Community programmes and agencies" proposed a selective and gradual participation of the Western Balkan countries in Community Agencies;
- (9) The European Council in Brussels in June 2004 confirmed Croatia as candidate country and the European Council in Brussels in December 2005 granted candidate country status to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
- (10) The Commission adopted on 9 December 2005 the Multi-beneficiary Programme on Participation of Turkey and Croatia in certain Community Agencies;
- (11) The proposed Regional programme aims at financing the preparatory measures for the participation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Turkey in selected Community Agencies under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component for 2007
- (12) This Decision meets the requirements of Article 90 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No 1605/2002⁵ (hereafter: "Implementing Rules") and constitutes thus a financing decision within the meaning of Article 75 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities⁶ (hereafter: "Financial Regulation");
- (13) The measures provided for by this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the IPA Committee.

³ OJ L 213/112, 07.08.2001.

⁴ Signed by the Council on 05.06.2007 awaiting countersignature by the Turkish government

⁵ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1 Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 478/2007 (OJ L 111, 28.04.2007, p. 13).

⁶ OJ L 248, 16.09.2002, p.1. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1).

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Regional programme on financing preparatory measures for the participation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Turkey in certain Community Agencies under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component in 2007, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

This programme shall be implemented by centralised management.

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community assistance shall be **EUR 2.75 million** to be financed through Item 22.02.07.01 – regional and horizontal programmes of the General Budget of the European Communities for 2007.

Done at Brussels, 5.11.2007

For the Commission
Olli REHN
Member of the Commission

ANNEX: REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON FINANCING PREPARATORY MEASURES FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, CROATIA AND TURKEY IN CERTAIN COMMUNITY AGENCIES

1. IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiaries	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Turkey
CRIS number	2007/019-044
Year	2007
Cost	2.75 Million euro to be financed from IPA
Implementing Authority	European Commission
Final dates for contracting	30 November 2008
Final dates for execution	30 November 2009
Sector Code	AA (Multidisciplinary), sector code: 99820 (axe 06/34)
Budget lines	22.02.07.01: regional and horizontal programmes
Programming Task Manager	DG Enlargement unit D3
Implementation Task Manager	DG Enlargement unit D3

2. PRIORITY AXES / (MEASURES) / PROJECTS

Summary

The objective of this new programme is to prepare the candidate countries Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for participation in selected Community Agencies.

A Community agency is a body governed by European public law; it is distinct from the Community Institutions (Council, Parliament, Commission, etc.) and has its own legal personality. It is set up by an act of secondary legislation in order to accomplish a very specific technical, scientific or managerial task, in the framework of the European Union's "first pillar".

The Member States who joined in the recent two enlargement rounds have benefited from preparatory measures carried out by the Community Agencies, financed under several multi-beneficiary Phare programmes. Over the six years that these programmes took place €18 million was awarded to Community Agencies to carry out such preparatory actions, allowing for a mutual beneficial full participation of these countries upon accession and in some cases where the Agency's regulation allowed for this as observers prior to accession⁷. Within this context it is worthwhile to note that Turkey is already participating in the European Environment Agency⁸. The agreement for participation of Turkey in the EMCDDA was signed by the Council on 5 June 2007.

To allow the candidate countries to achieve the same results financial support was provided in 2005⁹. With this support grant contracts to assist these countries were awarded to the following agencies¹⁰:

⁷ The EEA, EMCDDA, EMSA, EASA and EU FRA allow – under certain conditions – for (partial) participation of candidate countries prior to accession.

⁸ The agreement between the EC and Turkey on EEA membership is published in OJ 213/112 of 07/08/2001

⁹ PE/2005/2155 as adopted on 09/12/2005

- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, CEDEFOP
- Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)
- European Medicines Agency (EMA)
- European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)
- European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)
- European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC).

These preparatory actions will come to an end in December 2007. Since the Phare regulation was the legal basis for this programme, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia could not be included.

