



TWINNING NEWS No 41

BUILDING EUROPE TOGETHER

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New Twinning Manual now available in the website

The new Twinning Manual (revision 2009) came into force on the 15th of September. The rules of the new manual apply for all the projects whose selection has been notified from that date onwards.

Some of the main changes are the following:

- Introduction of Twinning Review Missions
- Uplifting of the ceilings for visibility costs
- Uplifting of the costs for the supply of services
- Templates for Side Letter and Annexes

The new Twinning Manual is available in English on our website. French and German translations are available upon request.

Programming for 2010 for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) and Turkey

Beneficiary Country	Project title
Albania	Anti-Money Laundering
Albania	Reform of Justice System (in particular development of a probation service)
Albania	Witness and Special Persons Protection
Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)	Improved education in the Public Safety and Security sectors
Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)	Integrated support to decentralisation
Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)	Further support to sustainable forestry management
Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)	Further institutional support to the Environment Sector -Enhance the capacities of Kosovo Environment Protection Agency (KEPA)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Labour and education
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Single Market Integration (I)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Single Market Integration (II)

Bosnia and Herzegovina	Veterinary and phytosanitary support (TWL)
Croatia	Support to the Reform of Criminal Proceedings
Croatia	Development of the Probation Services in Croatia
Croatia	Further harmonization of the road safety legislation, strengthening and development of the administrative capacity of the Ministries in the field of road Transport (DIGITACHO Twinning)
Croatia	Assistance in management of SF programmes, with an accent on financial management
Croatia	Enforcement of the new Environmental Protection Act harmonized with EU legislation in cases of criminal offences against the environment
Turkey	Capacity Building of Turkey on Strengthening the Water Quality Monitoring
Turkey	Control of Industrial Volatile Organic Compound Emissions
Turkey	Extending the Pilot FADN Project and Ensuring Its Sustainable Implementation
Turkey	Improving the Capacity of Civil Enforcement Offices
Turkey	Modernisation of Turkish Customs Administration VI (enforcement)
Turkey	Modernisation of Turkish Customs Administration VI (risk management)
Turkey	Standardization and Development of Quality Control Tests for Human Vaccines and Sera Used in Turkey
Turkey	Strengthening institutional capacity of Finance Inspection Board (FIB) and other pilot inspection boards within the scope of Public Financial Management Control (PFMC) system
Turkey	Strengthening intermodal transport in Turkey
Turkey	Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations in Turkey
Turkey	Strengthening the Capacity against Cybercrime
Turkey	Support to Implementation Capacity of Turkish Police for Preventing Disproportionate Use of Force

39th RTA Training Session (Brussels 22nd and 23rd of October 2009)

The Albert Borschette Centre held the 39th RTA Training Session, attended by 24 RTAs and 10 observers. The session offered a very interesting programme, including speeches of Pierre Mirel, Morten Jung-Olsen, Nelli Timm, Oliver Seiffarth, Stéphanie Palombi and Roxana Girbea.

The discussion focused on practical examples and real-life situations and the course was evaluated by the participants with an emphasis on the pertinence of the topics analyzed.

The next RTA Training Session is planned for the beginning of February.

Good to know when presenting proposals: CVs

Often submitted proposals contain more CVs than required for the Project and in many cases CVs of ineligible experts are attached. During Selection Meetings this situation can be seen as a weak point of the proposal. It is recommended to include only those CVs that correspond to the content of the proposal. Unnecessary CVs may compromise the overall appreciation of the team!

Good to know when receiving proposals: confirmation mail

It is recommended, as a best practice, that the EC Delegation or CFCU always confirm receipt of a proposal.

The confirmation mail will reassure the sender that the process has been carried out successfully.

The absence of confirmation may be an early warning that something went wrong.

Good practice from Poland

The twinning project PL 05 IB SO 02 entitled Transparency of the National Health System Drug Reimbursement Decisions started on 26th October 2006 and finished on 18th April 2008.

