



**EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PARTNERSHIP
INSTRUMENT**

**ENPI
INTERREGIONAL
PROGRAMME**

**STRATEGY PAPER
2007-2013**

&

**INDICATIVE PROGRAMME
2007-2010**

1. Summary

The main aim of the ENPI Interregional Programme (IRP) is to provide effective and efficient support for the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as well as the Strategic Partnership with Russia. The IRP aims in particular to fulfil a number of specific commitments made by the Community.

The Interregional Programme should be seen in the context of the overall structure of the ENPI-funded programmes: national, regional and cross-border as well as the IRP. The largest share of assistance will be channelled through national programmes, while support for meeting transboundary challenges and promoting regional cooperation will be provided primarily through the Regional Cooperation Programmes for respectively the Southern Mediterranean and for Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus. Cross-border cooperation will be promoted through a dedicated programme. The role of the IRP is primarily to fund activities that are best implemented at inter-regional level for reasons of visibility, coherence or administrative efficiency, but the Interregional Programme will also aim to gradually strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and the ENPI region and between eastern and southern neighbours.

The Interregional Programme will focus on the following themes:

Promoting reform through European advice and expertise

Support for reform processes in the partner countries is at the core of the ENP and will represent a major share of programmes at all levels. The ENP Action Plans contain commitments to provide European expertise through programmes that proved themselves in the transition process in the new Member States, in particular TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchanges) and SIGMA. These programmes would also help in implementing the Common Space Road Maps with Russia. The IRP will therefore finance TAIEX and Sigma operations in the ENPI countries.

Promoting higher education and student mobility

Higher education and student mobility are important both for their direct impact on the development of the partner countries but also for the contribution they make to mutual understanding and people-to-people contacts. The well-established cooperation between higher education institutions in the EU and the neighbouring countries through Tempus will continue, but with a greater role for the partner countries. Experience shows that such a programme is best financed through an interregional programme. A scholarship scheme for the region will be set up, open to undergraduates, postgraduates, and doctoral students as well as teaching staff.

Promoting cooperation between local actors in the partner countries and in the EU

Dialogue and cooperation between local stakeholders from the countries of the neighbourhood (and Russia) and from the EU will be promoted. Given the lack of such links at the moment, progress will have to be gradual. A programme for cooperation between local authorities in the EU and the partner countries will be set up as a first step. Other steps to promote mutual understanding may also be taken.

Promoting implementation of the ENP and the Partnership with Russia

Information about the ENP and the EU-Russia Strategic Partnership at the interregional level will be financed through this programme. Actions to support implementation of for example thematic aspects of the ENP at the interregional level may also be developed.

2. EU/EC policy objectives

The overall objective of the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**, as defined by the Strategy Paper¹, is to contribute to prosperity, stability and good governance in the EU's immediate vicinity: Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and the Southern Mediterranean.

In the case of Russia, the **EU-Russia Strategic Partnership**, with its four Common Spaces and associated Road-maps,² provides the basis for relations with that country.

The relevant **legal frameworks** for EU relations with the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)³ are Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with the EU's eastern neighbours Association Agreements with EU's southern neighbours⁴.

Individual, jointly agreed ENP Action Plans⁵ set out a detailed reform agenda. These tailor-made partnerships for reform identify priorities across a broad range of issues such as democratisation and rule of law, market-oriented economic reforms and reinforced people-to-people contacts. How far and how fast each partner progresses in its relationship with the EU depends on its political will and capacity.

For the countries of the Southern Mediterranean, the ENP is supplemented by the framework for regional dialogue and cooperation set up in 1995 through the **Euromed partnership**, confirmed at the Barcelona Summit of November 2005 and the Five-Year Work Programme adopted on that occasion⁶.

In December 2005, the European Council adopted an EU strategy for Africa which provides a long-term strategic framework for cooperation between Europe and Africa at all levels. For African countries included in the ENP, the strategy is coherent with the Africa Strategy in prioritising measures that aim to promote political, economic and social reforms that are needed for integration in the Euromediterranean area.

