Project Background
PHARE was originally (1989) designed to be the European Union's financial instrument to assist the Central and Eastern European countries in their transition to a decentralised liberal democratic society. By end of the 1990s emphasis for Phare had shifted toward the support of the accession process cumulative financial commitments amounted to approx. € 10 billion, 70 % of which was assigned to the ten candidate members (CMS). The new “Agenda 2000” increased Phare’s budget to about € 1,5 billion per year. This assistance translated into a vast programme portfolio which required regular assessment through the Phare Interim Evaluation Programme.

Evaluation Objectives
The assessment scheme was designed to make the quality of Phare Programmes more sustainable, the Programme Management Cycle more effective and the planning of new projects more focused on accession.

Evaluation Activities
• Upgrading of the existing evaluation scheme; further methodological development
• Standardisation of procedures and documents
• Definition of annual Evaluation Workplans
• Maintaining and developing the Management Information System (MIS)
• Implementation of the Evaluation Scheme with approx. 200 reports annually
• Quarterly and half-yearly summary progress reports
• Country assessments and thematic evaluation reports
• Rigorous quality control
• Training of national officials on methods and procedures

Implementation Features
The PHARE Interim Evaluation Programme was part of the overall monitoring and assessment of on-going PHARE programmes and included all PHARE programmes. Approximately 200 assessment reports were produced annually. For this purpose Interim Evaluation Cells were established in each of the Candidate Countries, with one Central Office in Brussels dealing with project management and multi-country and thematic reports.

Services Provided
• Upgrading and management of the Phare Interim Evaluation System, incl. the MIS
• Installation of a special system for quality control
• Appr. 200 project evaluation reports annually; additional country reports, progress summaries and thematic evaluations as part of the MIS
• Training of evaluation staff and country officials in assessment and evaluation methods and procedures