

Cross-Border Cooperation - The experience of the Republic of Macedonia


Ms. Maja Handziska, Secretariat for European Affairs

Government of the Republic of Macedonia



Cross-Border Cooperation

Before the EU Programmes for Cross-Border Cooperation

- Weak contacts between border municipalities
 - Lack of communication and cooperation initiatives
 - No joint cross-border priorities
 - Existing cooperation on government level
- 

Cross-Border Cooperation

EU Programmes for Cross-Border Cooperation

- 1996 - 1999 Phare CBC with Greece
- 1997 - 1999 Phare Multicountry Programme CREDO with Albania and Bulgaria
- 2000 - 2003 CARDS CBC with Greece
- 2004 - 2006 CARDS CBC with Greece and Bulgaria

Cross-Border Cooperation

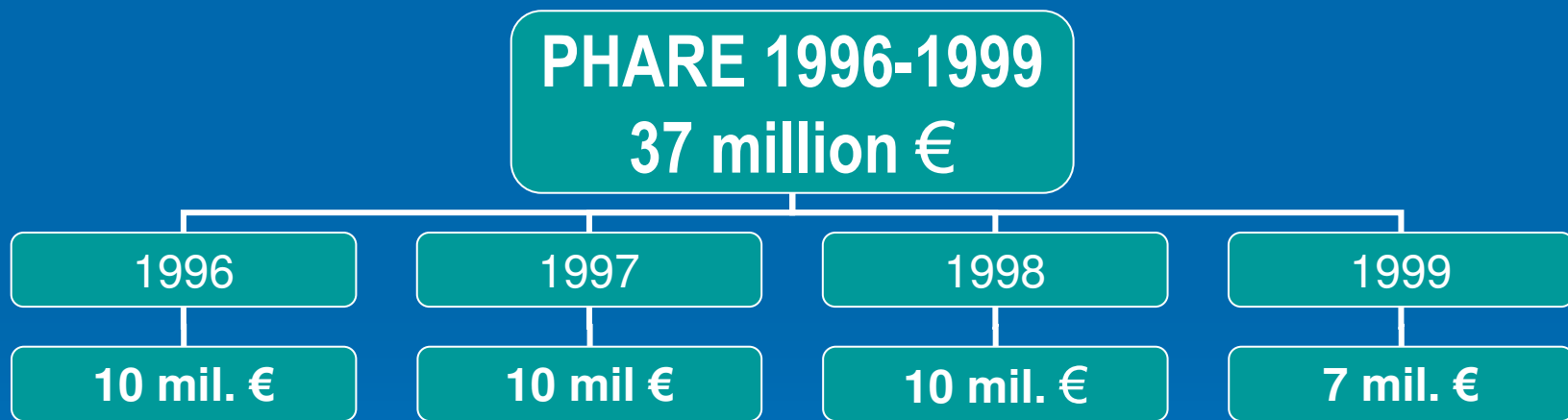
The Importance of the EU Programmes

- Commencement of cooperation between the neighboring border regions (Greece and Bulgaria)
- Joint cross-border priorities
- Learning by doing
- Full implementation of the Phare CBC Programme with Greece
- Good political and economic relations between the neighboring countries

Cross-Border Cooperation 1996-1999

Phare Programme (1)