The specific policy objectives which the Union and the Community pursue in relation to each of these countries are set out in detail in the relevant country and regional cooperation strategy papers, and will not be repeated here, nor will the detailed analysis of the countries and regions in the respective CSPs and RSPs.

¹ European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper, COM(2004) 373 final, 12 May 2004.

² The EU and Russia agreed at the St Petersburg Summit in May 2003 to establish four Common Spaces (a common economic space; a common space of freedom, security and justice; a space of co-operation in the field of external security; and a space of research and education, including cultural aspects).

³ The countries covered by the ENPI are Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestine Authority, Russia, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

⁴ In this region, the EU currently has Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) in force with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine (a PCA has been signed but not yet ratified with Belarus), and Association Agreements (AAs) with Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia (an AA has been agreed but not yet signed with Syria).

⁵ ENP Action Plans have already been adopted with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine. Action Plans Egypt and Lebanon are currently (November 2006) under preparation.

⁶ Barcelona Declaration, November 1995, and Barcelona Summit, November 2005.

The objective for the **ENPI Interregional Programme (IRP)** is to provide effective and efficient support for the achievement of the objectives of the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia, in particular at the interregional level.

3. Lessons Learnt

Lessons learnt, inside and outside the region, have a significant influence on the IRP since the programme will finance the extension to the region of activities that have been successful in the context of transition in the new Member States, adapted as appropriate.

The **Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) Programme** has been a very useful instrument in the transition process in the new Member States, effectively promoting approximation and implementation of the acquis through the provision of European expertise. It has successfully been extended to the countries covered by the CARDS Regulation, thus demonstrating its adaptability to new circumstances. TAIEX was extended to the neighbouring countries on 23 January 2006 and is already proving to be in high demand.

A joint initiative of the European Commission and the OECD and principally financed by the European Community, **SIGMA** has been a useful instrument for institution building assistance in the transition process in the new Member States and the Western Balkans. It is focused on horizontal areas of public management (public administrative reform, public procurement, public sector ethics and anti-corruption initiatives, external and internal financial control).

The mid-term evaluation of Tempus III showed that its strength is the multilateral, bottom-up approach based on close collaboration between institutions and individuals in higher education. The number of high quality applications has always exceeded the available funding and absorption capacity has been good. The evaluation underlined the transparency of the system of selection. To enhance the programme's impact, more emphasis should be placed on the sustainability of projects, dissemination and exploitation of results and a reinforced dialogue with higher education stakeholders in the partner countries. In addition, thematic monitoring and reviews of priority issues such as university-enterprise cooperation should be strengthened. The evaluation proposed integrating vocational training in Tempus. The role of the partner states in setting priorities should also be strengthened.

TEMPUS functions well. The programme is well known and appreciated by the academic world both in the EU and in the partner countries. Fundamental change in its structure and its management mechanisms are thus not needed. The role of the partner governments and of ENP and Russian partner universities should be strengthened with a view to increasing the impact of Tempus at the systemic and institutional level. Further efforts should be made to increase cooperation between institutions in the partner countries. The scope for extending the programme to vocational education and training is very limited owing not only to the lack of budgetary resources but also to the weaker and more diverse nature of VET systems in the region. This sector is therefore at present better supported through EC national programmes, where appropriate. Overall, Tempus should be better integrated into the substantial overall EC support for education in the region. A revised Tempus programme and the new scholarship programme (see below) need to be linked to improve impact and sustainability. The variations in absorption capacity and interest between the countries as well as our interest in promoting regional cooperation makes a strong case for financing the programme from a single programme, rather than by country-by-country allocations as at present.

There is no dedicated comprehensive EC **student mobility** programme for the countries eligible under the ENPI, but there are other EC student mobility programmes from which lessons can be learnt. The successful Erasmus programme promotes student mobility within the EU, but sets high requirements with regard to e.g. administrative capacity for full participation. The well-regarded,

relatively new Erasmus Mundus programme is aimed at students from around the world and involves EU universities in programme design and implementation. Special windows have been established for several Asian countries and regions. A programme for our neighbourhood should have a broader focus than Erasmus Mundus, which is postgraduate only, but the new programme should draw on the positive experiences gained from both programmes. In order to ensure coherence of EC interventions, the new scholarship programme should be implemented within the Erasmus Mundus framework.

