Phare 2001 - STANDARD SUMMARY PROJECT FICHE

1. Basic Information

1.1 Désirée Number:

ES01.09 / LE01.07 / LI01.16 / PL01.11

1.2 Title: Small Project Fund

1.3 Sector: all sectors

1.4 Location: Eligible regions are as follows

PL: voivodships of Poland: Zachodnio-Pomorskie; Pomorskie; Warminsko-

Mazurskie and Podlaskie - Euroregions

LT : All territory;

LV: All territory;

EST: All territory;

2. Objectives

2.1 Overall Objective(s):

The Small Projects Fund (SPF) supports conclusions of the European Council in Santa Maria da Feira on 19 and 20 June 2000, and in particular paragraph 76 and the action plan for the Northern Dimension with external and cross-border policies of the European Union 2000 to 2003 referred to in that paragraph.

This appropriation is intended, as part of the flexibility and harmonisation of the Interreg, Phare and Tacis joint approach. to cover the financing of special measures to assist the applicant countries bordering the Baltic Sea and to prepare them for accession.

It is intended in particular to assist the future development of relations and local, regional and NGO cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. Particular attention will be paid to local initiatives to improve the protection of the environment, develop human capital, and support economic development in this region. The appropriations shall be used for small-scale local and regional projects. The Baltic Joint Cooperation Committee shall be responsible for multilateral decision-making regarding the projects financed under this appropriation.

The Small Projects Fund (SPF) supports the key objectives of the Special Action for the Baltic Sea Region Programme, namely to help the border regions to overcome specific development problems resulting from their relative isolation in the framework of national economics; the SPF also supports the establishment and development of co-operative networks within the Baltic Sea Region and the creation of linkages between these networks and wider European Union networks. The SPF aims:

- to support the further development of the economic potential of the regions bordering the Baltic Sea by strengthening existing structures;
- to reduce the peripheral character of these areas, thereby improving the quality of life and creating a co-operative networking that region;

• to contribute to the development and strengthening of an effective implementation structure for the programme.

In pursuing these objectives, the SPF provides a flexible approach to funding smaller-scale actions, which are defined on the basis of local/regional needs, and which have a cross-border impact.

The SPF shall be implemented through two schemes, one for small projects between $20\ 000-50\ 000$ based on the Small Project Funds 1999 and 2000 and one grant scheme for projects $50\ 000-300\ 000$ EUR. Both schemes shall be in line with the Joint Programming Document for the Phare Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2001-2006, which was jointly developed by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland under the guidance of the Baltic Joint Cooperation Committee.

2.2 Project purpose:

The projects shall support development in particular in the fields of small-scale people-to-people activities across the border. In overall terms, the SPF may:

- contribute to the development of the eligible districts of Euroregions particularly those on the northern border in Poland and the whole territory of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania
- To contribute towards facilitating the efforts of the candidate countries of the Baltic Sea Region towards accession to the EU
- enhance possibilities for cross-border tourism attraction and linkages between the tourism support infrastructures on either side of the border;
- the development of cultural co-operation between neighbouring areas in the Baltic Sea region
- the support and increase in numbers of cross border meetings of various groups of the population, especially of youth;
- the support of educational activities for institutions and individuals involved in local/regional development, in local government and in organisations of public interest;
- the raising of the level of public awareness and information on cross-border co-operation affairs and on the process of European integration.
- encourage NGO and local involvement in the Phare Programme and to support small-scale actions which may form the basis for larger cross-border co-operation projects;
- build and develop the specialist resources of local and regional institutions involved in regional development, groundwork and implementation of cross-border projects in line with EU practice;
- stimulation and support to the creation of permanent structures among the local and regional organisations in the border region in question, particularly organisations with membership for both sides of the border;
- develop and enhance co-operation between the communities on either side of the border with a view to joint improvement of economic development, living conditions and on-going contact;
- support the productive sector and maximise the economic growth potential by creating a business
 friendly environment and overcoming the obstacles to trade and cooperation in the Baltic Sea
 Region;
- protect and improve the environment including local energy efficiency schemes and renewable sources of energy;

• improve accessibility, communication, infrastructure and transport links initiated locally within the border regions and provide access to the Trans-European networks

2.3 Accession Partnership and NPAA priority

The SPF plays a key part in the process of preparation of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland for accession as defined in the Accession Partnerships and NPAAs of the countries concerned, in particular through the capacity building dimension of local/regional actors. These funds are part of a process of creating "integration-minded" border regions. The project represents thus an important element in the preparation of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland for the adoption of Structural Funds. In addition, the project supports the social and economic integration between the border regions of candidate countries.