Under the CARDS Regional Action Programme 2005, support was provided to assist the Western Balkan countries in preparing for participation in the Community Agencies: EMSA, EMCDDA, EU-OSHA, European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the European Environmental Agency (EEA)¹¹. Only the contracts with EEA and EASA also covered Croatia. All contracts also involved the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, so that under this programme these Agencies will not be dealing with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the case of EASA neither with Croatia. (EEA is not involved in this proposed programme). Contracts with these agencies were signed and will end in December 2008.

It is foreseen that as of 2009 a new programme to continue preparing all the IPA countries for participation in those agencies for which (additional) actions are required will become operational. However, in order to bridge the gap between this new programme and existing programme for Croatia and Turkey, as well as to allow for the involvement of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, this programme has been drafted.

Important to note that the actual co-financing allowing the Candidate Countries to participate as observers in the Community Agencies will be covered by the CARDS, Phare and IPA National Programmes.

2. a Priority axes

The European Council of Helsinki (December 1999) confirmed the enlargement process launched at its meeting of December 1997 in Luxembourg. The enhanced Pre-Accession Strategy defined in 1997 was reiterated, including the participation of the Candidate Countries in Community Agencies as an important part of such strategy. Their participation will not only contribute towards the implementation of the provisions relating to economic, social and cultural co-operation in the Europe Agreements; it will also enable these countries to familiarise themselves with the Union policies and working methods.

¹⁰ No contract with the CdT, as foreseen by the Commission Decision establishing the programme was signed, due to legal conflict on whether or not CdT falls under art. 185 of the FR.

¹¹ No contract with the EUMC, as foreseen by the Commission Decision establishing the programme was signed, due to uncertainties regarding the scope of FRA.

Preparation for full participation in some Community Agencies is a fundamental step towards familiarising the Candidate Countries with the Community acquis in the broad sense of the term. As in the case of Community programmes, it could serve the interests of both the Union and the Candidate Countries for the latter to participate in all the Community Agencies as soon as possible on a basis which takes account of their respective constraints and circumstances.

Following the European Council's conclusions in Luxembourg and Helsinki, the Commission proposed the Council in its Communication of 20 December 1999 on "*Participation of Candidate Countries in the Community programmes, agencies and committees*" that bilateral agreements should be concluded with the Candidate Countries defining the terms of their full participation (but without voting rights) in the activities of those Agencies whose features make an early participation desirable. Depending on the respective constraints and nature of the Agencies and in view of preparing this kind of participation, it should initially take the form of participation in some ad hoc meetings, groups of experts and other specific work of mutual interest being carried out by the Agencies concerned.

Since preparatory actions of this kind, anticipating future full participation requires additional efforts of the Candidate Countries and the Agencies themselves, the Commission recommended that Phare funds be allocated in supporting the activities.

As a consequence under the Phare programme several programmes to facilitate participation of previous Candidate Countries from Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs) in Community agencies were created.

In 2005, the Community agencies requested via the sectoral DGs in charge of relations with them, additional support for assisting the three candidate countries in carrying out similar activities. This request was honoured by the European Commission when it adopted in 2005 the multi-beneficiary programme on Participation of the three candidate countries in certain Community Agencies. Subsequently, contracts were signed with all these agencies apart from the Translation Centre. These contracts will have to be executed by the end of 2007. It is foreseen that in 2008 a new programme will be presented covering all IPA countries and all those agencies for which further preparatory measures are required. The implementation of contracts under this future programme would start in 2009.

This 2007 programme will bridge the gap between the 2005 Programme and the above-mentioned future programme, while it will also allow for participation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia alongside the other candidate countries. Therefore, as bridging facility this programme will allow for continuation of the contracts awarded under its predecessor funded by the Phare programme, whilst including the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as beneficiary country. Furthermore, following its request, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) will also be included in this programme. The programme will thus involve the following agencies:

- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training ,CEDEFOP
- Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
- European Medicines Agency (EMA)
- European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)
- European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

2. b Description of projects grouped per priority axis and (if relevant) per measure

The objective of this programme is to further prepare the three candidate countries and to start preparatory actions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, related to their participation in the selected Community Agencies. This will be pursued by establishing contacts and connections (networks) with the relevant national authorities and counterparts as well as other relevant stakeholders; organising information activities (seminars, workshops, conferences); translating and publishing information material; establishing internet based connections including websites; organising training activities, and participation in official meetings as observers.