An evaluation of EC student mobility programmes in other regions concluded that they are an effective instrument for furthering cooperation between the EU and third countries in the field of higher education. Significant added value is brought by the EU when it fosters cooperation between universities in networks, which also contribute to the sustainability of the programmes. Deficiencies in programme implementation by the Commission have previously hindered the full achievement of objectives and have been detrimental to the European Commission's image. Mobility programmes should promote the institutional embedding of the scholarship holder with a view to achieving better and more sustainable results at both institutional and individual level. Such an institutional structure also facilitates the issuing of visas for the scholarship holders. The number, the level and the duration of grants awarded should be increased. The Commission should implement special measures to favour participation of women and less advantaged students. These recommendations will be taken into account in the design of the new scholarship scheme.

There is no specific evaluation for the Tacis institution building partnership or city twinning programmes, but the quality of project proposals has been good and there have been a number of expressions of interest for cooperation between regions and cities in a non-territorial context.

4. Policy strategy for the Interregional Programme

The objective of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is to contribute to prosperity, stability and good governance in the EU's immediate vicinity through reform partnerships between the EU and the partner countries. Assistance is an important instrument for supporting the implementation of the ENP, in particular the Action Plans. The Road Maps for the creation of four Common Spaces with Russia set out a series of shared objectives for EU/Russia relations.

The assistance will need to respond to a large number of demands at varying levels in a timely, effective and efficient way; this calls for a wide-ranging and flexible set of tools. Particular attention needs to be paid to the capacity to respond quickly to requests. Similarly, the assistance programmes must cooperate with a wide range of stakeholders in the partner countries.

The objective of the ENPI Interregional Programme (IRP) is to provide effective and efficient support for the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia through activities that are best organised at the interregional level. The IRP will in particular fulfil certain specific EC commitments, such as extending TAIEX and establishing a scholarship programme. The IRP must be seen in the context of the other ENPI-financed programmes: national, regional and crossborder. The largest share of assistance will be channelled through national programmes; action at this level is usually the most effective, because it induces greater ownership by the partner and is more suited to the specific situation of the country in question. Support for meeting transboundary challenges, such as environment, health threats, infrastructure networks, organised crime or illegal migration, can often best be channelled through regional cooperation programmes. However, the ENPI area does not form a coherent region - geographically or historically - and it could be counterproductive to force these diverse countries into a single framework for regional cooperation. Existing structures such as the Euromed Partnership and Traceca and Inogate underline this fact. Regional and subregional cooperation will therefore continue to be promoted through the Regional

Cooperation Programmes for the Southern Mediterranean on one hand and for Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus on the other. The IRP will aim to gradually strengthen cooperation, dialogue and exchanges between stakeholders in the EU and in the countries covered by the ENPI.

Certain activities are best organised at interregional level for the sake of visibility, internal coherence and administrative efficiency and flexibility. This is particularly the case for the specific policy commitments mentioned above. An interregional programme would avoid artificial obstacles, such as having to find funds from two programmes for an action involving both Ukraine and Morocco. Speedy and flexible but coherent implementation mechanisms are particularly crucial for activities that consist of bottom-up, small-scale actions. This justifies region-wide implementation mechanisms even when most individual actions involve a single country. Some activities will be implemented by international organisations; this too is facilitated by operating through a single, ENPI-wide programme. Other programmes are new, at least for the region, which makes it difficult to predict demand and thus allocate funds between countries as yet. Yet other programmes will be developed to support the implementation of the ENP at the interregional level, for example in thematic areas such as energy or environment. Funds for information must also be available at the interregional level to enable activities that involve all partner countries.

The IRP-supported activities will involve sectors and institutions that also receive support through other EC programmes and from other donors. This requires effective coordination of planning and implementation. Appropriate coordination mechanisms have or will be set up, with a strong role for the EC delegations, to avoid duplication and inconsistencies. The experience of TAIEX shows that coordination can be combined with rapid implementation. The structured approach of the ENP, e.g. follow up in subcommittees, will be a key factor also in this regard. For Russia too, the ability to react rapidly can smooth the implementation of the Road Maps for the Common Spaces. A strengthened system of information and feedback from the implementation of assistance will be essential in this regard.

