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### Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

CARDS 2002 Twinning Project

Capacity Building in the Area of Agriculture, Live  
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Croatia as a candidate country benefits from all three pre-accession financial instruments: Phare for institution-building and economic and social cohesion, ISPA for environment and transport infrastructures and SAPARD for agricultural and rural development. Croatia also remains eligible for the CARDS Regional Programme in 2005 and 2006. Pre-accession financing will amount to €105 million in 2005 (Phare: €80 million, ISPA: €25 million) and €140 million in 2006 (Phare: €80 million, ISPA: €35 million, SAPARD: €25 million). This represents a substantial increase in overall EC assistance compared to the amounts foreseen under CARDS for 2005 (€60 million) and 2006 (€62 million).

The European Partnership, adopted by Council on 13 September 2004 and based on the findings of the Commission's Opinion on Croatia's application for membership identifies short and medium term priorities for Croatia's preparation for further integration with the EU. The Croatian authorities agreed that these priorities are used to identify the key areas for EU pre-accession financial assistance for 2005. Among the European Partnership short and medium term priorities, the existing CARDS programmes 2002-2004 are already addressing a high number of priorities. A programming principle is therefore to provide continuity in assistance while at the same time avoiding any overlaps between CARDS and Phare.

An overall amount of €257 million was committed to Croatia in the CARDS programme between 2001 and 2004.

A total of 29 twinning tenders and contracts worth €23 million are at the moment being implemented in Croatia.



The European Union CARDS Programme for Croatia

# CARDS

## Twinning Project

### Capacity Building in the Area of Agriculture, Live Animals and Food Products

The project has been implemented by:  
Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo  
e del Molise „G. Caporale”, Teramo, Italy  
and  
Pesticides Safety Directorate, DEFRA, York, UK



# Capacity Building in the Area of Agriculture, Live Animals and Food Products

The project has supported the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and the Croatian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare as well as other target institutions (Croatian Veterinary Institute and Croatian Food Agency), to develop an upgraded control system which will provide for a new food safety strategy and the institutional framework necessary to manage these strategies. Due to its importance, harmonisation of legal framework has been addressed.

## Project Objectives

The general objective of the project was to enhance and facilitate the trade of agricultural and processed agricultural products thus increasing Croatia's presence on European and world markets.

Specific objectives of the project:

- Support to the ongoing process of harmonisation of key legislation in the areas of plant health, animal health, veterinary public health and food safety and quality with the EU *acquis*.
- Establishing efficient organisational and administrative structures under the domain of national competent authorities with enhanced functional capacity of enforcement and implementation of harmonised Croatian legislation.
- Strengthening human resources and technical capacity for the implementation and enforcement of harmonised legislation in the areas of plant health, animal health, veterinary public health, food safety and quality.
- Establishing appropriate number and types of reference and accredited testing laboratories, inspection and certification bodies.
- Providing and communicating information necessary for effective implementation of food, veterinary and plant health legislation at national and community level.

## Main results of the project

### 1. Design and development of a National Food Safety Strategy (FSS)

- A survey on the food safety situation in Croatia has been performed and areas of major concern have been identified.
- A Country profile on food safety has been drafted.
- An organic strategy for implementation in Croatia of a food safety control system fully compliant with EU standards has been prepared, including an action plan and a timetable.

The draft FSS is a strategy detailing how Croatia can meet the requirements of the EU *acquis* in the areas of Food safety and official controls in order to become a full member state of the European Union.

### 2. Institutional and Administrative Capacity Strengthening

- A survey on institutional structure has been performed and a report has been prepared.
- An action plan for a new organisational and administrative structure has been prepared.
- Training needs for management and inspectors have been identified.
- Capabilities of the Croatian technical staff involved in work of evaluation of Plant Protection Products dossier, have been upgraded.
- 60 officials have been trained on the EU legal framework on food safety and on qualified inspections methodologies.
- A plan for upgrading to EU standards food establishments has been prepared.
- A strategy for HACCP implementation in the Country has been drafted.
- Beneficiaries have been introduced to quality system (accreditation).
- Support has been provided in the preparation of a register of producers of food products with geographical indication and designation of origin, organisation of controls and preparation of annual reports.
- 10 officials have been trained on risk analysis.

### 3. Legislation - Approximation in priority sectors

Four Working Groups were appointed for: Plant Health (PPPs and residues); Animal Health, Animal Welfare and Veterinary Public Health; Food Safety; Food Quality. Working Groups components have been trained and the following specific activities have been carried out by the Working Groups:

- review of existing legal framework and identification of EU legislation requiring harmonization;
- preparation of gap analyses in respect of relevant *acquis communautaire*;
- preparation of new laws and Tables of Concordance.

A CD-rom, including the 43 documents drafted by Working Groups has been prepared.

### 4. Strengthening of official laboratory network

- Current laboratory network has been evaluated and a new rationalised network has been identified.
- An investment plan has been prepared.
- Training need analysis has been concluded.
- Training of laboratory staff has been carried out.
- The Croatian Veterinary Institute network has been assisted for accreditation according to ISO 17025.

## Project Partners - EU Member States

- Ministry of Health, Roma, Italy
- Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale", Teramo, Italy
- Agriurope Scrl, Roma, Italy
- Pesticides Safety Directorate, DEFRA, York, UK

## Project Partners - Croatia

- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Zagreb
- Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Zagreb
- Central Finance and Contracting Unit, Ministry of Finance, Zagreb

Duration and Funding

The Project worth in total €1,75 million was executed during the period April 2005 - December 2006.