Worth over one million Euros and concentrated in time (initial period of 16 months was extended by 7 weeks), this twinning was above all a complex one

because of its topic. The European directive of 1989 did come to impose common rules and to define the spirit in which the national policies should be conducted, which can be summarized in the word "transparency". In public decision-making, this concept implies funding decisions on clear and precise rules (who? what? how? why?) and taking these decisions in an open environment which offers some room for discussion and ways of court appeal. The health care system of the beneficiary country, Poland, was (in 2006, when the twinning contract was negotiated) and is still today in profound evolution. Besides, the pharmaceutical industry is a particular economic sector for which public financing is a vital issue, which explains the high degree of pressure companies exert on public authorities. Moreover, the relations of the Polish authorities with the European Commission on the transposition of the Directive were not well known at the beginning of the project, except the pending risk that the Commission would refer to the European Court of Justice.

In order to mitigate these risks the French partners introduced into the project the best experts available for component 1 on institutional building as well as for component 2 on training. About 70 experts were mobilized on the whole. They came from various institutions concerned by the issue, mainly from the French Ministry of Health and the National Health Fund (Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Maladie). High ranking experts came also from other European countries such as Austria, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. From the beginning to the very end of the project, the same staff in charge of the project management remained unchanged on the French side. The coherence of the project was thus facilitated. Even if it did not appear as an official partner in the contract, the French Haute Autorité de Santé (HAS) involved itself very dynamically into the implementation of the project, in both components.

For more than 8 months, the Polish Agency for Health Technology Assessment (AOTM) was mainly involved in elaborating a basic benefit package proposal for the Ministry of health and much less focused on drug reimbursement issues. On the whole, it took more than half a year for the foreign experts to be in a situation of confident relationship with their Polish partners and to exchange efficiently their experience with their Polish

counterparts. Then changes came more and more rapidly. These changes were favored by the launching, at the suggestion of experts, of informal talks between the Polish health authorities and the services of the European Commission. The appointment of a new Director of Pharmaceuticals and Drug Policy Department at the Ministry of Health and a new Minister of Health confirmed the initial will of the Director of Pharmaceuticals to use the twinning expertise and to go ahead in solving all the issues still pending in reference to the Transparency directive.

At the end of the project there was an explicit political will and a real commitment to achieve the outcomes of law harmonization according to the directive. A first legislative change, the law of 24 August 2007 (entered into force on 27 September) modifying the law on health care services financed by public means, had already introduced some improvements in the drug reimbursement procedure towards a better compliance with the directive. Regular talks with the European Commission were established, which was quite a novelty. The role of the Agency has been steadily growing. And a second training program was delivered during the same period to about 200 people, called the "users" of HTA reports, who were taught the basic principles of health technology assessment (HTA) and evidence based medicine (EBM).

In April 2008, at the end of the training project, the drafting of a new and comprehensive law on drug reimbursement issues was going on at a good pace. This is a main outcome of the cooperation between the experts of the twinning project and the Polish authorities: a unique law, was meant to replace the two previous ones (one on health care services financed by public means and the other on drug pricing), which will highly simplify the work of all the stakeholders, particularly of the pharmaceutical firms. As with for the Commission, the Agency has established regular talks with the industry and with international networks, basic steps for the effective work of the organization.

As said by the French project leader at the final seminar of the twinning project, "transparency is the only way to build trust in public decisions because it allows decision process to be clear, open and predictable. And the two main stakeholders in this field are both looking for predictability: the public (including doctors and patients) and the pharmaceutical industry".

There is no doubt that Poland is now on the good track to implement further such a policy. The very good cooperation spirit which was developed through this twinning project is one of the guarantees of such a development.

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Functional e-mail boxes:

elarg-twinning@ec.europa.eu - for proposals sent by the National contact points for Twinning to the Twinning co-ordination team

elarg-twinning-stc@ec.europa.eu - for sending draft Twinning contracts and draft Twinning contract addenda to be examined by the Twinning steering committee

elarg-twinning-reports@ec.europa.eu - for sending all Twinning quarterly and final reports

Website: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/technical-assistance/twinning_en.htm.

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