

## OISIN

## Annual programme and invitation for applications for 1998

(98/C 2/05)

On 20 December 1996 the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted the Oisin programme<sup>(1)</sup>, a framework to develop and enhance cooperation between police, customs and other law enforcement authorities<sup>(2)</sup> of Member States and to provide such authorities with a greater insight into the working methods of their counterparts in other Member States.

The programme covers the period from 1997 to 2000 and the financial reference amount for implementing it for the period 1997 to 1999 is ECU 8 000 000.

The 1998 budget comes to ECU 2 500 000.

1. In general, the Oisin programme intends to stimulate and enhance dynamic webs of relations among law enforcement authorities throughout the European Union by providing a framework for the exchange and training of, and cooperation between law enforcement authorities. This with a view to enhancing practical cooperation between law enforcement authorities through the support of innovative projects with an interest for the European Union.

The expected results are to make law enforcement authorities better acquainted with the working methods of their counterparts throughout the European Union.

To meet these aspirations, the following specific objectives are pursued:

- to raise operational language skills and comprehension of other Member States' legal and operational terminology in order to develop quicker and more efficient communication between law enforcement authorities in the European Union,
- to promote awareness of the legislation and operational procedures in other Member States, by means of training, exchanges and study visits of a limited duration,
- to organize joint operational projects in areas where such projects have an interest for the European Union,
- to organize briefing and debriefing meetings of joint operational projects, as described above and including joint surveillance operations.

2. Projects to be financed from the 1998 budget may relate to all types of measures listed below and detailed in Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Joint Action establishing the Oisin programme and should be directed to all law enforcement authorities as defined in Article 1 (2) of the above-mentioned Joint Action.

The Commission is managing four other programmes in matters concerning Title VI of the Treaty on European Union:

STOP (incentive and exchange programme for persons responsible for combating trade in human beings and sexual exploitation of children (OJ L 322, 12. 12. 1996),

Grotius (programme of incentives and exchanges for legal practitioners (OJ L 287, 8. 11. 1996),

Odysseus (programme of training, exchanges and cooperation in the fields of asylum, immigration and external borders — Commission proposal COM(97) 364 of 9. 7. 1997),

Falcone (programme of exchanges, training and cooperation for persons responsible in the action against organized crime — Commission proposal COM(97) 528 of 21. 10. 1997) — still pending final decision by the Council.

Combined financing under these different programmes is not permitted. It is imperative to address applications to the most relevant of these programmes. If an application is sent to the wrong programme, there is a risk of disqualification, owing to the deadlines applicable for the different programmes.

In this context, applications projects whose topics are the trade in human beings, including the sexual exploitation of children, and the fight against organized crime should be submitted to the STOP and Falcone programmes respectively.

3. Expenditure directly chargeable to the implementation of such projects is eligible. The grant from the European Community may not exceed 80 % of the total cost of the project. It is important to note that:

- expenditure contracted before the date of the committee meeting at which a positive decision is taken, is not eligible for reimbursement within the Oisin programme,

<sup>(1)</sup> Joint Action 97/12/JHA, OJ L 7, 10. 1. 1997, p. 5.

<sup>(2)</sup> For the purpose of this programme, 'law enforcement authorities' means all public bodies existing in Member States which are responsible under national law for preventing, detecting and combating criminal offences.

- a project financed within the 1998 budget must start and receive significant materialization before the end of 1998,
- a project must be finalized at the latest within a year of the date of the decision of granting of communication.

Applicants should take note that owing to the payment procedures of the Commission, pre-financing of projects is presumed; the pace of instalments will not enable applicants to cover expenditure directly from the Oisin subvention.

Grants will be awarded in five areas (projects may cover combinations thereof), subject to the criteria and guidelines specified under points 5 and 6:

- provision of training,
  - exchange of personnel and provision of operational expertise,
  - research, operational studies and evaluation,
  - operational projects (including, briefings and debriefing meetings),
  - information exchange.
4. Project leaders may be national or international institutions, whether public or private including, in particular, research institutes as well as institutions responsible for basic training and those responsible for continuing training. Initiatives by private individuals are not eligible for the programme.
5. The criteria based on which the projects are selected for financing are as follows:
- the European Union dimension of the project and the involvement of at least two of its Member States,
  - the consistency of the topics to be covered with the work undertaken in Council action programmes coming under police and customs cooperation,
  - the operational purpose and practical input, i.e. the extent to which stress is placed in passing on the knowledge of immediate use in carrying on the professional activity concerned, without overlooking the need for a thorough consideration on any obstacles to cooperation,
  - language training should be considered only where directly linked to professional needs, and where it is not easily available in the absence of the submitted project,
  - the number of professionals likely to derive some advantage from the project, either directly or through contact between those who have taken part and those who have not had the opportunity to participate,