Priority areas

Based on these general concerns and priorities, the Interregional Programme will focus on the following themes:

Promoting reform through European advice and expertise

Support for the reform processes in the partner countries is at the core of the ENP and a key factor in the Common Space Road Maps agreed with Russia. Support will take many forms, from dialogue through technical assistance to budget support, at bilateral and regional level. The IRP will be additional to other forms of support.

The experience of the transition process in the new Member States shows that targeted, demand-driven, short-term European expert advice can be very effective. One aim of the ENP is to use some of the tools that proved their worth in the transition process in the new Member States; particularly relevant in this regard are TAIEX, SIGMA and Twinning. TAIEX and SIGMA are both specific implementation mechanisms, which is why they will be financed through the IRP. Twinning, on the other hand, is a method of transmitting European expertise through longer-term partnerships between EU MS and partner country administrations. Each action will be more significant and the need for adaptation to specific country conditions more evident. This is why Twinning projects will continue to be financed through national programmes managed by the delegations.

Promoting higher education and student mobility

Action in the area of institutional cooperation and mobility of students and teaching staff are important as contributions to the development of the partner countries, but are also crucial for the promotion of mutual understanding and dissemination of values and experiences. The well-established cooperation between institutions of higher education in the EU and the neighbouring countries through Tempus will continue, with a reinforced role for the partners and a focus on the needs of each partner country. Student mobility has so far not been given enough attention. In the 5-year Work Programme agreed at the Euromed Summit last year in Barcelona, a scholarship scheme is one of the commitments. A scholarship scheme will therefore be set up aimed at undergraduate as well as postgraduate students and including teacher mobility. To improve impact and sustainability, Tempus and the scholarship programme will be coordinated. In both programmes, issues of gender balance will be addressed.

Promoting cooperation between local actors in the EU and in the partner countries

Promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between local actors in the EU and in the partner countries is a fundamental aim of the ENP. Exchange of experience and expertise is also a key part for the Road Maps for the four Common Spaces with Russia.

Regarding the ENP, given the present lack of structures and past experiences, such support will need to be built up gradually as the ENP gains momentum and as our partners face increasingly similar issues.

A first step will be to set up a programme for cooperation between local and regional authorities in the partner countries and the EU, with the objective of strengthening democratic governance and sustainable regional and local development in particular. The programme would support local and regional contacts extending beyond the border areas supported by the ENPI Cross-Border Cooperation programme. During the period 2007-2013 further people-to-people activities may be created.

Promoting implementation of the ENP and of the Strategic Partnership with Russia

During the coming years, initiatives at the interregional level to support the implementation of the ENP and the Strategic partnership with Russia may be developed, in particular regarding interregional aspects of thematic policy areas of the ENP, such as energy, environment, infrastructure linkages etc.

Under this heading, the IRP will also support information and dialogue activities at the interregional level with the aim to increase awareness and understanding among opinion formers and citizens in the partner countries. Support may be given to appropriate NGO and non-state partners capable of running information activities and exchanges of knowledge aimed at raising awareness of the region in Europe and/or raising awareness of EU policy in the region.

Given the rapidly evolving nature of the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia and the likelihood of new challenges that are best met at this level, the IRP must remain flexible. The novelty of several of the activities also reinforces the indicative nature of the attached IP.

5. INDICATIVE PROGRAMME 2007-2010

5.1 Introduction

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Strategic Partnership with Russia are key EU external relations priorities. The objective for the Interregional Programme is to provide effective and efficient support for achieving the objectives of these policies, in particular implementing the ENP Action Plans and the four Road Maps agreed with Russia, through activities that are best financed at the interregional level for reasons of impact, effectiveness, efficiency or visibility.

This **Indicative Programme 2007-2010** sets out objectives, expected results, indicators and describes briefly the activities to be financed from this programme.

