



GUIDELINES
FOR
TWINNING REVIEW MISSIONS

DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations - NEAR
Institution Building TAIEX, Twinning

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Twinning is one of the main tools of Institution Building assistance made available by the European Commission to candidate countries and potential candidates, as well as to some partners countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy. It aims to help the beneficiaries in the development of modern and efficient administrations, with the structures, human resources and management skills needed to implement the *EU acquis*. Twinning is an important tool to assist national administrations in reaching the required level of institutional capacity by facilitating the sharing of Member States' experience and know-how.

Procedures related to the preparation and implementation of Twinning projects are defined by the Common Twinning Manual ('the Manual'), regularly updated by DG NEAR. The latest revised version was issued in 2012 (REVISION 2012, UPDATE 2013-2014).

The Manual states also the basic principles of Twinning. Among them are the pre-definition of concrete operational results (the so called mandatory results) in connection with the *EU acquis* or other EU policies, and the commitment of both Twinning partners (the Member State (MS) providing the assistance and the beneficiary country (BC) receiving it) to achieving the mandatory results so that at the end of the project **a new or adapted system must function under the sole responsibility and ownership of the beneficiary administration.**

The Manual adds as well that the achievements of a Twinning project should be maintained as a **permanent asset to the beneficiary administration** even after the end of the project implementation. This presupposes inter alia that effective mechanisms are put in place by the BC to disseminate and consolidate the results of the project. Sustainability is one of the main features of Twinning.

1.2 The Twinning Review Missions

Twinning Review Missions (TRM), aim at assessing the **sustainability and long term impact** of the results and outputs of each Twinning project, with emphasis on developments in the BC after the conclusion of the project's activities. TRM are not meant to evaluate the Twinning project itself; separate provisions are included in the Manual for that purpose¹.

TRM are short term missions organised and financed by the TAIEX instrument according to the rules and procedures applied to TAIEX events, *mutatis mutandi*. The authorities of the BC – and in particular the competent Administrative Office – are expected to provide assistance and cooperation during the preparation and the performance of TRM.

The present Guidelines and the Reporting Form Template reproduced hereunder, provide the basic framework for the organisation of a TRM. They integrate and interpret the pertinent provisions of the Manual, detailed in its section 9.2.2. The present Guidelines become an

¹ "The Commission will, at regular intervals, contract independent experts for evaluating Twinning projects, according to themes or countries or technical aspects of the instrument. Article 8 of the General Conditions of the Twinning Contract applies", Manual, Section 6.5

integral part of the Manual from the date they are communicated to all Twinning National Contact Points of MS and BC.

2 OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of a TRM is to assess if the achievements of the Twinning project are still present and if they produced a standing impact, in particular in terms of sustainability. Normally, a TRM should also identify lessons learned and recommend improvements for the managing of Twinning projects in the given country and/or sector.

3 SCOPE

TRM will analyse 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.

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).

4 TRM TEAM

4.1 The Twinning Review Expert

The Team charged with the performance of the TRM is led by the Twinning Review Expert (TRE), a public sector (or mandated body) expert from a different MS than the Lead or Junior MS partners of the project concerned, who did not participate in the Twinning project in question. In principle and when possible the TRE is a former RTA of a similar project.

The TRE is selected by DG NEAR Institution Building TAIEX, Twinning Unit, in consultation with MS National Contact Points (NCP) and other stakeholders. He/She is directly invited by the European Commission to perform the TRM.

The TRE is responsible for preparing the Reporting Form, following the template reproduced in the Annex. The Reporting Form, which the TRE will timely distribute to all members of the TRM Team, will mention the project's deliveries and the final report's recommendations

The TRE drafts the review report.

4.2 The TRM Team

For all or part of the TRM the TRE will be assisted and accompanied by a team of persons who were involved in the project concerned:

- the MS RTA;

- the BC RTA counterpart;
- the MS Project Leader (when appropriate and if available);
- the BC Project Leader (or the official who might have replaced him/her in the same position);
- the task manager from the pertinent EU Delegation/EUO/CFCD task manager who followed the project or the sector involved (or the official who might have replaced him/her in the same position).

If the MS RTA and/or the BC RTA counterpart are not available, the selection of a replacement is decided on a case by case basis by the Institution Building TAIEX, Twinning Unit in close consultation with the pertinent stakeholders.

5 ACTIVITIES

5.1 Preparation

Before the actual TRM takes place, direct preliminary contacts will be established between the members of the Team, at the initiative of the TRE. The Institution Building TAIEX, Twinning Unit will put at the disposal of the Team the pertinent documentation related to the Project concerned and in particular the project fiche, the project work plan, final report and monitoring reports if any. Other relevant documents will be provided if requested and available.

The preliminary contacts will be used to define the details of the TRM, including the draft programme of visits and meetings; possible questions/requests to be addressed to the competent authorities of the BC before the mission; time and duration of the visit (in principle 3 to 5 days) to the BC; etc.

5.2 Mission in the BC

The TRM will start with a briefing meeting of the Team, when possible in the premises of the EU Delegation. The briefing meeting can include a session with stakeholders from the BC administration in order to confirm and/or fine-tune the programme of the TRM.