2.4 Contribution to National Development Plan

Not applicable in general since infrastructure is not specifically or separately identified.

2.5 Cross Border Impact

The Programme will contribute to the removal of existing disparities between areas in the Baltic Sea Region and thus to the gradual alignment of economic and social development. This is particularly important in view of future integration into the European Union. Full membership will require the approximation of levels of economic activity and living standards in particular in border regions in order to avoid undue problems connected to the removal of borders and the introduction of the principle of free movement.

The SPF emphasises projects with a cross-border impact and encourages the development of linkages between the communities /organisations/ institutions in the Baltic Sea Region. All projects necessitate active participation of foreign partners from EU Baltic states and thus facilitate establishing direct contacts of inhabitants from the entire region.

In Poland, the Regional Steering Committees will be composed of representatives of the relevant partners from various countries within the Euroregions. In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania National Steering Committees will be established composed of representatives from relevant national and regional authorities and organisations.

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification:

Following the approach adopted in 1999, the 2000 Special Action for the Baltic Sea Region Programme is now focused on the SPF mechanism and confirms the evolution in the overall Phare CBC Programme in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland from an exclusively project—by-project approach to the gradual inclusion of flexible funding mechanisms. The success of these SPF in addressing identified local needs, their popularity with local/regional actors and relatively quick implementation record encourages a greater emphasis within the Phare CBC Programmes.

The fund model approach is particularly useful in the context of pre-accession and the preparation of local/regional administrations and NGOs for accession. Moreover, funds are seen as ideal mechanisms

for the "maturing" of cross-border co-operation through allowing greater possibilities for the definition and preparation of joint projects.

To summarise, the inclusion of the SPF into the programme is a logical step forward in the *overall* context of the Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland's future accession to the EU, and in the *specific* context of the development of cross-border co-operation and evolution of the Phare CBC Programme in the pre-accession context.

3.2 Linked activities:

The SPF follows on directly from the support and methodologies developed since 1996 in the Baltic Sea Region, beginning with the Baltic Small Project Facility and supported by bilateral MS contributions. It is currently taking up the linking strands of the opportunities provided under the new Interreg IIIA, B and C.

3.3 Results:

The project's main objective is to sustain and develop futher the BSR networking which permits the ongoing integration of the candidate countries into the region itself and by doing so into the EU. This is achieved by a series of project results:

- BSR integration projects and networking for developing strategies and preparing for greater investments
- Northern Dimension Action plan projects
- "people to people" support actions in line with the objectives of the programme across the BSR and the integrating of the CC into the EU-MS networks

3.4 Activities:

The project is based on the single, repeated activity of developing small projects via a mechanism of standardised project applications / joint calls for proposals and joint evaluations – with criteria under the decentralised harmonised guidelines. Qualified technical expertise supports activities such as:

- carrying out of cultural exchanges, youth meetings;
- training courses, exchange visits;
- courses, conferences and seminars,
- elaboration of planning and development studies, feasibility studies, project preparation documents;
- marketing initiatives for the region, tourist information material printed; exhibitions visited and arranged;
- small scale infrastructure projects

4. Institutional Framework

Poland

The project will be implemented under the overall responsibility of the Implementing Authority for the Phare Cross Border Co-operation Programme at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration in Poland (the IA CBC Phare).

The IA CBC Phare is finally responsible for the management of funds allocated to the SPF and reserves therefore certain rights with respect to approving individual regional SPFs and reserves the right to supervise them: issuing of guidelines; definition of the responsibilities of institutions involved in the SPF; approval of the institutional set-up; specification of the rules for financial management and for regular submission of reports; the IA CBC Phare has the right of veto over certain projects that have been approved in contravention of the established rules; and finally the IA CBC Phare is responsible for the provision of on-going support to institutions in the regions in the form of training or consultation through experts chosen by the IA CBC Phare. Specifically the IA CBC Phare will manage the implementation of horizontal actions in support of institutional development.

Regional Steering Committees will be established for each Euroregion. The Steering Committee will consist of representatives of the local/regional public administration and of other relevant institutions and organisations from all partner countries in the areas comprised by the respective Euroregion. The Regional Steering Committee will become the principal responsible institution for the operation of the Fund. Representatives of the IA CBC Phare and of the European Commission (Delegation) will participate in the meetings of the Committee as observers. The basic functions of the Regional Steering Committee are:

- issuing calls for proposals;
- appointment of expert panels for the assessment of project applications;
- decision-making on the selection of projects, in accordance with the Guidelines issued for the SPF;
- supervision of the operation of the SPF.

