



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Neighbourhood Programmes 2004-2006 Electronic Newsletter

Issue 2 – March 2005

Introduction

Welcome to the second Neighbourhood Programmes newsletter. Its aim is to provide you with helpful information about the cross-border and transnational co-operation Neighbourhood Programmes operating along the external borders of the Union between 2004 and 2006.

This newsletter is for your benefit. The aim is to keep you fully informed about progress with these Programmes. If you have any comments, then please let us know. Our address is Regio-territorial-cooperation@cec.eu.int

What are Neighbourhood Programmes?

Neighbourhood Programmes are cross-border and transnational co-operation programmes involving Member States of the European Union and their neighbours. They are aimed at helping authorities and organisations inside and outside the Union to work together to improve the economic and social conditions of the areas concerned and to address common challenges and opportunities for development.

Cross-border programmes are focussed on the local level on either side of a border, helping the local population address issues of common interest. Transnational programmes cover much larger geographic areas (e.g. the regions around the Baltic Sea) and concentrate on more strategic issues, such as transport and environmental matters.

For the first time, it has been possible to fully integrate the application, selection and implementation procedures governing co-operation programmes that straddle the external border of the Union. Contracting remains separate (i.e. there is one contract for the internal part of each project and one for the external part), but the Neighbourhood Programmes offer genuinely joint possibilities to build effective co-operation across the Union's external borders.

Neighbourhood Programme progress

The first Neighbourhood call for projects was launched last December in the Slovenia/Hungary/Croatia programme (see below for more details). The Neighbourhood Programme for the Hungarian-Serbian & Montenegrin border has now also launched a call (see below) and the [Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus](#) co-operation has launched their call on 28 February. Calls for the Hungary/Slovakia/Ukraine and Poland/Belarus/Ukraine programmes are expected in March.

In order to release funds to non-Member States, an annual financing agreement must be signed between the European Commission and the third country concerned. In the context of the Neighbourhood Programmes, Croatia, Serbia & Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Belarus and Moldova have all signed their financing agreements for 2004. Ukraine is expected to sign shortly.

1st call for projects: Slovenia/Hungary/Croatia

The first ever Neighbourhood call for projects was launched by the Slovenia/Hungary/Croatia programme on 17 December 2004. The overall objective of the programme is to promote the development of the trilateral border region into a common, future-oriented economic and living space. This objective is to be achieved through improving the competitiveness of the region within the European context, sustainable enhancement of the residents' living conditions and assistance in overcoming regional development disadvantages caused by separation through national borders.

The **deadline** for submitting project proposals was **1 March 2005**. Further information can be found at:

<http://www.gov.si/arr/4eu-p/1p-8-interreg-c-new.html> (SI),

<http://www.vati.hu/owa/vati/tfi.tfimenu?kod=34.1.3> (HU),

http://www.delhrv.cec.eu.int/en/item2/topic_5.htm (HR).

The Steering Committee will take decisions on the projects to be funded in May.

1st call for projects: Hungary-Serbia & Montenegro

The 1st call within the Hungary-Romania & Hungary-Serbia and Montenegro programme was launched on 16 February with a deadline of 20 May. The Neighbourhood part of the programme is concerned with the Hungary-Serbia and Montenegro border.

Further information is available from:

<http://www.vati.hu/owa/vati/tfi.tfimenu?kod=34.1.4>. (in Hungarian)

<http://emis.mier.sr.gov.yu/Emis/PublicSite1/index.aspx> (in Serbian and English)

Neighbourhood Programme websites and contacts

Remember: for all programme information, application procedures and project details, contact the programme secretariats, not the Commission! Websites can be found by clicking on the programme's name.