The following objectives and activities per agency will be pursued:

CEDEFOP

Objectives

Cedefop's main objective is to involve the countries in existing Cedefop networks and to provide general information on Cedefop's role and work. Therefore Cedefop aims:

- (a) to help the three candidate countries take part in developing Community VET policy during their transition to becoming EU Member States;
- (b) to prepare the three candidate countries for full participation in Cedefop's activities and networks at the time of accession;
- (c) to disseminate Cedefop's documents/publications in the three candidate countries.

Activities

The main activities which will be implemented in the three candidate countries under this component try to include gradually the countries in the following areas of Cedefop's activities:

- *Developing research activities* meaning the involvement of the beneficiary countries' stakeholders in SkillsNet network, the early identification of skill needs activities, the work related learning events and invitation to participate in the Agora conferences.
- *Reporting and facilitating a concerted approach* is focused particularly for the three candidate countries on two aspects: collecting information on the countries Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems to be entered into the eKnowVet database, the thematic overview and to involve them more in the teachers and trainers network (TTnet) and in the annual conferences.
- *Exchange and supporting partners'* activities will ensure the active participation and involvement of the beneficiary countries' representatives in the Community study visits programme, will support the familiarisation of the candidate countries with Cedefop's activities and will provide support on the studies conducted on the issues related to the social dialogue.
- *Information, communication and dissemination will ensure* documentation services (collecting and providing relevant information about the beneficiary countries' VET systems), active participation and involvement of the three candidate countries in the ReferNet network and ReferNet's events, and dissemination of information about

Cedefop's activities in exhibitions organised by DG EAC in the candidate countries (CCs).

Along these lines the necessary conditions can be attained for a smooth, full participation of these countries following accession. As a result the three candidate countries will gradually be included in the Cedefop's networks and main projects such as ReferNet and the Study Visits Programme.

Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)

The Community Plant Variety Rights (CPVR) system is based on a directly applicable Council Regulation. Thus, in the absence of any derogation or transitional arrangements, it will apply from the date of accession in the territories of the new Member States without the need for implementation.

Objectives

The objectives of this component are to:

- Inform competent bodies and stakeholders about the legal impact of the extension of the CPVR system such as the consequences for rights in force prior accession and granted after accession, procedural aspects for the filing of applications, transitional arrangements such as novelty criteria, royalties, protection on both, national and Community level.
- Preparing the competent authorities for participation in the Community Plant Variety Rights system in particular on their future participation in the Administrative Council as governing body of the CPVO.

Activities

The countries will therefore be informed about the functioning of the agency, and the consequences for other stakeholders involved in this system.

In more detail, the following activities will be implemented:

- Evaluating and if possible integrating the beneficiary countries technical expertise into the Community system.
- Evaluate and if necessary advise on improving procedures on technical issues related to the implementation of the CPVO quality requirements.
- Inviting the countries' experts to CPVO meetings (i.p. those involving representative of the Member States' Examination Offices) to promote integration in the Community System network.
- Conduct information seminars/workshops and other actions aimed at informing breeders, growers and officials about the CPVR and other relevant instruments.

The target groups are officials involved in variety registration and plant variety rights on one hand and the breeding industry and growers in the relevant countries on the other hand.

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)

Support will only cover Croatia and Turkey as in 2008 general support for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will continue to be funded from the CARDS budget.

As the new member states joined the European Union the remaining candidate countries' agenda for the future included safety and health issues. Although legislative initiatives are rather easy to take, the main challenge exists in the uptake of the safety and health standards by the employers and employees. Furthermore, the judiciary systems need to inform about the

legal implications of such legislation. Even within the EU this remains an important challenge; therefore in order to avoid that the two candidate countries will stay behind it is important that the efforts carried out by EU-OSHA will receive further impetus.