The **Secretariat** represents the executive SPF body in the region. Its chief function is to provide technical and specialist support to the Steering Committee and to ensure the everyday implementation and operation of the SPF. The secretarial services will be performed by Polish secretariats of Euroregions. The responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- provide information to beneficiaries on the 2000 Phare CBC Programme and its Sub-Programmes;
- provision of support for the preparation of Steering Committee meetings;
- organisation of individual round of public calls for the submission of proposals;
- supporting applicants with project preparation;
- assist and co-ordinate the process of project evaluation, through passing project proposals to the expert panels and organising their sessions, etc.
- assist in the preparation of Terms of Reference and associated tender and contracting documents as required;
- conclusion and control of sub-contracts;
- monitoring and inspection of implementation; evaluation of benefits;

- the complete financial management of the SPF;
- reporting to the Steering Committee and to the IA CBC Phare.

The Secretariat will in particular ensure sound and professional financial management of the funds in line with Phare requirements. Overall, the IA CBC Phare through the provision of on-going advice and support and specialist consultancy and training inputs will assist the Secretariat in performing their role. In particular in the case of more complex services or supply procurement, the Secretariat will cooperate closely with the IA CBC Phare. The Secretariat will need to report regularly to the IA CBC Phare, in particular on the financial management and implementation record of the SPF. Up to 10% of the Phare contribution may be used for expenditure relating to the preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of the assistance.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

In each case the CFCU (Central Financial and Contracting Unit) is responsible for the implementation within the framework of the guidelines agreed by the respective delegations. The CFCUs will be supported by SPF Secretariats with similar functions as listed above for Poland. National Steering Committees will be established in each of the three countries and carry out the same functions as the Regional Steering Committees in Poland. A National SPF Co-ordinator will be nominated as chairman of the National Steering Committee.

Project Selection: Projects will be selected following the approval of harmonised Guidelines, a joint Call for Proposals and an evaluation involving representatives and experts from all 4 countries. The detailed procedure for the project selection will be outlined in the Guidelines for the Call for Proposals, which is to be developed on the basis of existing SPF Guidelines.

Local Authorities: Due to the decentralised nature of the SPF, local/regional authorities will be directly involved in project selection and the management of the Fund as well as in the preparation and implementation of the projects. Moreover, local and regional authorities through their participation in the Regional or National Steering Committees will need to integrate the actions funded through the SPF with those supported through other programmes. However, due to the eligibility of local authorities as project applicants, their participation in Steering Committees and project selection and management will be limited where a potential conflict of interests exists.

Experience of the institutions: Representatives of the eligible border regions have acquired experience of the operations of Steering Committees and the associated project selection and evaluation processes within the framework of the CREDO Programme and of previous Small Projects Funding. There is a strong commitment on the part of regional/local public administration and other actors in this type of funding mechanism and enthusiasm for their active involvement in an EU Programme.

In terms of the expert panels there is a pool of know-how on the defined themes which the SPF will address. Experts from regional/local level should be involved in the preliminary project evaluation exercise, where a conflict of interests can be avoided. This will help ensure that information on good practice experiences from elsewhere can be available to each committee.

5. Detailed Indicative Budget

	Phare	Support				
	Investment	Institution	Total Phare	National	IFI*	TOTAL
	Support	Building	(= I + IB)	Cofinancing*		
Projects 20.000 to 50.000	4.0	-	4.0	0.8	-	4.8
Projects 50.000 to 300.000	8.0	-	8.0	1.6	-	9.6
Total	12.0	-	12.0	2.4	-	14.4

Co-financing will be available.

There is no formal requirement for financial support of foreign partners in the SPF, however, projects with financial contribution of foreign partners will be given priority. Co-financing provided from national sources including private sector, if relevant is presented at the level of the individual small project proposal – and has to be confirmed. Such funding is expected to be assured in this project as in the past.

Up to 10% of the Phare contribution may be used for expenditure relating to the preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of the assistance.

6. Implementation Arrangements

6.1 Implementing Agency

The project will be managed in accordance with the Phare Decentralised Implementation System (DIS) and under the overall supervision of the National Fund (NF).