5.2. Main priorities and goals

Assistance provided under this Indicative Programme will focus on **four priority areas**:

Priority Area 1: Promoting reform through European advice and expertise

Sub-priority 1: TAIEX

Sub-priority 2: SIGMA

Priority Area 2: Promoting higher education and student mobility

Sub-priority 1: Promoting institutional cooperation in higher education

Sub-priority 2: Promoting student mobility

Priority Area 3: Promoting cooperation between local actors in the EU and in the partner countries

Priority Area 4: Promoting implementation of the ENP and of the Strategic partnership with Russia

5.3 Indicative budget

Funding for the Indicative Programme for 2007-2010 will amount to 260.6 € million, with the following indicative breakdown:

<i>Priority Area 1: Promoting reform through European advice and expertise</i>	40
<i>Priority Area 2: Promoting higher education and student mobility</i>	208.6
<i>Priority Area 3: Promoting cooperation between local actors in the EU and in the partner countries</i>	12
<i>Priority Area 4: Promoting the implementation of the ENP and of the Strategic Partnership with Russia</i>	n/a

Priority area 1: Promoting reform through European advice and expertise

The implementation of ENP Action Plans and the Common Space Road Maps agreed with Russia must be supported by effective assistance. Building on the experience of the transition process in the new Member States, two mechanisms will be used to strengthen other forms of assistance such as twinning and sector reform financed primarily through national programmes.

A. Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Programme (TAIEX)

Objective

Promote the implementation of the ENP and in particular the Action Plans through the provision of targeted advice based on European experience.

Expected results

Timely and relevant advice to partner countries in support of their efforts to implement the ENP Action Plans.

TAIEX is a demand-driven programme, so actions are not planned far in advance. Neither will it always be possible to make a direct and explicit ex-post link between individual actions and progress in implementation of individual AP commitments, much less between overall progress in AP implementation and TAIEX. In the short term, follow-up will therefore have to focus on output and process rather than impact, but regular reporting of AP implementation should aim to identify where TAIEX has made an impact. Evaluations will have impact on AP implementation as their key focus.

Indicators

- Progress in the implementation of the APs noted in relevant subcommittee reports
- Country and thematic distribution of actions
- Positive results from surveys and other feedback from stakeholders and beneficiaries in the partner countries as well as in the Commission
- Relevance of these activities to issues identified in ENP Action Plans

Conditionality

TAIEX assistance will primarily be provided to countries with ENP APs or Common Space Road Maps (for Russia) under implementation, but other countries can participate in regional events. Bilateral events should also be held in the other countries in subjects where there is strong mutual interest.

TAIEX will provide advice and support in sectors where other forms of Community assistance, in particular twinning operations and technical assistance, are also active. Coordination is needed to avoid overlap or needless competition.

Description of Programme

TAIEX was set up in 1996 to provide short-term, targeted technical assistance to the Central and Eastern European candidate countries to promote understanding, drafting and implementation of EU-related legislation. TAIEX provides five main services: documentation, information and advice on legislation; workshops and seminars; study visits to the European Commission and Member States; expertise to advise the beneficiary countries; and, finally, databases on the deployment and results of technical assistance provided.

TAIEX was introduced in the ENPI region in 2006. ENP partner countries, in particular those with ENP Action Plans under implementation, as well as Russia, should have access to TAIEX in the same way as the countries covered by the IPA Regulation.

Actions will be demand-driven, but a reasonable geographic spread should be sought. If demand proves to be very uneven or outstripping supply, balancing action will be taken.

Considerable interest has been expressed by partner countries and other stakeholders. A gradual build up is planned, with the annual action programmes reflecting demand. This allocation will need to be complemented by adequate BA funds for the administration of the programme.

B. SIGMA

OBJECTIVE

Improved public administration institutions in the neighbouring countries in order to enhance economic well-being and political freedom and facilitate closer economic integration and political cooperation between the EU and its neighbours.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased awareness in partner countries of the need to improve governance systems, increased ability to identify problem areas and effectively implement solutions;
- Delivery of technical assistance, consultancy services and training in support of efforts to modernise public governance systems, public administrations and regulatory frameworks, mainly in areas prioritised in or relevant to Action Plans or Road Maps;
- Significant improvements in the legal and regulatory framework and in implementation of these frameworks in the fields of external audit and financial control, civil service and justice, public expenditure management, public procurement and ethics.