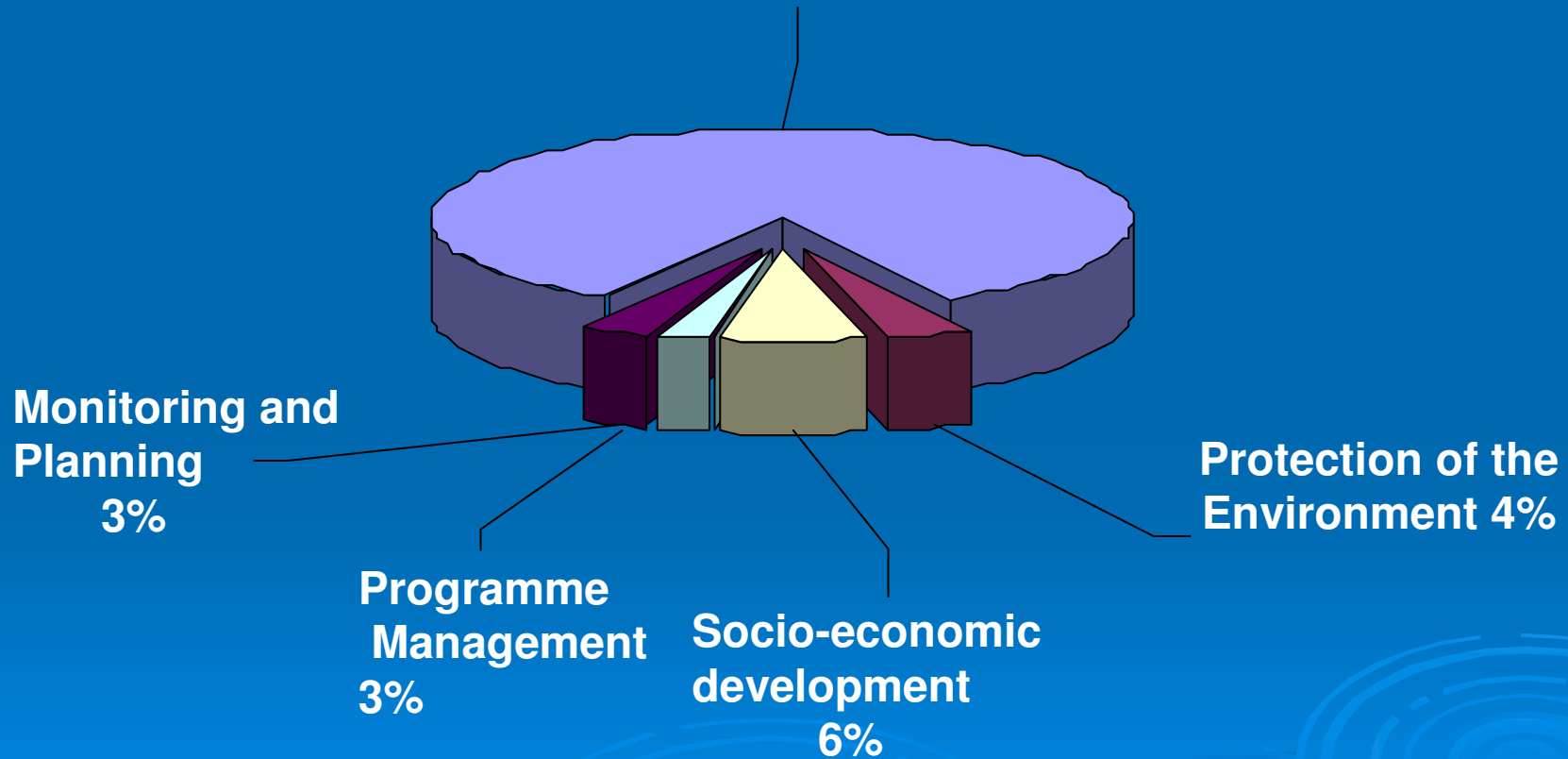
Allocation by year



Cross-Border Cooperation 1996-1999

Phare Programme (2)

Allocation by sector



Cross-Border Cooperation 1996-1999

Phare CREDO Programme (1)

The idea behind CREDO

- Multi-country grant scheme for cross-border cooperation projects between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania and the Republic of Bulgaria.
- The objective of the Credo Programme was to promote good neighborliness, social stability and economic development in the border regions by providing funding for projects which yield tangible benefits to both sides of the border

Cross-Border Cooperation 1996-1999
Phare CREDO Programme (2)

Undergone Projects

1. Republic of Macedonia with Republic of Albania: Project in the area of environment, Project in the area of NGO collaboration, Project in the area of local administrations;
2. Republic of Macedonia with Republic of Bulgaria: Infrastructure study, Project in the area of environment, Project in the area of education, Project in the area of local administrations;

Cross-Border Cooperation 2004-2006

Creating a ring of friends around the borders of the Republic of Macedonia

After the Thessalonica Summit in 2003, Macedonia has received additional funds for CBC through the CARDS Regional Programme and they are as following (yearly rates):

- Cross-border cooperation with the Republic of Greece 1.8 mil. €
- Cross-border cooperation with the Republic of Bulgaria 1 mil. €
- INTERREG III B CADSES 0.2 mil. €

Cross-Border Cooperation 2004-2006

Following the two step approach

- Creating a Neighborhood Programmes for the period 2004-2006 that has had the following features:
 - enabled funding to be allocated on both sides of the border
 - programme priorities took into account the aim of the Wider Europe Communication
 - had balanced membership in the management and the committee structures from both sides of the border
 - established single application procedure and joint decision making

