



TWINNING NEWS NEAR N° 4



7th June 2017

2017 Twinning Agenda

Event	Date
59th RTA training - 6th joint IPA&ENI	16 & 17 May
New Twinning Manual awareness raising missions	May -September
New Twinning Manual enters into force and all projects circulated will have to apply the rules of new Manual	1 July 2017
In-house training day for Twinning focal points in delegations	18 October (tbc)
Institution Building Days 2017 (IBD)	19 & 20 October

The final draft of the Twinning Manual was presented to EU Member State National Contact Points (MS NCPs) in Malta May 8-9, where the Team Leader for twinning Claus Lech gave an overview of the final changes introduced after an assessment of the final proposals and remarks received by the EU MS. The EU MS welcomed the final version of the Manual.

The Malta meeting concluded a long and intensive consultation process started in 2014 and peaking with intensified consultations, particularly over autumn 2016 and Spring 2017 (see below).

The new Manual will enter into force on and apply to all projects launched after July 1st 2017.

Reform of Twinning

New Twinning Manual

The reform is the most significant modernisation of the tool since its launch nearly two decades ago. Its objective is to make Twinning financial and technical procedures easier and ensure maximum simplification and flexibility for the implementing partners.

With the revision the procedures used for the Enlargement and the Neighbourhood areas have been harmonised and programming processes better aligned with DG NEAR procedures. In addition Twinning as a key tool for supporting institution building efforts under the Public Administration Reform agenda has been strengthened and finally the planning and scope of Communication and Visibility activities enhanced.



Meeting of Member State Twinning National contact points, May 8
Malta, Maritime Museum

Consultations

Before the finalisation of the Manual as presented in Malta Near C.3. implemented an intensive consultation programme complementing the

consultations with EU Member States EUDs and Partner Countries, which had started in 2015.

Dedicated meetings with EU Member States National Contact Points in Vienna 26-27 September 2016 and in Brussels 27-28 March.

The Vienna meeting was organised in close co-operation with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs in Vienna and the Austrian Twinning National Contact Point (NCP).



Alois Mock – Hall, Minoritenplatz 8, Vienna

In the meeting the Commission presented the state of play of TAIEX strategic and took stock of the reform of the Twinning instrument and the steps forward. It was agreed to convene a new meeting as soon as the Commission Decision regulating the costs under Twinning had been adopted.



From left to right; Corinne Mercier, Christine Kirven, Paolo Gozzi and Yildiz Götze. Ladies are respectively Twinning NCPs for France, Austria and Germany

Another Twinning reform stock-taking meeting with the EU MS NCPs took place in Brussels March 27-28. The Commission Decision regulating the use of simplified costs was intensively discussed on basis of a draft revision of the Manual and the impact of the decision was taken into account. It was agreed that, following the final comments in the meeting, the

Commission would do a final assessment of the legal/contractual options to accommodate the EU MS proposals and that a final revision of the Manual would be held in Malta in May.

Meetings in Rome December 1st and in Paris on January 23rd

Near C.3. was invited for consultations in Italy and France to discuss the practical implication of the novelties under the Twinning reform and the TAIEX recalibration.

Paolo Gozzi and Lucia Santuccione from Unit C3 presented the revised features of the two instruments and the ongoing implementation of projects.

Meetings with EUDs and Partner Countries

Over 2015-2016 EUDs and Partner countries have been contributing with analysis and proposals to the Twinning reform process, following its kick-off in early 2015. Following the Commission Decision they were given a final chance to comment in the context of the Joint DEVCO-NEAR Cooperation days March 20-24th. Lawrence Meredith, Director NEAR C and Heike Gerstbrein, Head of Unit C.3 introduced the revised Twinning Manual and took note of proposals and ideas for improvements before the finalisation of the new Manual.

Training and awareness activities

Training Missions to Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Following a specific request by the Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU) in Serbia, Christophe Casillas from the Twinning Coordination Team in Brussels carried out a mission to Serbia on 27 and 28 October 2016.