In Poland, the Implementing Authority for the Phare CBC Programme at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration will be the Implementing Authority (IA) for the project and the NF will transfer funds to the IA in accordance with the Financing Agreement signed between the NF and the IA. The IA will be headed by a Programme Authorising Officer (PAO) nominated by the responsible Minister and appointed by the National Authorising Officer. The PAO will be responsible for all the operations carried out by the IA.

In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the CFCU is to implement the project and will receive funds from the NF according to the individual national arrangements.

In addition, the General Guidelines of the Commission for Small Projects Funds and detailed guidelines developed for SPF in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, endorsed by the Commission, will be applied for the SPF. These Guidelines will be revised in line with the Joint Programming Document in order to ensure increased harmonisation between the SPFs and to take into account the distinction between Grant Scheme and traditional Small Project Fund.

All contracting will be carried out in line with the *Practical Guide to Phare, ISPA and SAPARD contract procedures*. The project selection process shall be agreed by the Baltic Joint Cooperation Committee and detailed in harmonised Guidelines for applicants.

6.2 Twinning

None

6.3 Non-standard aspects

The project follows the standard approach for small projects applied to the specific requirements of the BSR's four participating MS and Candidate Countries – in line with the Budgetary Commentary

6.4 Contracts

A maximum of 160 contracts for the total budget of 12 M€

7. Implementation Schedule

7.1 Start of tendering/call for proposals

ToRs and/or project specifications will be early in 2002

7.2 Start of project activity

Expected date of commencement of first contract/grant scheme is the last quarter of 2002

7.3 Project Completion

The expected date of last payment under last contract/grant is 15th November 2004

8. Equal Opportunity

Equal participation in projects by women and men is assured and women's participation will be measured by examination of the individual project personnel portfolio.

9. Environment

Dealt with at the individual project level

10. Rates of return

Dealt with at the individual project level

11. Investment criteria

Dealt with at the individual project level

11.1 Catalytic effect:

The Phare support catalyses the priority accession driven action of preparation of the local, regional authorities and NGOs for accession which would otherwise not have taken place in this way by galvanizing the local authorities into the project development actions which are at the heart of future EU funding mechanisms.

11.2 Cofinancing:

Phare will use its grants to attract as much co-financing as possible from all sources.

11.3 Additionality:

Phare grants shall do not displace any other financiers especially from the private sector or IFIs since no other source provides for these specific activities – bearing in mind that the expertise developed by the successful beneficiaries makes them well placed to also take advantage of EU funding from other sources such as Economic and Social Cohesion and the ACCESS programme.

11.4 Project readiness and Size:

Projects will only be financed by Phare if they are ready for contracting and when all necessary technical studies have been completed and this is amply assured by the extensive and detailed projects criteria and the project selection process using experts.

11.5 Sustainability:

Dealt with at the individual project level

11.6 Compliance with state aids provisions

Dealt with at the individual project level

11.7 Contribution to National Development Plan

Contributes through following the Accession Partnership priorities to the NDA

12. Conditionality and sequencing

No new conditionality applies since the activities are continuations of previous ongoing ones for which all conditions are fulfilled.

The sequence of the project is in the order of : Agree common Guidelines; launch call for proposals; analyse and select projects; contract, monitor and evaluate.

The most important milestones of the project in terms of impact is the actual number of projects successfully terminated with the results achieved. Control is therefore at the level of the individual projects.

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

- 1. Logical framework matrix in standard format
- 2. Detailed implementation chart
- 3. Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme

STANDARD SUMMARY PROJECT FICHE

Programme Number ES01XX.01/LE01XX.01 LI01XX.01/PL01XX.0	1/	Document	Financing Proposal		Section	Е	Version	Final	Page	
Annex 1: LOGFRA	ME PLANNING MATRIX				End contracting End disbursement Phare budget		15/11/2003 15/11/2004 12M€			
Project Number	ES01XX.01/LE01XX.01/ LI01XX.01/PL01XX.01	Project Title	Small Projects Fund				Total Project Budget		14.4 M€	
Wider Objectives		Indicators of A	chievement ¹		v, When and cators Will B	Assumptions and Risks				
economic potenti Region by streng structures; to reduce the per these areas, ther quality of life and network on both	ripheral character of eby improving the creating a co-operative sides of the border; ne development and an effective	 amount of traffic of local character amount of joint social, economic and cultural organisations, and new creations opinion of inhabitants living in the neighbouring border (indicator of approval) increased command of the neighbours' languages 			data of the border and customs services reports and statistics from regions, statistical offices, opinion polls			 continued commitment of the Governments towards the priorities of the programme and regional development; political commitment to Regional co-operation functioning co-operation between all relevant partners in the Regions; sustained interest of the Region's population in development and co-operation. 		

