



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## **Neighbourhood Programmes 2004-2006 Electronic Newsletter**

**Issue 3 – July 2005**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to the third 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](mailto: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, candidate countries 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 – Tacis and CARDS funding**

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, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Croatia, Serbia & Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have all signed their financing agreements for 2004.

The Commission is currently preparing the necessary documentation to begin the release of Tacis and CARDS funds under the 2005 Community budget.

### **Neighbourhood Programme Progress – MEDA funding**

Given the particular situation of co-operation actions in the Mediterranean area, it has been decided not to proceed with a modification of the programme documents for the 4 programmes concerned. Instead, the MEDA funding will be linked to the existing INTERREG programmes on an ad hoc basis, in order to allow funding to be made available both inside and outside the Union. Further details of this approach will be available after the summer.

### **Results/Status of 1<sup>st</sup> calls**

Two Neighbourhood Programmes have already selected projects. At a recent selection committee meeting, the [Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus](#) co-operation area selected 9 projects from 21 submitted. 4 of the selected projects have Belarussian partners.

At the beginning of July, the Slovenia/Hungary/Croatia programme selected 64 projects from a total of 226 submitted. 27 of the selected projects involve Croatian partners.

Another two programmes have completed their first call, but have not yet selected projects. One further call is on-going, and another 10 calls are planned for the autumn. See the table below, and the programme websites, for more details.

### **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.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Commission contact</b>	<b>Call for Projects Status</b>
<b>Cross-border programmes</b>		
<a href="#">South-East Finland</a> *New website*	<a href="#">Aiga Berke</a>	Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Euregio Karelia</a> *New website*	<a href="#">Aiga Berke</a>	Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Nord</a>	<a href="#">Ann-Kerstin Myleus</a>	Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Estonia/Latvia/Russia</a>	<a href="#">Aiga Berke</a>	1 <sup>st</sup> Neighbourhood call starts 5/9/05
<a href="#">Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus</a>	<a href="#">Aiga Berke</a>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Neighbourhood call starts 5/9/05
<a href="#">Lithuania/Poland/Kaliningrad</a> *New website*	<a href="#">Agata Kosin</a>	Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Poland/Belarus/Ukraine</a>	<a href="#">Agata Kosin</a>	Neighbourhood call open until 31/8/05
<a href="#">Hungary/Slovakia/Ukraine</a>	<a href="#">Peter Fischer</a>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Hungary/Romania/Serbia &amp; Montenegro</a>	<a href="#">Claudio Caruso</a>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Slovenia/Hungary/Croatia</a> *New website*	<a href="#">Moray Gilland</a>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Neighbourhood call expected in November
<a href="#">Italy/Adriatic</a>	<a href="#">Claudio Caruso</a>	Neighbourhood call expected in autumn
<a href="#">Italy/Albania</a>	<a href="#">Claudio Caruso</a>	
<a href="#">Greece/Albania</a>	<a href="#">Christina Karaitidi</a>	Neighbourhood call expected in autumn

<a href="#">Greece/FYROM</a>	<a href="#">Christina Karaitidi</a>	
<b>Romania/Ukraine</b>	<a href="#">Andrew Blackmore</a>	
<b>Romania/Moldova</b>	<a href="#">Andrew Blackmore</a>	
<b>Romania/Serbia &amp; Montenegro</b>	<a href="#">Andrew Blackmore</a>	
<b>Bulgaria/Serbia &amp; Montenegro</b>	<a href="#">Francois Begeot</a>	
<b>Bulgaria/FYROM</b>	<a href="#">Francois Begeot</a>	
<a href="#">Spain/Morocco*</a>	<a href="#">Eusebio Murillo Matilla</a>	
<a href="#">Gibraltar/Morocco*</a>	<a href="#">Maud Carlsson</a>	
<b>Transnational programmes</b>		
<a href="#">CADSES</a>	<a href="#">Moray Gilland</a>	1 <sup>st</sup> Neighbourhood call in summer
<a href="#">Baltic Sea Region</a>	<a href="#">Niels Bjerring Hansen</a>	1 <sup>st</sup> Neighbourhood call in summer
<a href="#">Archimed*</a>	<a href="#">Fausta Corda</a>	
<a href="#">Western Mediterranean*</a>	<a href="#">Claudio Caruso</a>	

Note: Neighbourhood Programmes in bold have been approved. The remaining INTERREG programmes must still be amended to become Neighbourhood Programmes.  
\* - Programmes not modified for specific Neighbourhood content.

### **Upcoming meetings**

A major launch event in Belgrade for the first CADSES Neighbourhood call is being planned for September this year. See the website for more information.

The Commission is discussing with some of the countries in the Western Balkans the possibility of organising further information seminars for the Neighbourhood Programmes in the region. Successful events have already been held in Croatia, Serbia and Albania.

The Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe are organising, in co-operation with Volyn Regional Council, the 8<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Border Regions, to be held in Lutsk (Ukraine) on 15-17 September. Further information can be obtained from the Conference Secretariat: [Bogdan.Torcatoriu@coe.int](mailto:Bogdan.Torcatoriu@coe.int).

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

### **Regional Capacity Building Initiative for Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus**

The introduction of the Neighbourhood Programmes along the EU's eastern border is being strongly supported by the new Regional Capacity Building Initiative project (RCBI) which started work in April 2005.

This project, funded by Tacis, will run until October 2006. As a first step, offices have been set up in St. Petersburg, Lviv, Chisinau as well as an additional point of contact in Minsk. All these are now fully operational and are now involved in the preparation of the implementation activities of the project.

The key objectives of the RCBI are to:

- build project and programme management capacity and skills in the regions along the eastern border of the Union stretching from Murmansk to Odessa.
- raise awareness for the Neighbourhood Programmes in local areas along the entire stretch of the eastern EU border
- train and assist potential partners to prepare sound project applications under the Neighbourhood Programmes

The RCBI plans to invite all eligible partners in the regions (local authorities, chambers of commerce, business associations, non-governmental bodies and interest groups, academic and cultural institutions as well as EU bodies like national co-ordination units, joint technical Secretariats and liaison offices) to information, partnering and training events. These are set to take place along the EU – Tacis border, in many of the local areas eligible to participate in the Neighbourhood Programmes.

Over 700 contacts have already been entered into a contact database by the RCBI project, providing an extensive list of potential partners and stakeholders. This database is constantly being updated, and will be accessible for registration and partner search via the RCBI website ([www.rcbi.info](http://www.rcbi.info)). The RCBI website is set to be operational as of August 2005.

The first events are set to commence in September 2005, and will be closely co-ordinated with the dates of Neighbourhood call for proposals in the different programmes. Separate events will be held with the Joint Technical Secretariats and with the Neighbourhood programmes project evaluators.

Further information can be obtained directly from the RCBI offices in St. Petersburg (Main office) - [Peter Joan Wedemeyer](#); Lviv - [John Tate](#); and Chisinau - [Jan Willem Richelman](#)

### **Progress report – next programming period**

With the failure of the European Council to reach agreement on the Union's budget for 2007-2013, negotiations are continuing among the Member States on this and other issues, including 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 [European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument](#) and co-operation along EU borders with candidate and potential candidate countries should be supported through the Instrument for Pre-Accession.

With agreement on the financial package unlikely before December at the earliest, it would appear that the earliest possible date for adoption of the relevant regulations is the beginning of 2006.

## **Distribution**

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