

25-26 November 2002 - Presentation given during the
CONFERENCE on the use of EU pre-accession funds and their environmental and social implications
Billions for Sustainability? Lessons learned from the use of pre-accession funds

Estonian SPD 2003-2006

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Strategic Environmental Assessment

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Overview of the presentation

- * Single Programming Document (SPD)
- * Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- * Lessons learned



Single Programming Document (SPD):

...is a development plan that reflects only these development activities which are financed from State Budget of the Republic of Estonia and co-financed from Phare economic and social support programme 2003 before and from Structural Funds after accession to EU.



Overall objective of SPD

- Fast, socially and regionally balanced sustainable economic development
- According to the EU Structural Funds' general regulation (1260/99) EU post-accession support to Estonia for co-financing of SPD can be up to 4% of GDP of Estonia



The process of SPD - main steps

- August 2001 the process of SPD started
- March 2002 analytical part ready
- March 2002 start of SEA of SPD
- November 2002 strategic basis ready
- November 2002 SPD measures ready
- November 2002 financial plan ready
- December 2002 final report of SEA submitted to the Minister of Environment
- January 2003 submission of SPD to the Government of Estonia and to the European Commission

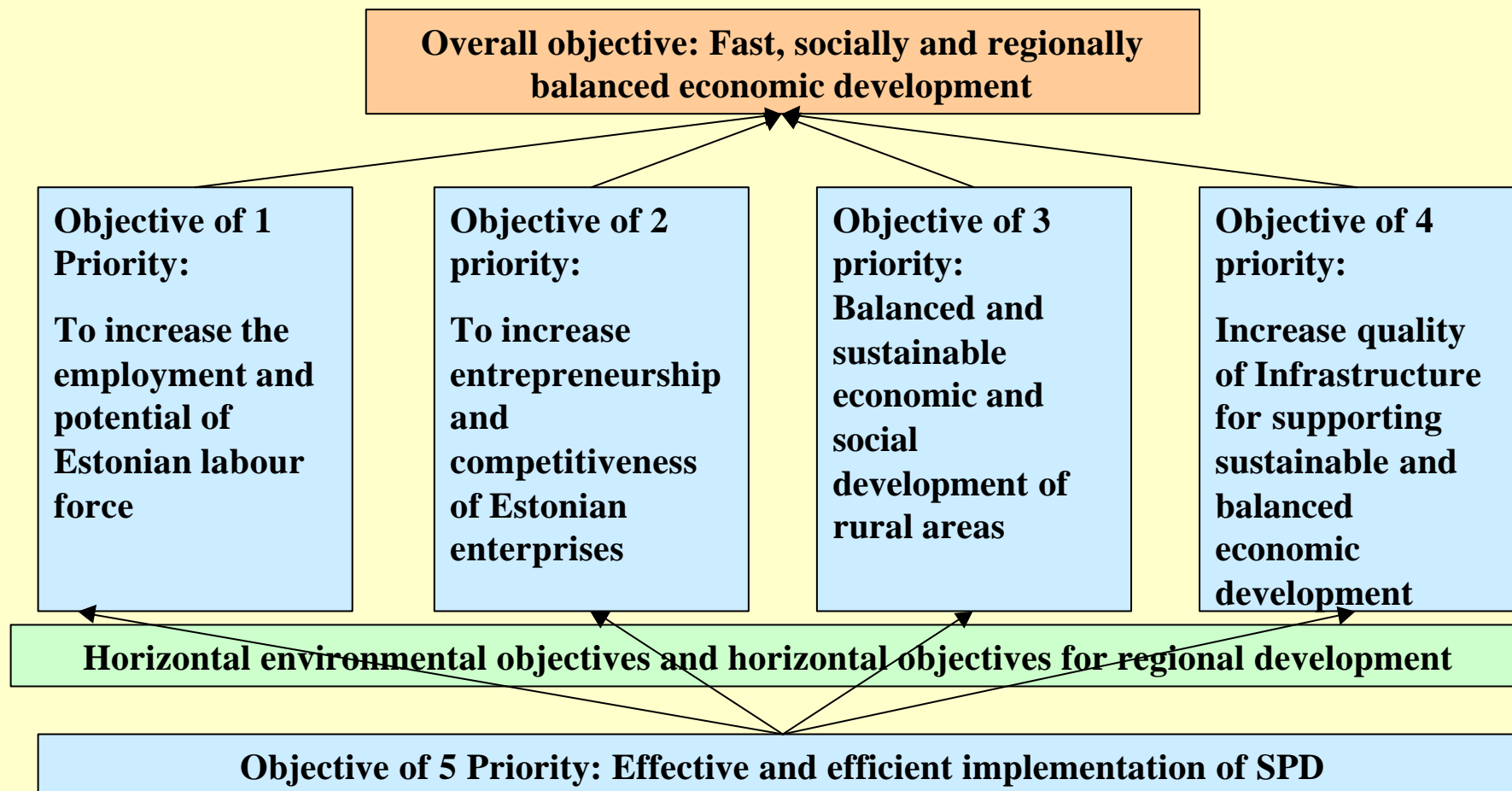


SPD priorities

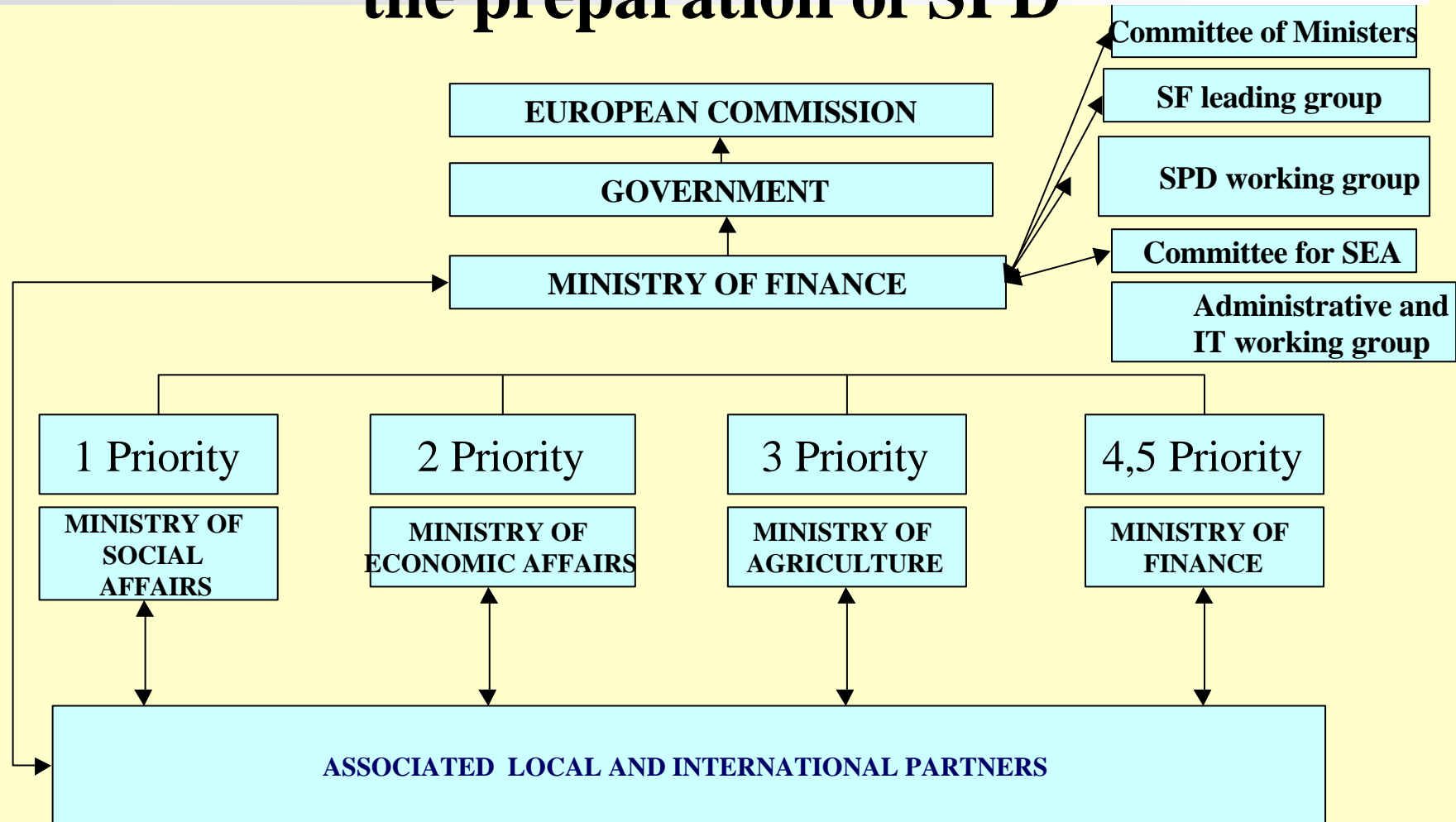
1. Human resources development (ESF)
2. Competitiveness of enterprises (ERDF)
3. Rural development and agriculture (EAGGF and FIFG)
4. Infrastructure and local development (ERDF)
5. Technical assistance