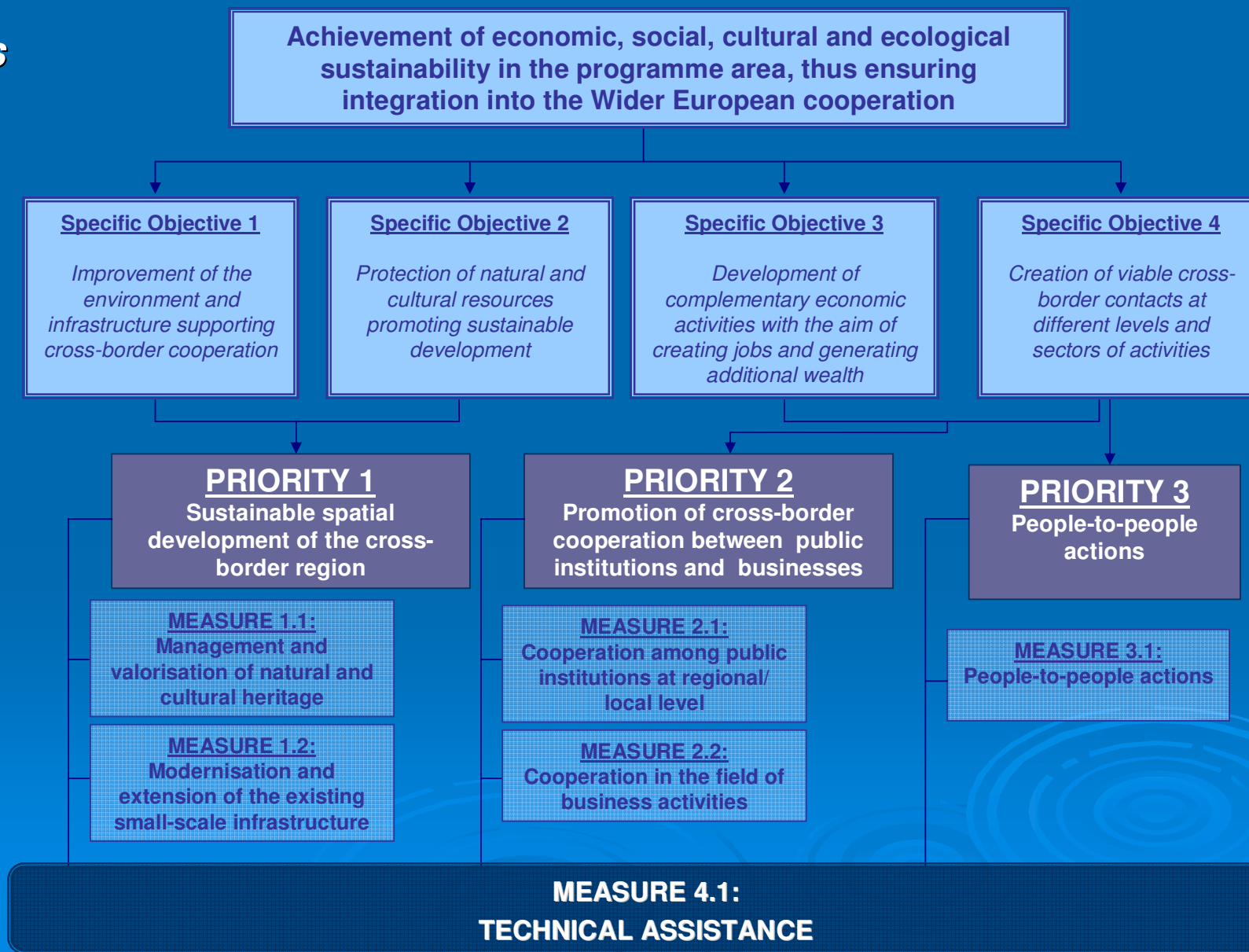
Cross-Border Cooperation
Republic of Macedonia
Republic of Bulgaria 2004-2006 (1)

Phare CBC/CARDS Programme

- **Purpose:** support towards faster integration of the region through cooperation.
- **Eligibility:** the eligible area for the CBC NP includes 2 regions and 23 municipalities on the Bulgarian side and 21 municipalities on the Macedonian side by NUTS III.
- **Management Structure:**
 - Joint Cooperation Committee, JCC
 - Joint Steering Committee, JSC
 - Joint Technical Secretariat, JTS