Performance indicators

- Number of governance related activities carried out under this programme, relevance of these activities to issues identified in ENP Action Plans and the Common Space Road Maps with Russia.
- Legal and administrative measures taken by governments to improve transparency, accountability and governance
- Progress on governance issues noted in relevant subcommittee reports

Brief description of the programme

The programme will focus on priority areas for governance reforms identified in the ENP Action Plans and Common Space Road Maps with Russia, and on underlying general governance reforms. It will use short-term advice, technical assistance and training.

This activity will be implemented through the SIGMA programme, which is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Commission, mainly financed by the European Community and set up in 1992. SIGMA provides support to partner countries in their efforts to modernise public governance systems, assists in the process of institution building and sets up legal frameworks. Originally established to support the transformation processes in the post-communist countries, it now provides expertise for the new Member States and candidate countries, and was extended in 2001 to

the Western Balkans. Its geographical mandate will now also cover the countries participating in the ENPI.

Priorities will be agreed annually between the Commission and the OECD on the basis of a broad outline document. Individual projects will be agreed by the Commission in a process which ensures that support through SIGMA is fully coherent with other forms of support, in particular TAIEX and Twinning.

The allocation for priority area 1 will be 40 million for the period 2007-2010.

Priority area 2: Promoting higher education and student mobility

Higher education has a key role in the development of any country. Higher education and in particular student mobility and other forms of people-to-people cooperation also contributes to mutual understanding between people, countries and cultures.

A. Promoting institutional cooperation in higher education

Overarching objective

Modernisation and strengthening of higher education in the partner countries through cooperation with EU higher education institutions.

Specific objectives

Reform and modernisation of higher education to promote convergence with developments in the EU such as the Lisbon agenda and the Bologna process;

Enhanced quality and capacity of higher education institutions;

Development of human resources;

Qualitative improvement of skills and better match with labour market needs.

Enhanced mutual understanding between students and teaching staff in the EU and the partner countries;

Sustainable partnerships and exchanges between institutions of higher education in the EU and in the partner countries.

Expected results

Improvement of higher education with regard to modernisation of curricula and teaching methods, research capacity, employability of graduates and university governance.

Establishment of sustainable partnerships between universities and other institutions of higher education in the EU and the Neighbourhood.

Indicators

- Number and geographic and thematic spread of Tempus activities
- Widened participation among institutions of higher education

- Progress in convergence with the Bologna process
- Increased roles and responsibilities of ENP and Russian partner universities and higher education institutions with regard to project application and implementation
- Positive feedback from the actions financed

Brief description of the programme

Tempus started in 1990 within the Phare programme in order to assist partner countries in reforming tertiary education to prepare citizens for the challenges of a competitive economy and for a multiparty system where civil society would play a greater role. Tempus was extended in 1993/4 to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in 2000 to the Western Balkans, and in 2003 to the countries of the Southern Mediterranean. The architecture of the programme has remained fundamentally unchanged. The programme is designed to promote cooperation between higher education institutions in the EU and in the partner countries thereby encouraging the transfer of know-how with a view to stimulating:

- Academic development and upgrading
- The opening-up of institutions to international cooperation (including greater regional cooperation);
- The acquisition of management skills by academic and administrative staff thus ensuring balance between institutions' growing autonomy and the need for greater financial sustainability;
- The opening up of partner countries' higher education systems to civil society.

By strengthening the higher education institutions, Tempus also contributes to their capacity to take part in the Research Framework Programme.

The programme combines a bottom-up approach, whereby initiative is left mainly to universities, with a top-down approach, whereby national priorities are established for each partner country with a view to maximising the impact of the programme.

To achieve these objectives, the programme will support two types of projects:

- Joint European Projects, in areas such as curriculum development, university management and institution building. Mobility activities within the JEPs will be further reinforced;
- Structural and Complementary Measures.