Christophe Casillas and Irena Sotra Twinning Focal Point EUD BSH at Training seminar EU Office Sarajevo, 25 October 2015

Since the EC Decision on conferral of management from 20 March 2014, CFCU Serbia has been granted indirect management mode without ex-ante control for Twinning. Therefore the training mission to Belgrade also targeted CFCU staff, in addition to EU Delegation staff.

One important conclusion from the discussions was that there is a need to reinforce the message that beneficiary administrations must adequately analyse absorption capacity issues and better prepare **before planning to use Twinning**.

Twinning Awareness Raising mission to Ramallah

A workshop took place in Ramallah on January 30th – February 2nd with the aim of raising awareness about Twinning and TAIEX. A large number of potential beneficiaries were participating in the workshop.

The mission allowed for an exchange both with EUD and the Palestine interlocutors, in particular discussing synergies from combining both strategic and classic TAIEX.

With regard to Twinning, separate meetings with the EUD and the beneficiary took place in order to discuss the institutional and physical conditions that have to be in place in the EUD Office and the partner country administration. A pre-identification of potential institutions was undertaken. It is expected that the tools could be introduced in Palestine** for the first time in the coming months and that the selection of two institutions for the first Twinning projects will be finalized by end 2017.

** This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

Conference celebrating Twinning operations' 10-years' anniversary in Azerbaijan

More than 100 participants convened in an event in Baku on April 7th. Azerbaijan has been one of the most active users of Twinning (and a very active user of TAIEX) considering that these are the key institutional building instruments in the country.

38 representatives of the Azerbaijani Public Administrations, and representations from Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Turkey exchanged views and best practices following the key note speakers Mr Sahil Babayev, Deputy Minister of Economy and Ms

Malena Mard, EU Ambassador to Azerbaijan. The speakers highly praised Twinning and TAIEX actions *as they are contributing to fostering social, economic and public administration reforms.*

The conference was extensively covered by the local media.

Besides giving an overview of the new Twinning principles to the audience, DG NEAR's Twinning team also benefitted from the visit to discuss the revised Twinning modalities with the Twinning practitioners, it met the EU Delegation, a group of RTAs and the PAO in Azerbaijan.



Lucia Santuccione and Claus Lech in Baku, 7 April 2017

RTA training, May 17-18 2017

Director Lawrence Meredith commended the Twinning instrument by saying: *"this is a very successful, flexible instrument which must deal in particular for IPA region with fundamentals first: the rule of law, Public Administration Reform (PAR), competitiveness and economic governance. Twinning must complement the inclusive process where reforms are not only conducted by and with public administrations but also civil society, private sector, trade unions professional associations and Universities."*

RTA-trainings are considered very useful by participants because of their practical orientation. After the last RTA training 86% of the 47 participants evaluated the training presentations as very useful. The Twinning team would like to get to 100% and it is therefore currently discussing what future shape these trainings should take. Any ideas and proposals will be welcome. The next RTA Training will take place on May 17-18th. As the last one, it will be based on the old Twinning Manual.

Second annual training on Twinning at EIPA, Maastricht.

As in previous years Christophe Casillas from the Twinning Coordination team contributed to EIPA's bi-annual Programmed workshop "Successful

"Preparation and Implementation of Twinning projects" held on 22 and 23 September 2016 in Maastricht. The cooperation with EIPA will continue also in 2017.



EIPA Seminar on Twinning 22-23 September 2016

Staff News

Farewell to Paolo Gozzi

During the last RTA training Lawrence Meredith, Director of the Neighbourhood East Directorate in DG NEAR, thanked Paolo Gozzi who, he said, "has been devoting so many years to developing and nurturing the Twinning instrument".



Paolo Gozzi's last day farewell party with DG NEAR colleagues

Newcomer to the Twinning Team!