Objectives of SPD:



General co-operation network for the preparation of SPD



Local co-operation network for the preparation of SPD

Local associated partners (116):

- * Local municipalities and county governments
- * Professional unions
- * NGO-s and foundations



Procedure of public participation in SPD process

- * Two formal commenting rounds for social partners
- * Constant availability for partners to comment in the Internet
- * On-going formal answering to the questions and comments
- * Information days on Structural Funds, including SPD



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - basic documents

- EC SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)
- Estonian Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and Audit (RT I 2000)



SEA - in the context of SPD

- SEA is an autonomous part of SPD ex-ante evaluation
- a part of SPD process
- implemented by independent licensed group of experts
- co-financing and methodological assistance from REC Estonia



Key participants in the SEA process

- Ministry of Finance - overall co-ordination
- Ministry of Environment - start of SEA process, endorsement of draft SEA programme and interim and final report
- Expert team - carrying out SEA
- REC Estonia - co-financing SEA process and methodological support to the experts



Selection of the expert team

- Personal invitations to all licensed experts in Estonia to participate in the selection
- Establishment of SEA committee (12. March 2002)
- Creating indicators for evaluation of tenders
- Evaluation of tenders (6)
- Signing of a contract between expert group and REC Estonia



Members of SEA committee

- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture
- REC Estonia
- Estonian Council of Civic Organisations
- Association of Non-governmental Organisations
- Union of Estonian Associations of Local Authorities



Objectives of SEA

- Assessment of environmental situation in
- Selection of environmental objectives in SPD priority areas
- Assessment of SPD strategy, measures and implementation plan
- Analysis of the process and methodology of SEA and giving recommendations for the next SEA process



Methodology of SEA

- Prepared with expertise from REC
- Integrated methodology where SEA is implemented for priorities, measures and monitoring scheme of SPD
- Mainly expert opinion and qualitative analysis have been used for assessment
- General environmental management principles are used
- Flexible methodology - can be changed when necessary



Main steps in SEA process

- Public hearing of SEA programme and endorsement (March 2002)
- Assessment of analytical part of SPD (June 2002)
- Preparation of interim report (July 2002)
- Public hearing of SPD environmental objectives and indicators (November 2002)
- Assessment of SPD strategic basis (November 2002)
- Assessment of SPD measures (November 2002)
- Public hearing of the measures and monitoring plan (December 2002)
- Public hearing of draft final report of SEA and submission of the final report of SEA to the Ministry of Finance (December 2002)



Public partnership

- Open discussion of the SEA programme (two rounds)
- Public hearing of environmental indicators (November 2002)
- Introducing SPD and SEA process on different seminars and conferences
- Possibility to make comments in the Internet
- Public hearing of SEA final report (December 2002)



Lessons learned in Estonian SPD and SEA process (1)

- Unforeseen obstacles (extension of the time schedule, disagreements between partners etc)
- Shifts in SPD time schedule influence SEA process



Lessons learned in Estonian SPD and SEA process (2)

- SEA should start as early as possible within the SPD process
- It is beneficial to organise a preparatory meeting for planners to introduce the purpose and procedure of SEA
- Good communication between the SEA expert team and SPD working group is a key factor



Information on SPD

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