Cross-Border Cooperation Republic of Macedonia Republic of Bulgaria 2004-2006 (2)

Priorities



Cross-Border Cooperation
Republic of Macedonia
Republic of Bulgaria 2004-2006 (3)

Financial Allocation of CARDS funds

Priorities	2004	2005	2006
Priority 1	450.000	500.000	500.000
Priority 2	300.000	210.000	210.000
Priority 3	200.000	250.000	250.000
TA	50.000	40.000	40.000

Cross-Border Cooperation
Republic of Macedonia
Hellenic Republic 2004-2006 (1)

INTERREG III A/ CARDS Programme

- **Funding:** 3.6 million EUR are available for development and implementation of projects
- **Eligibility:** The eligible regions of Programme implementation are as follows:
 - Republic of Greece:** The Regions of Central Macedonia (Prefectures of Thessalonica, Kilkis, Pella) and Western Macedonia (Prefecture of Florina)
 - Republic of Macedonia:** The regions of Bac, Bistrica, Bitola, Bogdanci, Bosilivo, Capari, Demir Kapija, Dobrusevo, Gevgelija, Kavadarci, Konopista, Kuklis, Miravci, Murtino, Novaci, Novo Selo, Prilep, Resen, Star Dojran, Staravina, Topolcani, Valandovo, Vitoliste, Ohrid and Strumica

Cross-Border Cooperation

Republic of Macedonia

Hellenic Republic 2004-2006 (2)

- There is an existing JPD that has been modified due to the new approach
- Joint call for proposals was launched on **21.11.2006** for total of 3.5 million EUR for the Republic of Macedonia

Priorities

- AXIS 1. Cross-border infrastructures
- AXIS 2. Economic development and employment
- AXIS 3. Quality of life – environment
- AXIS 4. Technical assistance

Cross-Border Cooperation
Republic of Macedonia
Hellenic Republic 2004-2006 (3)

Financial Allocation of CARDS funds

<i>Year</i>	<i>CARDS Funds</i>
<i>2004</i>	1.800.000
<i>2005</i>	1.800.000

INTERREG III B - CADSES

- **Funds:** 0.6 million EUR are available for development and project implementation
- **Objectives:**
 - Contribute to spatial integration in the area;
 - Contribute to competitiveness, efficiency and growth in the respective regions;
 - Contribute to economic and social cohesion within the countries and regions and between the countries;
 - Ensure the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage, the protection of the environment and the sustainability of development;
 - Contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities between women and men

Cross-Border Cooperation 2004-2006 CADSES (2)

Outcome of the Programme

- Participation in the 4th call for proposal for the first time in the CADSES Programme.
- According to the National Coordinator for CADSES, the Ministry for Environment and Physical Planning there were 238 qualified projects, 178 projects were rated at suitable for according to the criteria , and 26 of them are recommended for approval on the next meeting of the Joint Steering Committee, and 2 of them were selected.
- Two projects have been approved and contacts are to be signed until the end of 2006, while one is still on the reserve list.

Cross-Border Cooperation 1996-2006

General Remarks

- Positive experience in the period 1996-2006 (RM-AL, RM-RB, RM-RG, CADSES)
- Critical issues in the period 1996-2006 (RM-AL, RM-RB, RM-RG, CADSES)
 - Complicated management structures affecting the communication
 - Different regulations regarding financing
 - Unavailable 5% TA effecting the start of the NP
 - Finding other resources from National Funds as an alternative, not as a long term solution
 - Better coordination and cooperation between all parties involved
 - More focused regional strategy
 - Need for networking and closer collaboration (regional workshops, sharing of experiences)

Cross-Border Cooperation 2007-2013 (1)

Beyond 2006

IPA Component II – Cross Border Cooperation

Challenges ahead 2007-2013:

- Expecting greater flexibility in defining cross-border priorities and activities
- Simplified programme procedures
- Commencement of CBC programmes with the other neighbor countries

The Republic of Macedonia defines:

4 Joint Programming Documents + 1 Transnational Programme:

- 2 Member States and 2 Potential Candidate Countries

Cross-Border Cooperation 2007-2013 (3)

➤ Member States

- Old experiences new practice
- Established links
- Familiar rules and procedures
- Existing Programming Documents
- Firm commitment
- Equal role
- Shared management and shared responsibilities

➤ Potential Candidates

- New rules new experiences
- Enormous regional impact
- A chance to lead
- An opportunity to share knowledge and best practices