Claus Lech

Claus was Head of Finance and Contracts in the EU Delegation to Turkey from 2007 to 2011 and he was Head of the Operations Section dealing with the rule of law and good governance in the EU Delegation to Albania from 2011 to 2016. He joined the Twinning Team as Team Leader on 1st September 2016.



Claus Lech, Team Leader

New communication staff for Twinning and TAIEX



Stefania Lopedote, Information and Communication

Stefania Lopedote

Stefania Lopedote joined the Institution Building, TAIEX and Twinning unit on 1 March 2017, as the new reference point for communication, information and visibility activities for Twinning and TAIEX. She worked before as a press and communication expert both in the EU institutions and in the private sector. For any communication-related issue, feel free to drop her an email at Stefania.lopedote@ec.europa.eu.

Focus on Twinning Review Missions (TRMs)

A capacity building project needs sometimes a long time to produce a standing impact in general and in particular in terms of sustainability. The scope of the TRM implies the analysis of the situation in the area/sector covered by the Twinning project concerned, comparing it to the situation prevailing when the project's implementation ended and taking into account the initial situation that the project was called to correct. The scope of the analysis will be determined by the mandatory results of the Twinning project. So the TRM will focus on the developments intervened after the end of the Twinning project concerned with particular regard to the legal and institutional level (legislative progress and administrative adaptation), to capacity and skills building (further training of staff and spreading of know-how) and to the structural changes introduced (irreversibility of the new framework).

Lessons learnt and good practices

The following recommendations, comments were extracted from recent TRM reports.

- to disseminate a brief summary of the final report and in particular the results achieved and the recommendations for the future among potentially concerned institutions if so agreed with the

beneficiary administration, the contracting authority and the Press and information Officer in the EU Delegation.

- Before a follow up project starts, it is necessary to ensure that the achievements of the pre-conditions for a follow up project has been fulfilled and that sustainability has been ensured
- It is good practice to agree with the beneficiary institution on a tentative schedule of implementation of the recommendations listed in the project final report. This can be particularly useful in the framework of a TRM.
- The involvement of experts from several Member States to address single topics can give a wider perspective and help operationalise some of the concepts presented in a project.
- The participation of staff from other institutions in the beneficiary country is advantageous and allows building on existing relationships. It significantly increases impact and sustainability of a project.
- It is believed that programming into the “project pipeline” a number of sequential, logical project interventions, would have a more significant impact in the sector concerned and would ideally make sufficient change (through training and general capacity building over an extended period)
- In estimating the duration of a project, it is necessary to allow sufficient time between each expert mission. This is to allow time for experts’ mission reports to be: written, received, translated, distributed, read, discussed and debated and on what action is required by the beneficiary institution before the next expert mission takes place.
- Avoid over-ambitious mandatory results and objectives. A more realistic and practical approach should be considered for the results to be achieved within the implementation period of a project. A focus should be placed on tertiary legislation (e.g. regulations or procedures and instructions issued by the Ministry) which can be managed by the beneficiaries without excessive risks from factors that are external to the project and/or beneficiary institution.

illicit businesses in which criminal networks thrive. This is a new irreversible way of thinking among them."

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

"Support to the National Police & Criminal Law Reform" MK 09 IB JH 01

"With regards to component 2 Forensic development, the outcomes have to be regarded as excellent. Within a very short time frame of less than 2 years, the whole forensic system has been renovated and turned into a professional unit which will most probably pass the first ISO accreditations in 2016."

Algeria

"Renforcement des capacités du Centre National de Recherche pour le Développement de la pêche et de l'aquaculture (CNRDPA)" DZ11/AA/AG07

The project has fully achieved the overall objective of ensuring the development and sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture based on scientific advice. Twinning projects have positive effects on the beneficiary administration (eg stabilization of the administration) and contribute to the sustainability of objectives through the networks created in the project (training and workshops, study visits).