Individual Mobility of teaching staff which used to be the third leg of Tempus will be integrated in the Joint European Projects and also receive support through the Scholarship Programme, see below.

Support will continue to be provided to the Tempus National Offices in the partner countries.

In the next cycle, certain aspects need reinforcement.

- The process of setting country-specific priorities should be strengthened by means of a reinforced structured dialogue with the educational authorities of the partner countries. Such

dialogue could take place in the relevant Association Agreement or Partnership and Cooperation Agreement subcommittee.

- Gender balance should be ensured.
- The share of projects with a regional component should be increased.
- The dissemination and exploitation of results should be improved, as well as the impact on the systems of higher education.
- The role of the partner government in the programme should gradually be strengthened, including by enhancing the role of the Tempus National Offices
- The role of the ENP and Russian partner universities and other institutions of higher education in the implementation of the programme should gradually be strengthened.

The Tempus programme will be managed by the Executive agency for Education, Audiovisual and Culture.

B: Promoting student mobility

Background

Enhancing mutual contacts and understanding through people-to-people exchanges in particular for young people is a key objective of the ENP as well as the Common Space of Research, Education and Culture with Russia. The Euromed five-year Work Programme, adopted at the Euromed Summit 27 November 2005, includes a scholarship programme as a major commitment.

Objective

A high-profile student scholarship programme with balanced participation of women and men with regard to countries, subjects and social origins, with sustainable results with regard to mutual understanding, increased employability for the students in their country of origin and reinforcement of partner institution capacity and links between EU and Partner country institutions of higher education.

Expected results

- A higher education mobility scheme covering all ENP partner countries and Russia by the start of the academic year 2007/8
- 1 000 scholarships starting each year by 2009, selected by a transparent process
- High visibility confirmed by surveys or other methods
- Students returning to their home region and improving their employability as well as their understanding of Europe
- Establishment and reinforcement of institutional linkages between the higher education institutions concerned building also on Tempus and the 7th Research Framework Programme.

Brief description of the programme

The Scholarship Programme will be demand-driven but involve higher education institutions in the European Neighbourhood countries and Russia and in the European Union. Links between the universities involved will be established to facilitate implementation, increase impact and achieve sustainable results for both universities and individual students. Links to the Tempus programme may be useful in this context. A European dimension, including a balanced geographic spread across the European Union should be achieved.

The programme will be open to undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral and post-doctoral students from the partner countries and will allow for teaching staff exchanges. The Scholarships will be designed so that students return to their home country.

A transparent selection process will be created. The main criterion for the selection of students should be academic excellence. Issues such as geographic and gender balance and representation of underprivileged groups or ethnic minorities will be addressed. The grant amount will be high enough to ensure that economically disadvantaged students may take part.

A limited number of Scholarships may be made available to EU students wishing to participate in a course at a university in an ENP country or Russia in order to contribute to capacity building in the partner countries and show that cooperation with the ENP countries is based on a partnership between equals.

Thematic priorities may be set, overall or country by country, e.g. for issues which are of particular importance for the ENP or the Strategic Partnership with Russia (such as European studies, the environment, trade, governance and human rights).

The Programme will be given high visibility and publicity. An alumni organisation should be set up to maintain contact between and with the students after their time in Europe.

The Scholarship Programme for ENP countries and Russia will for now be implemented as a neighbourhood window of the Erasmus Mundus programme. The scholarship programme will be fully incorporated in the next phase of Erasmus Mundus due to start in January 2009. The Scholarship Programme will be implemented in close coordination with other activities in the higher education area, in particular Tempus.

The allocation for priority area 2 will be 208.6 million for the period 2007-2010⁷.

3. Promoting cooperation between local actors in the EU and in the partner countries

Background

Promoting dialogue and cooperation between the EU and the partner countries is a fundamental aim of the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia. Dialogue and cooperation will primarily be supported through the national, regional and cross-border programmes, but cooperation between stakeholders in the EU and the partner countries covered by the ENPI as a whole needs to be promoted. Starting from the present lack of structures and experiences at this level, it will be necessary to proceed gradually and in response to real demand. As a first step, a programme for cooperation between local and regional authorities in the partner countries and the EU will be developed, building on the experience of programmes such as the Tacis Institution Building Partnership Programme, Tacis City Twinning and MED-PACT under MEDA. This would also enable partner country stakeholders to participate in transnational cooperation or other relevant forms of cooperation provided for Member States under the Structural Funds.