The TRE will perform the planned activities (visits, meetings, etc.) accompanied by some or all of the other members of the Team. The BC administration is expected to provide all necessary support to facilitate the execution of the TRM.

A de-briefing meeting of the Team will take place at the end of the TRM, when possible in the premises of the EU Delegation. On this occasion Team members will have the opportunity to discuss and comment with the TRE the findings of the TRM, the preliminary outcomes and the main lines of the Report.

5.3 Visits and meetings

Visits and meetings that take place during the TRM shall focus on the follow-up to the activities and results of the Twinning project concerned; on the commitment of the beneficiary administration in pursuing the implementation effort; on the level of ownership of the new structures and processes put in place and on the possible persistence in the medium and long term of the project's impacts.

6 REPORTING

Within two weeks following the TRM, the TRE prepares and circulates to the Team members for comment a draft Report based on the Reporting Form's questions and grids and integrated by a narrative part elaborating on the level of ownership of outputs and their use by the beneficiaries; continuity in the reform process after the conclusion of the project; permanence and further sharing of skills and know-how acquired during the implementation of the project; persistence of significant gaps in structures, systems and capacities that might undermine the sustainability; etc.

The TRE integrates the comments of Team members in the draft and sends the final version of the Report to the Institution Building TAIEX, Twinning Unit which will share it with the pertinent stakeholders.

7 LOGISTICS

All logistical arrangements related to TRM (flights, accommodation, payment of allowances) will be centrally managed by the Institution Building TAIEX, Twinning Unit, through the TAIEX Instrument.

8 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

The TRE and the other Team members will be asked to sign a declaration of confidentiality. The views expressed in the Report will be those of the TRE and the TRM Team members and will not necessarily reflect those of the Commission. A corresponding standard disclaimer will be included in the Report.

The Report will remain the property of the Commission. No document based, in whole or in part, upon the Report or upon information collected during the TRM may be published except with the prior written approval of the Commission.

ANNEX

Reporting Form Twinning Review Mission

Twinning Project Number:
 Call for proposal reference:
 TAIEX Event Number:
 Project Title:
 Duration of the project (months):
 End date of the project:
 Date of the mission:

General Environment

1. How many officials of the Beneficiary Administration (BA) participated directly in the activities/training carried out by the Project?	
2. How many of those who participated directly in the activities/training are still working in the same organisation of the BA?	
3. How many in the same posts?	
4. Were there changes in the structure (services, departments, units, etc) of the BA?	
If yes, please, specify:	
The main team remains substantially unchanged but there were general changes that potentially can change the orientation of the management of the organisation.	
The main team has been changed substantially but the new team keeps substantially the same functions.	
The main team has been changed completely and there is no new team with similar functions.	
Other (please specify):	
5. The risks foreseen in the Project affected the implementation?	
a. If yes, please, specify:	
i. The Twinning Team had to change the project substantially	
ii. The Twinning Team had to make small changes on the project but it caused delays	
iii. The Twinning Team had to make small changes on the project but it didn't cause delays	
iv. The Twinning Team could neutralize the negative effects without changing the project	
v. Other (please specify)	

b. Please specify the changes that were made (if any)

Project deliveries

With reference to the outputs delivered by the Project, analyse the impact of these outputs in the BA and assess if the premises for the sustainability of the impacts are correct. Fill in a separate table for each output (mandatory result):

Output 1	
Indicators (as specified in the Final Report)	
According to the Final Report, was this output fully delivered?	
Can it be considered that the BA had ownership of this output at the end of the Project?	
Are impacts still visible in the BA?	
Are the training outputs still in use in BA?	
Are impacts likely to remain sustainable?	
Were recommendations issued linked to this output? If yes, please specify.	
Was a schedule for the implementation of the recommendations defined?	

Output 2	
Indicators (as specified in the Final Report)	
According to the Final Report, was this output fully delivered?	
Can it be considered that the BA had ownership of this output at the end of the Project?	
Are impacts still visible in the BA?	
Are the training outputs still in use in BA?	
Are impacts likely to remain sustainable?	
Were recommendations issued linked to this output? If yes, please specify.	
Was a schedule for the implementation of the recommendations defined?	

Output 3	
Indicators (as specified in the Final Report)	
According to the Final Report, was this output fully delivered?	
Can it be considered that the BA had ownership of this output at the end of the Project?	
Are impacts still visible in the BA?	
Are the training outputs still in use in BA?	
Are impacts likely to remain sustainable?	
Were recommendations issued linked to this output? If yes, please specify.	
Was a schedule for the implementation of the recommendations defined?	

(Please add additional tables as appropriate)

Additional Comments

Please, include here possible observations on the sustainability of the project's results, the dissemination of good practices and the present situation in the sector considered with regard to the implementation of European standards.

Follow-up of Recommendations

Recommendations included in the final report	Responses by Beneficiary Administration	Actual state of play following the TRM

(Please add additional rows as appropriate)

Lessons learned for future Twinning

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