Objectives

The objectives of this component are:

- to allow candidate countries Croatia and Turkey to participate in the Agency's network (as observers) and activities
- to support the national Agency focal points in the two candidate countries to be able to live up to the Agency's guidelines for Focal Points and the national information networks;
- to strengthen the national information networks which should include social partners and all relevant institutions/organisations in the field of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), e.g. concerning the application of health and safety standards;
- to further transfer knowledge on systems and programmes and Good Safety and Health Practice information to the two candidate countries and between them and Member States;
- to support the candidate countries to run and develop their national Agency websites to be high quality information sources for decision-makers, experts, social partners etc.;
- to support the two candidate countries to organise European Safety and Health Week campaigns in their respective countries.

Activities

The component foresees the following activities:

- Meetings in Bilbao:
 - Agency's Focal Points meetings
 - Expert Group meetings
 - General meetings between the Agency and representatives from the beneficiary countries
- Missions by Agency experts (Agency staff, networks members or other experts) to the two candidate countries
- Translations of material:
 - Information material (leaflet, posters and fact sheets) for the European Week campaigns
 - Good Practice information
 - Key information from the two candidate countries for publication on websites
- Support in the organisation of European Week conferences
- Production of information material for the European Week conferences
- Support for developing the beneficiary countries' Agency websites

The target groups for the information provided under this activity are the same as that for European Agency activities in Member States. That is everybody with an interest in information on Occupational Safety and Health, including decision-makers, OSH experts, social partners, employers, and workers.

Activities relating to the provision of good safety and health practice are in particular targeted at workers, managers of enterprises (especially SMEs), and intermediaries (e.g. sector organisations, worker and employers organisations) who take direct action to reduce the risk of ill health and injury to workers.

To reach these target groups, the Agency will work through the focal points in the two candidate countries and their networks.

European Medicines Agency (EMA)

Objectives

The overall purpose of the component is to assist competent authorities in the three candidate countries with the alignment of their standards and practices with those obtaining in the European Union in the implementation of Community law.

More specifically, this translates into the following detailed objectives:

- to inform the competent authorities in the three candidate countries about scientific and procedural developments linked with the work of the EMA and with the participation of these countries to this work;
- to provide access to such regulatory data as may be made available to the competent authorities in the three candidate countries prior to accession to the European Union;
- to assist the competent authorities in the three candidate countries to participate in training initiatives undertaken; and
- to provide such other training or assistance as is required to maintain the alignment of the standards and practices of the three candidate countries with those obtaining in the European Union in the implementation of Community law.

Activities

This component consists of four types of activity:

1. the financing of observerships in scientific and technical meetings of the EMA;
2. the provision of focused training on specific technical topics;
3. timely preparation of product information for centrally authorised products (medicines) in the beneficiary countries; and
4. measures to assist the three countries' Competent Authorities to integrate into the EU telematics systems.

The approach is to seek to permit the participation of delegates from the three candidate countries as observers in as wide a cross-section of scientific and technical meetings of the EMA as is practicable, whilst providing such practical support as is possible in the areas of telematics and training.

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Food safety is a very important issue in the accession negotiations. Therefore it is essential that the candidate countries will be informed about and involved in the operations of the EFSA, making it possible to take part in its operations on equal footing upon accession. The three candidate countries will be confronted for the first time with this recently created European Agency. An early introduction into how the European Food Safety Authority operates, including exchange of information concerning emerging issues, scientific expertise and findings will serve to help the beneficiary countries acquaint themselves with the EU risk assessment process. Being part of information networks will also benefit these countries as they will be able to focus on issues which are new to all Member States and enable them to warn Member States of problems detected at an early stage which may in its turn prevent food scares.

Objectives

The objectives of this component are:

- to prepare the competent bodies in the beneficiary countries, which are active in the fields relating to the work carried out by EFSA, for their future participation in EFSA networks;
- to contribute to the creation of communication and information exchange systems enabling future participation of the three candidate countries in the EFSA networks;
- to transfer knowledge on methodologies used in the fields in the remit of EFSA, in particular on risk assessment and data collection;
- to support the beneficiary countries in their communication activities linked to risk assessment.

Activities

Under this component EFSA will carry out exploratory and explanatory missions to the three candidate countries to inform/update partners in these countries on EFSA and to further identify the specific scientific and/or technical areas which will be addressed under the programme.