Georgia

"Strengthening management of Protected Areas of Georgia" GE12/ENP-PCA/EN/14

The sustainability of the project’s results seems good due not only to the strong motivation of the Beneficiary - both the Agency of Protected Areas of Georgia (APA and the directors of National Parks) but also as a consequence of the good cooperation between all stakeholders during the lifetime of the project. Twinning proposed a concrete and realistic methodology for the preparation of 4 Management Plans (MP) and Operational Plans (OP).

New success stories

Croatia and Serbia

Twinning is seeing an increase of projects being implemented in cooperation between the EU Member States having joined the EU after 2004 and the pre-accession countries. In a recent project, Serbia has for the first time selected Croatia for a project in Serbia. It is a Twinning Light project in the area of Health and Consumer protection aiming at “Strengthening national institutional capacities in the field of Substance of Human Origins (SoHO) to improve the safety of blood in transfusion and transplantation”.

Azerbaijan

Examples of findings of TRMs

Croatia

"Strengthening the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights" HR 06 IB OT 01

"Many Croatian officials believed that organised crime was not linked with IPR infringements but currently they have no doubt that those links do exist and that counterfeiting and piracy are

"Support for the development of a modern system of standardization and technical regulations in Azerbaijan" AZ/13/ENP/TR/26

The project supported the creation of a framework of the modernization of Standardization and Technical Regulations through recommendations for the reform of the legal framework and recommended processes to improve the methodology for the development, adoption and publication of standards.

Albania

"Implementation of a modern Financial Management and Control System and Public Financial Inspection in Albania" AL 12 IB FI 01

An example of enhanced communication and visibility efforts.

The project successfully delivered results linked to the better use of public funds and consequently better services to the citizens and actively ensured EU communication and visibility through the use of classical and new communication tools (MoF webpage, reports, newsletters) and external (Facebook, events, press releases) communication. This way, the project is actively involved in raising awareness in Corruption Prevention, Obligations and Objectives of Public Financial Inspection in the public administration.



Workshop for Internal Control Plan with the pilot ministries (19-21 September 2016)

[implementation-of-a-modern-financial-management-and-control-system-and-public-financial-inspection-in-albania_en](#)

- News Media:
- <http://top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=340535>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPm6LKSaPY>

Good Practices

If you have examples of "good practices" used in your project to share, please send your contribution (maximum 300 words) to our new functional mailbox near twinning NEAR-TWINNING@ec.europa.eu

Save the date: Institution Building Days 2017

The next IBD is planned to take place 19 & 20 October this year. It will include:

- back-to-back meetings with the IBDs
- an in-house training of Twinning coordinators from EU Delegations/Office, Central Financial and Contracting Entities (CFCEs) and Programme Administration Offices (PAOs)
- networking and meetings to discuss issues related to the daily management of Twinning

- Project Webpage:
<http://www.financa.gov.al/en/the-ministry/departments/general-regulatory-and-controlling-department/central-harmonization-unit-for-financial-management-and-control/projects/project-implementation-of-a-modern-system-of-financial-management-and-control-and-public-financial-inspection-in-albania-financed-by-ipa-funds-in-2012>
- Find us on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/fmcibpIPA2012?ref=hl>
- Closing event press release November 2016:
<https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/14927/results-of-the-twinning-project-on-the->

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Functional e-mail boxes:

When sending a message to the Brussels Twinning coordination Team, please always put in copy:
[near-twinning at ec.europa.eu](mailto:near-twinning@ec.europa.eu)

Communications (Manual until 01.07.2017)

For IPA-ENI proposals sent by the NCP for Twinning to the Twinning co-ordination team: near-twinning@ec.europa.eu

For sending draft IPA Twinning contracts and draft Twinning contract addenda to be examined by the Twinning steering committee: near-twinning-stc_at_ec.europa.eu

For sending all IPA-ENI Twinning quarterly and final reports: near-twinning-reports at ec.europa.eu