

UFFIĊĊJU TAD-DEPUTAT  
PRIM MINISTRU  
MINISTERU GĦALL-AFFARIJET EWROPEJ

SEGRETARJAT PARLAMENTARI GĦALL-  
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EWROPEJ



MALTA

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY  
PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTRY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT FOR THE EU  
PRESIDENCY 2017 AND EU FUNDS

*Id-Divizjoni għall-Fondi u Programmi*

*Funds and Programmes Division*

**8<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Circular FPD TAIEX 1/2017**

**Sharing of Knowledge & Expertise - Participation of Government Ministries in  
Twinning, Twinning 'light' projects and TAIEX**

### **EU Twinning and Twinning 'Light' projects**

Twinning projects ([http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/tenders/twinning/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/tenders/twinning/index_en.htm)) bring together public sector expertise from EU Member States and beneficiary countries with the aim of achieving concrete mandatory operational results through peer to peer activities. Twinning is not a one-way technical assistance instrument but a shared commitment and relies on learning by doing principle and sharing of best practices.

The beneficiaries include: IPA countries - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia<sup>1</sup>, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo<sup>2</sup>, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey; and ENP countries - Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Two (2) Project Leaders (one on behalf of the EU MS leading the project and the other of the beneficiary administration) and a Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) are the backbone of Twinning projects. The RTA is seconded to the beneficiary administration for a minimum of 12 months and up to 36 months throughout the entire duration of the implementation period of the Action and coordinates the project's activities.

"Twinning Light" is designed to offer a more flexible, mid-term approach (up to six months, in exceptional cases can be extended to eight months) without the presence of an RTA.

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia is still a beneficiary country and at the same time a provider of assistance under the Twinning instrument.

<sup>2</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The procedure to be followed by any interested department/entity is the following:

- 1) Calls for project proposals are first circulated to the National Contact Points (NCP) in the Member States and in the Candidate Countries. In Malta, FPD is designated as the Twinning NCP.
- 2) The Twinning NCP circulates the Twinning fiches to the relevant Directors in the respective Ministries, according to the project's theme. There will be approximately six to eight weeks to prepare a proposal.
- 3) Following an internal process of consultation, a Line Ministry may decide either not to participate or to participate as a Junior partner in a consortium (on own initiative or if approached by a counterpart authority in another EU MS) or to participate as a solo bidder. For each project fiche, Malta may only submit one proposal, opting for only one of these options.
- 4) Solo bids or bids where Malta will act as the lead Member State in a consortium are to be forwarded through Permanent Secretaries to Ms Carmen Dalli, Director, Programmes and Projects on [taix@gov.mt](mailto:taix@gov.mt) for onward transmission to the beneficiary country. Proposals should be submitted at least **two days** prior to the closing date established in the call for project proposals. Proposals must be fully in line with Twinning rules outlined and explained in the Twinning Manual.
- 5) Proposals, in which Malta shall be participating as a Junior partner in a consortium are to be coordinated through the administrative mechanism of the lead MS. However, FPD, as NCP, should be informed of such participation.

The decision whether or not to participate in an individual project would be up to the Permanent Secretary / Head of Department or Head of Public Entity. Careful evaluation of the project document is solicited, bearing in mind that a year or more could elapse before the start of actual implementation. Due consideration should be given to the available financial and human resources and to the potential value added implications of participation on the organization. A proposal to take part in a project should invariably be accompanied by a written undertaking of no adverse impact on the performance of the organization concerned.

For all practical and comprehensive information regarding the preparation and implementation of Twinning projects, please consult the Twinning Manual and annexes on: [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial\\_assistance/institution\\_building/2012/manual\\_may\\_2012.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial_assistance/institution_building/2012/manual_may_2012.pdf) and <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/twinning-manual-2012-update-2013-2014-annexes-20140910.pdf>

As per MFIN circular 5/2014, when a proposal involving Maltese participation is selected, the Department or Public entity concerned is to inform MFIN in writing (copy to the Treasury and Budget Office) so that arrangements would be made for a new Revenue item "EU Twinning Projects" to be opened in the Financial Estimates for that respective Department/Ministry.

## **TAIEX**

TAIEX ([http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/tenders/taiox/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/tenders/taiox/index_en.htm)) stands for Technical Assistance Information Exchange instrument of the European Commission. It supports public administrations in beneficiary countries so as to approximate, apply and enforce EU legislation as well as facilitate the sharing of EU best practices. It is mainly needs-driven and provides for appropriate expertise to address issues at short notice through three primary options, namely

- (1) **Workshops** – expert(s) from EU MS present specific areas of EU legislation in workshops organised for beneficiary officials;
- (2) **Expert missions:** EU MS expert(s) are sent to the beneficiary administration to provide in-depth advice on the transposition, implementation or enforcement of a specific part of EU legislation;
- (3) **Study visits:** a group of three practitioners from a beneficiary administration take part in a study visit to an EU MS's administration.

Beneficiary Countries will issue a request for expertise in specific areas of the Acquis, which is then uploaded on the TAIEX Expert Database. This database is an online tool, where *inter alia* calls are published for experts to view. Hence, experts are encouraged to register on this database at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/TMSWebRestrict/ExpertDatabase#/register> so that they are directly informed as soon as a call of interest to them is made available.

If no expert is found through this system, the NCPs will then be contacted, who, in turn, shall disseminate the information to the relevant Director within a Ministry/Public Entity. The latter forwards the information to any expert, identified as potentially eligible in offering the expertise required. It must be noted that on the contrary of Twinning projects, TAIEX missions are held over a small number of days, usually less than a week, therefore less demanding on human resources.

Malta, having gained a high level of expertise in different fields, has for these last ten years provided expertise in various specialised areas including market standards, financial accounting and taxation. Hence, public officers are encouraged to register their interest in the expert database so as to be able to receive information on relevant TAIEX missions.

For any queries, kindly contact the Coordination Unit, Funds and Programmes Division on [taiox@gov.mt](mailto:taiox@gov.mt).