

1.7 Sources of financing for project partners from ineligible countries covered by the Programme

1.7.1 EU programmes available for Russia and Belarus

Some support for Russian and Belarusian part of the joint project can be obtained using various programmes only for part of the activities to be done within INTERREG III B project e.g. SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) www.sida.se or Nordic Council of Ministers focusing on Baltic States and St. Petersburg www.nmr.lt or Swedish Institute for cooperation in research institutions www.si.se. Other sources of funding may come from national EU project partners, or bilateral aid schemes.

To facilitate the co-operation between the EU Member States and non-EU countries in the Programme region, travel and subsistence expenses of partners from Russia or Belarus can be eligible costs for an operation (project) when the meeting or seminar takes place in the EU/Norway and is part of an approved operation (project). In such case the costs have to be covered by the eligible project partners.

1.7.2 The Neighbourhood Programme initiative 2004-2006 (NP) and the external element

On 1st July 2003 the European Commission introduced the concept of the Neighbourhood Programme (NP) for the period 2004-2006, "Paving the Way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument" (<http://www.bsrinterreg.net/projects.html>). The concept of the NP is to support the cross-border and transnational cooperation along the external borders of the EU in the framework of existing INTERREG programmes.

The overall idea of the NP is to allow the joint projects (involving partners from the EU MS as well as partners from Russia/Belarus) to submit one application that will be jointly assessed and approved in regard to the project activities to be carried out on internal (EU) and external (Russia and Belarus) side of the border.

The BSR INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme documents have already been revised due to the enlargement and introduction of the Neighbourhood Programmes and are expected to be approved in Autumn 2004. However the procedures regarding the implementation of the internal end the external element have not yet been fully harmonised. Therefore the 6th application round will not include any new elements or procedural changes comparing to the previous application rounds. It is expected that from the 7th call for project proposals (to be launched in the beginning of 2005) onwards the projects will be maintained in the framework of BSR INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme.

No additional Tacis CBC call for proposals are foreseen. The activities of the Russian/Belarusian partners taking part in the joint projects submitted for the 6th round should be financed from the partner's own national resources or some alternative funds (see the previous subsection).