As a follow up, EFSA will invite national experts from the countries to participate in specific meetings, colloquiums, working groups, etc. dealing with the technical/scientific issues of relevance for the countries, on the condition that participation to observers is allowed.

Next to these formal EFSA events, some specific workshops or information happenings in and in co-operation with the countries concerned will be organised, while EFSA will invite relevant beneficiary countries' counterparts to similar events when these are organised within the EU.

Small and specific training events will be engineered by EFSA to transfer knowledge on specific methodologies identified as of interest for the three countries (e.g. data collection and risk assessment).

To inform the sector and the public in general about food safety and the EFSA, the agency will ensure that relevant information material on EFSA or linked to risk assessment activities is being translated into the beneficiary countries' languages. These materials will then subsequently be made available and distributed via the local EFSA counterparts and partners. The target groups are the officials and experts at the national authorities of three countries who work in the fields where EFSA is active.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)

Objectives

The aim of this component is to strengthen the involvement of the three candidate countries in the activities of the Foundation.

In short the programme will allow the three candidate countries:

- to contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions through action designed to increase and disseminate knowledge likely to assist this development (quotation from the Foundation's mandate);
- to foster and extend cooperation and to fully integrate into the institutional framework of the Foundation and into areas of the Foundation's work programmes;

- to help achieve important objectives of the social policy in relation to a functioning industrial relations system, to principles of equal opportunities, to access to and quality of employment, and in relation to social inclusion.

Activities

The component will thus:

- include the three candidate countries in research projects of the Foundation's programmes of work through study contracts with Turkish, Croatian and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian institutes and experts following proper tendering procedures;
- disseminate knowledge through distribution of documentation and publications in the three candidate countries;
- involve tri-partite delegates and other experts from the three candidate countries in Foundation seminars, round-tables and conferences.

Statistics from the three candidate countries will be incorporated in the Foundations' data sources and knowledge base with regard to social policy issues, enhancing the quality and overall significance of these analyses. The Foundation's statistics and knowledge bases from the three candidate countries will be used by EU institutions and other information users in their own work.

On top of that the statistical material and research results will allow the beneficiary countries to present accurate, useable up-to-date information for European and national policy development.

The Foundation's knowledge base will be utilised by the beneficiary countries' target groups in their own policy development in the social policy field, in co-operation with their social partners (employers' organisations, trade union organisations). These partners form together with the government departments and other experts in the three candidate countries the target group of this component.

As a result the three candidate countries will gradually be included in the following monitoring, strategic research and transversal projects on Living Conditions; Working Conditions, and Industrial Relation, and in the European Monitoring Centre on Change.

European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

In view of the particular characteristics of maritime transport it is important that candidate countries are informed about and involved in the operations of EMSA, particularly upon their accession. An early introduction into the European Maritime Safety Agency's tasks, its organisation and its working procedures could be a first action for the candidate countries to become familiar with EMSA. Under the CARDS programme EMSA is already implementing a project involving the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, therefore under this programme EMSA will only focus on Croatia and Turkey.

Objectives

The objectives of this component are:

- to promote the participation of government representatives of the candidate countries at EMSA technical meetings which are normally open only to EU Member States;
- to assist the candidate countries to enable their future participation in EMSA's networks;

- to assist the competent maritime authorities of the candidate countries in preparing and aligning their national legislation, standards and practices with those applicable in the European Union.

Activities

From an operational point of view, EMSA will:

- invite national experts from candidate countries to participate in specific meetings, conferences, working groups, etc, which are normally attended only by Member States;
- hold explanatory meetings, using EMSA staff or experts from Member States' maritime administrations to update local authorities on EU maritime legislation evolution.

Furthermore, the possibility of supporting activities of coordination in the field of maritime safety and oil pollution response will also be explored.

The target groups are the officials and experts of the national maritime authorities of the candidate countries who work in the fields where EMSA is active. Meetings, seminars and workshops will facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge between officers from the beneficiary countries of this component, EMSA and the other EU Member States.

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

Objective

The main objective of the component is the establishment and/or strengthening¹² of National Focal Points and national drug information networks in the candidate countries and their further integration into the REITOX network.