Programme	Commission contact
Cross-border programmes	
<u>South-East Finland</u>	<u>Aiga Berke</u>
<u>Euregio Karelia</u>	<u>Aiga Berke</u>
<u>Nord</u>	<u>Ann-Kerstin Myleus</u>
<u>Estonia/Latvia/Russia</u>	<u>Aiga Berke</u>
<u>Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus</u>	<u>Aiga Berke</u>
<u>Lithuania/Poland/Kaliningrad</u>	<u>Agata Kosin</u>
<u>Poland/Belarus/Ukraine</u>	<u>Agata Kosin</u>
<u>Hungary/Slovakia/Ukraine</u>	<u>Peter Fischer</u>
<u>Hungary/Romania/Serbia & Montenegro</u>	<u>Fausta Corda</u>
<u>Slovenia/Hungary/Croatia</u>	<u>Moray Gilland</u>
<u>Italy/Adriatic</u>	<u>Claudio Caruso</u>
<u>Italy/Albania</u>	<u>Claudio Caruso</u>
<u>Greece/Albania</u>	<u>Christina Karaitidi</u>
<u>Greece/FYROM</u>	<u>Christina Karaitidi</u>
Romania/Ukraine	<u>Andrew Blackmore</u>
Romania/Moldova	<u>Andrew Blackmore</u>
Romania/Serbia & Montenegro	<u>Andrew Blackmore</u>
Bulgaria/Serbia & Montenegro	<u>Francois Begeot</u>
Bulgaria/FYROM	<u>Francois Begeot</u>
<u>Spain/Morocco</u>	<u>Armando Miranda Cardoso</u>
<u>Gibraltar/Morocco</u>	<u>Maud Carlsson</u>
Transnational programmes	
<u>CADSES</u>	<u>Moray Gilland</u>
<u>Baltic Sea Region</u>	<u>Niels Bjerring Hansen</u>
<u>Archimed</u>	<u>Fausta Corda</u>
<u>Western Mediterranean</u>	<u>Claudio Caruso</u>

Note: Neighbourhood Programmes in bold have been approved. The remaining INTERREG programmes must still be amended to become Neighbourhood Programmes.

Recent meetings

Neighbourhood Programmes Seminar, Warsaw 27-28 January 2004: An International seminar on Neighbourhood Programmes was held on 27 and 28 January 2005 in Warsaw. The event was organised by the [INTERACT Point Managing Transition and External Cooperation](#) in close collaboration with the [Polish Ministry of Economy and Labour](#).

On 27 January 2005, [Commissioner Danuta Hübner](#) and high-level policy makers shared their views on Territorial and Cross-Border Cooperation along the EU external borders in front of 250 participants.

The second day of the seminar provided INTERREG/Tacis/CARDS/Phare stakeholders with the opportunity to meet and discuss practical aspects of programme implementation. 32 countries were represented, comprising Member States and their partner countries across EU external borders.

The seminar allowed all participants to gain an insight into the current progress of different Neighbourhood Programmes, as well as providing time for initial reflection on future CBC programmes with EU external borders. Besides technical workshops presenting bottlenecks and solutions to current Neighbourhood Programmes, programme secretariats and managing authorities used the event as an opportunity to present their questions and positions to the European Commission. Co-operation experts underlined an urgent need for consultation among all stakeholders in order to facilitate the implementation of CBC programmes at the EU's external borders in the forthcoming programming period.

Neighbourhood Seminars in Serbia:– As part of the information and publicity exercise launched by the [European Agency for Reconstruction](#) and the [Serbian Ministry for International Economic Relations](#), 4 seminars were held in Serbia in January. A national event was held in Belgrade, followed by 3 regional events, on the Hungarian, Romanian and Bulgarian borders. The events were chaired by the Serbian Assistant Minister Gordana Lazarevic and included presentations from the European Commission, the European Agency for Reconstruction and the Serbian Ministry for International Economic Relations. In total, the events attracted over 500 participants and stimulated lively debates about potential projects and procedures. Also, of note was the high level of media interest, with television, radio and newspaper coverage.

Upcoming meetings

The Commission is planning a series of seminars in the Western Balkans at the beginning of 2005 in order to publicise the Neighbourhood Programmes and to provide an opportunity for networking among potential project partners. The planned seminars in other parts of the Western Balkans have been delayed to the spring, but it is intended to hold events in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and possibly in Montenegro as well. Further information will be provided when available.

If programme authorities wish to advertise programme-specific events in this newsletter, then please send details to the Regio-territorial-cooperation@cec.eu.int.

The Final Tacis CBC SPF call – March 2004

The Commission is currently contracting projects under the final Tacis CBC SPF call. The process was delayed due to the late signature of the relevant Financing Agreement by some of the participating countries. A full list of projects selected will be included in a later newsletter.

Progress report – next programming period

Negotiations are continuing among the Member States on the future shape of co-operation. The Commission has proposed that co-operation along the Eastern and Mediterranean external borders of the Union should be supported through the proposed [European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument](#) and co-operation along EU borders with candidate and potential candidate countries should be supported through the proposed Instrument for Pre-Accession.

The Regulations could be agreed by Member States by the autumn, although it is likely that final agreement will depend on an overall agreement on the financial resources for the Union for the 2007-2013 period.

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