⁷ In order to promote exchanges between Russia and the EU, an additional annual amount of 9 million from the country allocation for Russia has been added to supplement the basic allocations for Russia already provided through these programmes.

During the period covered by the IP, further initiatives to promote interregional cooperation and people to people exchanges may be developed.

Overarching objective

Closer understanding, dialogue and cooperation between the EU and the partner countries.

Specific objectives

Modernisation and strengthening of local and regional government, in particular with regard to capacity building for democratic governance and sustainable development.

Expected results

- Cooperation and transfer of knowledge leading to sustainable improvement of governance, with special reference to democratic accountability and sustainable development, of the participating partner country local and regional authorities, with dissemination effects to other local authorities. Strengthened ties between local and regional authorities, including at their political level.
- Visibility in the partner country of the programme and of the actions and partners involved.
- Creation of lasting partnerships and links between the participants in the activity.

Indicators

- Number of partnerships and thematic and geographic spread of the local and regional authority partnerships, both proposed and financed;
- Improvement in governance indicators relevant to the aim of the projects;
- Measures taken by local and regional authorities to improve transparency, accountability and democratic governance.

Brief description of the programme

The programme will support bottom-up identification and development of partnerships between local and regional authorities, in particular provinces and larger cities. Activities should be aimed at transferring knowledge and experience, with special reference to democratic governance and accountability and sustainable economic, social, cultural and environmental development. The programme will be open to regional and local authorities and their local cooperation partners in civil society in all the EU and partner countries. Participation by more than one partner country and more than one EU country will be sought. The participating EU partners should share in the financing of the actions. Emphasis should be placed on the dissemination of the results of the programme to other local government authorities in the partner countries. The programme should be launched in 2008.

The allocation for priority area 3 will be 12 million for the period 2007-2010.

Priority Area 4: Promoting the implementation of the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia

Objective

Prosperity, stability and good governance in the EU's immediate vicinity.

Specific objectives

Effective and efficient implementation of the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia.

Improved mutual understanding between the citizens in the EU and the partner countries.

Expected results

Effective and efficient action at the interregional level in support of the objectives of the ENP.

Information and dialogue activities at the interregional level promoting awareness of the ENP.

Indicators

- Effective and efficient support to the development of priority aspects of the ENP, in particular thematic issues, as shown by monitoring and evaluations.
- Visibility in the partner countries of the programme and of the actions and partners involved, as shown by opinion research and other factors.

Brief description of the programme

During the period covered by the IP, initiatives at the interregional level to support the implementation of the ENP and the Strategic partnership with Russia will be developed. This may in particular concern the development of interregional aspects of thematic areas of the ENP, such as energy, environment, infrastructure linkages etc. The activities may take the form of studies, conferences and working groups.

To complement the regional programmes for communication and information, activities may be launched at the interregional level, for example information activities or conferences and seminars for journalists involving participants from the region as a whole.

This activity may also support efforts to promote understanding of the countries by EU policy makers and stakeholders and the promotion of understanding of EU policy towards the region by policy makers in the region through appropriate NGO and non-state partners capable of running information activities and exchange of knowledge. Support may be given to appropriate NGO and non-state partners capable of running information activities and exchanges of knowledge aimed at raising awareness of the region in Europe and/or raising awareness of EU policy in the region. These activities could include conferences, seminars, publications, information campaigns, awareness-raising events and exchange visits.

The allocation for priority area 4 depends on future development of the ENP and the Strategic Partnership with Russia and will be decided in the annual action programmes..

List of abbreviations and acronyms

AP:	Action Plan
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
IP	Indicative Programme
IRP	Interregional Programme
IBPP	Institution Building Partnership Programme
SIGMA	EC/OECD capacity building programme
TAIEX	Technical Assistance Information Exchange