Twinning Projects have allowed setting up national focal point in Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Under the CARDS Regional Programme a contract will be awarded involving the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia so that under this programme the EMCDDA will only deal with Croatia and Turkey. Even though an agreement for participation in the EMCDDA with Turkey has been signed allowing it to participate in the EMCDDA by 2007, and that is expected that an agreement with Croatia will be signed by the end of 2007 allowing it to participate as of 2008, the EMCDDA would still like to involve both countries in these preparatory actions in order to strengthen their Focal points and information networks.

The component's technical proposal will closely follow the recommendations included in the Assessment Reports that have been produced by the EMCDDA on the beneficiary countries, and will build up on the achievements of the Twinning Projects.

Activities

The component will cover the following activities:

- *Direct support to the establishment/strengthening of the National Focal Points and of the data collection network, and associated training activities*

The component has two main components: institution building and capacity building. As far as institution building is concerned, the objective will be to assist these countries in

¹² In Croatia, the NFP has been located under the Office for Combating Narcotic Drug Abuse (OCNDA), but it has not been really established since then, while in Turkey, a Twinning Programme with Spain and Greece has allowed to start the establishment of the NFP, which needs to be consolidated.

establishing or strengthening their National Focal Point (NFP), in defining their legal status and mandate (when necessary), and in providing the necessary training to their staff members. A particular attention will be paid in the definition and improvement of the relations between the NFPs and their partner institutions and data providers.

The capacity building component aims to provide the technical and training support for the implementation of the key epidemiological indicators that are needed for the participation of these countries in the EMCDDA. This training will be provided through a completely adapted setting, based on a “learning by doing” methodology. This will cover the preparation of some key surveys, sets for data collection and the launch of the pilot phase, including – where relevant - the collection of the data, the quality assessment of the data collected based on EMCDDA guidelines and the review of the methodological issues, and the reporting.

- *Develop or update the Country Situation Summaries on the relevant EMCDDA web page and creation of national websites for data collection and/or dissemination*

The work will consist in the production/update of Country Situation Summaries in line with EMCDDA standards, which summarises all available information on the drug situation in a country, as well as the creation of national websites for collecting and disseminating the most relevant information on the drugs situation in these countries, provided that such websites are needed and could provide an added value (to be estimated on ad hoc basis).

- *Supervision of the production of the beneficiary countries' National Reports and standard tables*

The existing or improved sets of available data and the new sets of data to be collected in these countries will be used by them to prepare their first national reports and standard tables under a specific supervision mechanism, in order to make sure that 1) the report follows as much as possible the EMCDDA guidelines 2) the data are presented and interpreted in an appropriate way, 3) the reports and tables are delivered on time to the EMCDDA for the preparation of the EMCDDA Annual Report.

- *Participation in the statutory bodies, scientific meetings and REITOX Academy*

The component will guarantee that the beneficiary countries' representatives and national experts will be able to participate in key EMCDDA relevant meetings and regional or national training activities organised by the REITOX Academy where their presence is requested.

- *Direct support from EMCDDA staff and short-term experts*

Direct support will be provided by EMCDDA staff and short-term experts through ad hoc intervention, supervision meetings that for example concern the negotiations with national key partners about sharing collected data, discussing data confidentiality issues and improving existing data collection practices in order to follow the EMCDDA guidelines and standards and to raise awareness among the national authorities as well as to support national training and data collection activities. In particular in the case of Croatia direct support from the EMCDDA staff and short-term experts will be required to facilitate the establishment of working groups on key indicators, the national drug information system and the initial negotiation with key partners.

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

The ECDC has developed a mechanism for strengthening country capacities regarding preparedness and response to seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza. Furthermore, the Agency has developed a strategy to strengthen country capacities regarding the detection and response to emerging communicable disease health threats.