¹ Precise indicators can only be developed later on at the project level.

Immediate Objectives	Indicators of Achievement	How, When and By Whom Indicators Will Be Measured	Assumptions and Risks
 contribute to the development of the eligible districts of the Regions; enhance possibilities for cross-border tourism; the development of cultural co-operation between neighbouring areas in the border region; the support and increase in numbers of cross border meetings of various groups of the population, especially of youth; the raising of the level of public awareness and information on cross-border co-operation affairs and on the process of European integration. encourage local involvement in small-scale actions; build and develop the specialist resources of local and regional institutions involved in regional development in line with EU practice; stimulation and support to the creation of permanent structures among the local and regional organisations in the border region; develop and enhance co-operation between the communities on either side of the border with a view to joint improvement of economic development, living conditions and on-going contact. 	 SPFs in operation and used; regional authorities' personnel trained, regional institutions qualified; number of projects carried out; number of tourists in Regions 	 Regional and IA CBC reports; Project completion reports; Monitoring and assessment reports; Programme evaluation. 	 Availability of qualified experts, local interest maintained; well functioning co-operation and co-ordination between CBC IA s BJC and working groups;
Results - Outputs of Sub-projects	Indicators of Achievement	How, When and By Whom Indicators Will Be Measured	Assumptions and Risks

STANDARD SUMMARY PROJECT FICHE

 BSR integration projects and networking for developing strategies and preparing for greater investments "assuring the "people to people" support across the BSR and the integrating of the CC into the EU-MS networks carrying out of cultural exchanges, youth meetings; training courses, exchange visits; Northern Dimension Action Plan projects courses, conferences and seminars, elaboration of planning and development studies, feasibility studies, project preparation documents; marketing initiatives for the region, tourist information material printed; exhibitions visited and arranged; 	 number of meetings of social, economic and cultural organisations with their partners from the other side of the border number of project participants from both sides of the border number of publications, maps etc. on border areas 	 IA CBC reports; Project completion reports; Reports of Secretariats Monitoring and assessment reports; Summary SPF reports of Regions 	 Availability of qualified experts; well functioning co-operation and co-ordination between IA CBC, Steering Committee, Secretariat and local governments; continued commitment of project counterpart.
Activities: Inputs The project is based on the single, repeated activity of developing small projects via a mechanism of standardised project applications / joint calls for proposals and joint evaluations — with criteria under the decentralised harmonised guidelines. Qualified technical expertise supports this activity.			Assumptions and Risks Standardisation of the approach across the BSR is the main challenge to be met – based on the assumed willingness of the many partners to co-operate with the attendant risk that the logistics may not allow them to do so in an optimal manner.

Annex 2 and 3: Cumulative implementing, contracting and disbursement schedule.

Implementing schedule:

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	Qtr 9	Qtr 10	Qtr 11	Qtr 12
	I/2002	II/2002	III/2002	IV/2002	I/2003	II/2003	III/2003	IV/2003	I/2004	II/2004	III/2004	IV/2004
SPF	D	DC		CI	I	I	I	I				

Cumulative Contracting schedule(M€):

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	Qtr 9	Qtr 10	Qtr 11	Qtr 12
	I/2002	II/2002	III/2002	IV/2002	I/2003	II/2003	III/2003	IV/2003	I/2004	II/2004	III/2004	IV/2004
Estonia				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Latvia				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Lithuania				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Poland				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
				12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12

Cumimlative Disbursement schedule(M€):

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	Qtr 9	Qtr 10	Qtr 11	Qtr 12
	I/2002	II/2002	III/2002	IV/2002	I/2003	II/2003	III/2003	IV/2003	I/2004	II/2004	III/2004	IV/2004
Estonia					0,375	0,750	1,125	1,500	1,875	2,250	2,625	3,000
Latvia					0,375	0,750	1,125	1,500	1,875	2,250	2,625	3,000
Lithuania					0,375	0,750	1,125	1,500	1,875	2,250	2,625	3,000
Poland					0,375	0,750	1,125	1,500	1,875	2,250	2,625	3,000
					1,500	3,000	4,500	6,000	7,500	9,000	10,500	12,000