

Enterprise

Case Study: Programming & Implementation of Pre-Accession Support (Romania)

Background

The overall objective of this project was to strengthen the institutional, programming and implementation structures necessary to manage the EU Economic and Social Cohesion Programmes and Structural Instruments in Romania.

The project purpose was to improve the capacity of Ministry of European Integration [MEI], the eight Regional Development Agencies and potential beneficiaries in programming, implementation and management of Phare Economic & Social Cohesion (ESC) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) type of projects.

The project was delivered through three inter-related components:

- Capacity building of final beneficiaries
- Capacity building with staff of the Ministry of European Integration and the eight Regional Development Agencies
- Actions to strengthen the capabilities of the Training Unit.

Project Information

Donor: EC Phare
Value: € 2,081,900
Dates: January 2005 – November 2005

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Initial Situation

In preparation for Accession to the European Union, the Government of Romania and the European Union funded a series of projects to help develop local knowledge and understanding of the European Union's Economic and Social Cohesion mechanisms and also to build capacity within Romanian Government structures regarding the management of European Union Regional Policy programmes. This project's objective was to help strengthen institutions in advance of Accession.

Key Customer Requirement

In order to strengthen Romanian institutions prior to Accession, this project transferred know-how and experience of Structural Funds management (in particular under Regional Operational Programmes) from other EU states to Romania.

Our Response

Our response to the key customer requirement was to deliver the project in three components:

- Component 1 strengthened the final beneficiaries' capabilities to design and implement Phare ESC and future ERDF projects through intensive training and know-how transfer on project management and project pipelines.
- Component 2 strengthened the MEI and RDAs staff capabilities in programming and implementation of Phare ESC 2004-2006 and future ERDF, through specialised training as well as secondments and stages in similar institutions/departments in member states.
- Component 3 strengthened the Training Unit capabilities to establish, organise, monitor the most appropriate training seminars for staff working with the relevant regional development institutions.

To realise the project's objectives, we delivered the following services:

- A needs assessment of the final beneficiaries in preparation of applicants for ESC and future ERDF aid schemes;
- Training and knowledge transfer to improve key capabilities of final beneficiaries to design aid projects;
- Capacity building for national and regional development through training for MEI and RDA staff;
- Design and delivery of thematic seminars trainings to use Structural Funds as innovative instruments for sectors as SMEs, Tourism, ITC Energy and Infrastructure;
- Training on the EU's Structural Funds programming approach and on full project cycle management.

The training objectives included:

- Learning and practice of Structural Fund and Phare ESC reporting requirements (technical and financial) during implementation;
- An overview of public procurement procedures for Structural Funds and Romania procurement laws; and
- Structural Fund procedural guidelines for final beneficiaries.

Improvements Achieved

- Needs assessment report on final beneficiaries capacity to make applications for European aid schemes completed.
- Training modules developed and delivered to all actors involved in managing regional projects.
- 640 people from potential final beneficiaries trained on project pipeline preparation under ERDF
- 640 people from potential final beneficiaries trained on financial economic analysis and risk assessment
- Training manuals delivered to MEI.

Conclusions / Summary

Through a detailed programme of training the project was able to strengthen the institutional, programming and implementation structures necessary to manage the EU ESC Programmes in Romania.