Objectives:

- To expose specialists from Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to EU tools and mechanisms for the detection and control of emerging threats and for strengthening seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza preparedness and planning and so to improve the capacity and preparedness in those countries
- To strengthen the links between the EU, the ECDC and these countries
- To strengthen and broaden the general network of epidemiologists in the EU in charge of the detection and control of communicable disease threats as well as seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza threats
- To strengthen and broaden the network of epidemiologists in charge of the detection and control

Target group:

- Officers in charge of prevention and response to seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza threats and in charge of detection and control of communicable disease threats in Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, at national or regional level

Beneficiaries:

- Institutions in charge of health system response planning and communicable disease control in the beneficiary countries
- European networks of public health specialists and epidemiologists
- European citizens through improved health protection at a European level as seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza do not respect national frontiers

Activities proposed:

- Visits of ECDC/EU experts (3) in each country to jointly review and assess preparedness activities related to communicable disease threats and to seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza and development of approaches that are suited to the needs of such countries
- Participation of public health officers (5 from each country) in ECDC focused meetings on seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza
- Participation of 2 senior specialists in the annual workshops conducted in preparedness and response for seasonal, pandemic and avian influenza (25,000€).
- Hosting senior experts from each country for a period of 4 months in ECDC and a Member State
- Participation of 15 public health officers (5 from each country) in the EU training module on outbreak investigation
- Participation of 2 senior epidemiologists in the 4 annual meetings conducted in preparedness and response: epidemic intelligence, outbreak response, preparedness to emerging threats, training

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Objective and activities

FRA's general objective is to provide the relevant Community institutions and bodies with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights in order to support them when they take measures to formulate courses of action within the respective spheres of competence. The three candidate countries are expected to fulfill the political criteria and to work towards further improvement regarding the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. Within its general objective, the FRA can contribute to this goal by carrying out in candidate countries tasks entrusted by the Regulation 168/2007 establishing the FRA it. The tasks and activities of FRA in respect of candidate

countries will be decided in the context of the decision of the Association Committee referred to in Article 28 of the Regulation establishing the FRA.

2. c Overview of past and on going assistance (EU / IFI / Bilateral and national assistance) including lesson learned and donor coordination

Under the Phare programme several programmes to facilitate participation of previous Candidate Countries from Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs) in Community agencies were created.

The programmes proved to be very beneficial for both the beneficiary countries and the Community Agencies. The countries learned about the operations of the Agencies and subsequently received assistance in establishing their own national structures and functions allowing them to become a fully operational partner in the Agencies upon accession. The assistance allowed the countries as well to mobilise the relevant national stakeholders, similar to those in the EU Member States.

The Agencies learned more about the beneficiary countries and their specific problems and opportunities. As a result the Agencies were better equipped to take on board these new members in their activities.

2. d Horizontal issues

Provided that the Association Council will allow for the countries concerned to participate in the Fundamental Rights Agency, this programme will prove to be a valuable instrument in the fight against discrimination, and in the support to minorities and vulnerable groups.

Plant variety, maritime safety (in particular concerning transport of hazardous goods and substances) as well as food safety are environmental concerns. Participation in the Community Agencies dealing with these subjects will allow the countries to better understand their obligations concerning the adoption of the relevant acquis, as well as the required functions and structures to implement and enforce this acquis, involving the relevant stakeholders.

2. e Conditions

As regards candidate countries participation as observers in FRA pursuant to article 28 (1) of Regulation (EC) 168/20007 establishing the FRA, the present programme does not prejudice neither the decision of the respective Association Councils nor the modalities for their participation, as referred to in Article 28 (2) of the same Regulation.

Therefore, the participation of the candidate countries in the FRA is subject to a decision of the respective Association Councils. The cut-off date for allocating the amount of FRA is set at October 2007. In case FRA cannot carry out a project the amount reserved could be used to award grants to other (new) Agencies and/or to strengthen the projects of the Agencies already mentioned in this programme.