- the accessibility of the project, i.e. the approach taken, and the allowance which the organizational arrangements make for participants' existing knowledge and for professional constraints,
- the degree of preparation and the standard of organization, as well as clarity and precision as regards the objectives, design and planning of the project,
- the involvement of different entities and the combined use of their particular expertise in the organization of the project,
- the openness to practitioners from different Member States and disciplines and the opportunity for them to benefit from each other's experience,
- the extent to which the projects complement each other, the way in which they contribute to creating a forward momentum rather than merely juxtaposing isolated operations,

6. The following guidelines, based on the above criteria, should be of assistance to applicants:

- ambitious schemes, schemes of long duration or those for which a large grant is being applied for should be supported by pilot projects or studies that justify and demonstrate their feasibility,
- any plan for setting up a documentation network, databases etc. should state in detail the sources, the field of investigation, the methodological approach, the frequency of updates, etc.,
- research projects should not be limited to study based purely on written material but should be based on practical experience and aim to produce usable conclusions,
- the knock-on effect of a project will be assessed on the basis of the number of participants and their status and capacity to disseminate the results of the project,
- justification will have to be shown as to the benefits likely to be derived from very small projects, organization of traineeships or visits for a small number of participants. Projects likely to benefit only the applicant organization will not be considered,
- meetings between institutions responsible for basic or continuing training should be considered only where they aim at a well-defined purpose in relation to a particular project or policy,
- the standard of preparation will be assessed both objectively, as regards project design and planning, and subjectively, as regards the

experience and reputation of the applicant organization. Previous records will be given attention if a series of applications is received from the same organization. Initiatives submitted by organizations or associations having neither well-established structures nor significant human and financial resources will not be disregarded,

- added-value conferred by the involvement of several disciplines will be evaluated in terms of quality, not quantity, and will be assessed in terms of how the contributions from the various professional categories involved in a single project complement each other,
- a high degree of interaction between the project organizer(s) and the participants, will be regarded as a positive feature for the project,
- related projects put forward as complementary should be presented together, with individual budgets identified, so that consideration can be given to support them either individually or in groups.

In principle, projects should concentrate on situations where law-enforcement personnel experience practical difficulties.

7. Against this background, the following topics are suggested as being of particular interest:

- the fight against drug trafficking,
- the fight against terrorism,
- improvement of police and customs cooperation,
- the use of technology as a means to defeat crime,
- urban violence,
- the fight against and prevention of urban crime,
- crime analysis.

Special attention will be given to projects open to professionals less familiar with international contacts, and to projects open to professionals from candidate countries, in accordance with the Commission's Agenda 2000 and with Article 7 (4) of the Council Joint Action establishing this programme, that states that 'the projects may involve those responsible in the applicant countries with a view to making them familiar with the achievement of the European Union in this area and contributing to their preparation for accession, or in other third countries where it serves the aims of the projects'. It must be emphasized, however, that the Oisin programme is not intended to provide assistance to the Central and East European

countries, for which specific facilities are provided under Phare.

8. The budget for 1998 will be ECU 2 500 000. It will be indicatively allocated to the different areas as follows:

Areas	ECU
Training	520 000
Exchange	460 000
Research	170 000
Operational projects	600 000
Meetings	650 000
Evaluation	100 000
Total	2 500 000

9. Applications for grants must be submitted by 31 March 1998 to the European Commission, Justice and Home Affairs Task Force (attention Mr Telmo Baltazar, N-9 6/21 — fax (32-2) 295 01 74), Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200, B-1049 Brussels, using the application form in one of the 11 European Union languages (a translation may be added in a second working language). Forms may be obtained from the above address.

Note that the signed original application must be submitted in real time (not by fax, followed by the original), together with a brief (2-3 pages) outline of the project. Alterations to the form or the use of any the of earlier versions of the form, etc., will disqualify the application. The purpose of the project must be described as briefly and accurately as possible in point 8 of the form.

A detailed estimated budget in national currency must be sent with the application. An indication of the value in ecus may be attached.

The budget must show the expected overall cost of the project. The grant applied for may not exceed 80 % of the final cost. The actual subvention may be for a lower amount than the percentage requested. The running costs of an organization are not eligible.

Beneficiaries are required to state in all advertising or published material that their projects are in receipt of financial support from the Oisin programme and the European Community. Within three months of the completion of their project, they must submit to the Justice and Home Affairs Task Force of the European Commission a report on the execution of the project, any obstacles encountered, the assessment given by the participants, the results obtained, the dissemination of such results and the conclusions drawn.