2. f Benchmarks

	N		N+1 (cumulative)		N+2 (cumulative)	
	EU	NF*	EU	NF*	EU	NF*
Tenders launched (N/A)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct award to the agencies	2.75 Meuro	-	-	-	-	-

Contracting Rate (%)	100%	-	-	-	-	-
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3. BUDGET (AMOUNTS IN €)

3.1. Indicative budget table

	EU – IPA assistance			Total Co-financing	Total (IPA plus Co-financing)
	Institution Building (IB)	Investment (INV)	Total (IB + INV)		
Cedefop	225,000	0	225,000	0	225,000
CPVO	175,000	0	175,000	0	175,000
ECDC	200,000	0	200,000	0	200,000
FRA	250,000	0	250,000	0	250,000
EFSA	500,000	0	500,000	0	500,000
EUROFOUND	225,000	0	225,000	0	225,000
EMA	600,000	0	600,000	0	600,000
EMCDDA	250,000	0	250,000	0	250,000
EMSA	100,000	0	100,000	0	100,000
EU-OSHA	225,000	0	225,000	0	225,000
TOTAL	2,750,000	0	2,750,000	0	2,750,000

3.2 Principle of Co-Financing applying to the projects funded under the programme

N/A

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Method of implementation

The programme will be implemented on a centralised basis by the European Commission following Article 53 (a) of the Financial Regulation¹³ and the corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules.¹⁴

4.2 General rules for procurement and grant award procedures

Grant award procedures shall follow the provisions of Part 1, Title VI of the Financial Regulation and Part 1, Title VI of its Implementing Rules.

Agreements will be signed with the Agencies following approval by the EC of the project description received from the Community Agencies. These agreements will be awarded without calls for proposals due to the *de jure* monopoly situation of the agencies. The deadline for submission of project descriptions will be initially three (3) months following the notification to the Community Agencies on the adoption of this new programme.

Agencies falling within the scope of Article 185 of the FR are not entitled to claim operational costs, but may request financing in full of their projects. Agencies not governed by Article 185 of the FR will receive grants for a value of 95% of the total eligible costs (which may include operating expenses).

The Commission shall use the procedural guidelines and standard templates and models applicable to international organisations, facilitating the application of the above rules provided for in the "Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions"

¹³ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1 Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 478/2007 (OJ L 111, 28.04.2007, p. 13).

¹⁴ OJ L 248, 16.09.2002, p.1. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1).

(“Practical Guide”) as published on the EuropeAid website at the date of the initiation of the grant award procedure.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 Monitoring

The Commission may undertake any actions it deems necessary to monitor the programmes concerned.

5.2 Evaluation

Programmes shall be subject to *ex ante* evaluations, as well as interim and, where relevant, *ex post* evaluations in accordance with Articles 57 and 82 of the IPA Implementing Regulation¹⁵, with the aim of improving the quality, effectiveness and consistency of the assistance from Community funds and the strategy and implementation of the programmes.

The results of *ex ante* and interim evaluation shall be taken into account in the programming and implementation cycle.

The Commission may also carry out strategic evaluations.

6. AUDIT, FINANCIAL CONTROL AND ANTI-FRAUD MEASURES

The accounts and operations of all parties involved in the implementation of this programme, as well as all contracts and agreements implementing this programme, are subject to, on the one hand, the supervision and financial control by the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office), which may carry out checks at its discretion, either by itself or through an outside auditor and, on the other hand, audits by the European Court of Auditors. This includes measures such as *ex-ante* verification of tendering and contracting carried out by the Delegation in the Beneficiary Country.

In order to ensure the efficient protection of the financial interests of the Community, the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office) may conduct *on-the-spot* checks and inspections in accordance with the procedures foreseen in Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 2185/96¹⁶.

The controls and audits described above are applicable to all contractors, subcontractors and grant beneficiaries who have received Community funds.

7. LIMITED CHANGES

Limited changes in the implementation of this programme affecting essential elements listed under Article 90 of the Implementing Rules to the Financial Regulation, which are of an indicative nature¹⁷, may be undertaken by the authorising officer by delegation (AOD), or by the authorising officer by sub-delegation (AOSD), in line with the delegation of powers conferred upon the AOSD by the AOD, in accordance with the principles of sound financial management without an amending financing decision being necessary.

¹⁵ Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 (*OJ L 170, 29.6.2007, p. 1*)

¹⁶ *OJ L 292; 15.11.1996; p. 2*

¹⁷ These essential elements of an indicative nature are, for grants, the indicative amount of the call for proposals and, for procurement, the indicative number and type of contracts envisaged and the indicative time frame for launching the procurement procedures.