

EVALUATION ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to share any relevant information that they may have.

TITLE OF THE EVALUATION	Evaluation of the Twinning instrument in the period 2010-2017
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	DG NEAR A3 (Evaluation Sector)
INDICATIVE PLANNING (PLANNED START DATE AND COMPLETION DATE)	Q1/2018 to Q2/2019
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/tenders/twinning_en

The Roadmap is provided for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the document, including its timing, are subject to change.

A. Context, purpose and scope of the evaluation

Context

This evaluation is part of the DG NEAR multiannual Evaluation plan and it to be launched in 2017. It is in line with the [EU Better Regulation](#) which emphasises the need of systemic and timely evaluation of European Commission programmes, activities, instruments and non-spending activities in order to demonstrate accountability and to promote lesson learning to improve policy and practice.

[Institutional Twinning](#) is an initiative of the European Commission that was launched in 1998 in the context of the preparation for enlargement of the EU. It was conceived as a tool for targeted administrative co-operation to assist candidate countries and potential candidates to strengthen their administrative and judicial capacity to implement EU legislation as future Member States of the EU.

As from the end of 2003, Institutional Twinning was extended to the Southern Mediterranean countries where there was an Association Agreement with the EU and the following year to the Newly Independent States of Eastern Europe where Partnership and Cooperation Agreements were signed.

Institution Building Twinning projects bring together public sector expertise from EU Member States and Partner countries with the aim of achieving specific mandatory results. They yield concrete operational results for the Partner country under the terms of the agreements established with the EU (the Association Agreements (AA) and the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) with Neighbourhood countries, the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) with Western Balkans candidate countries and potential candidates and the Association Agreement (AA) with Turkey serve as the legal bases of relations between the EU and its partners).

Twinning as a tool is specifically mentioned in Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action , and in particular Article 4 paragraph (1) (a) and paragraph (10) (b) thereof.

Furthermore the Commission Decision 1122 of 21 February 2017 states in its grounds for consideration the institutional setting of Twinning and the role of EC by stressing "the sound implementation of Twinning projects requires that the relevant procedures are clearly detailed in a guidebook (Twinning Manual), established by the services of the Commission coordinating the implementation of Twinning projects".

Whilst standard Twinning has always been built on three main pillars – the co-operation between administrations, the permanent presence of a Member State civil servant (the Resident Twinning Adviser) in the partner/beneficiary country (PC/BC) and an established project management system based on the achievement of "mandatory results" - the application of these principles has sometimes led to the definition of overambitious results and implementation timetables whereas reforming Public Administration is known to be a lengthy process.

Twinning Light tool can be used to tackle any institutional issue with a more limited scope than in the case of standard Twinning as the implementation of a specific measure, rather than supporting reform of the general or legal framework. The maximum amount of a grant financing a Twinning Light project is EUR 250 000 and the

maximum duration of the implementation period is limited to eight months. Apart from the limitations to budget and duration, there are four other main elements that differentiate Twinning Light from standard Twinning: there is no Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA); Member State must submit their proposals individually (no consortia are allowed); the detailed work plan covering the entire implementation period must be included in the proposals submitted by MS; no form of sub-contracting to the private sector is allowed, with the only exception of the hiring of translation and interpretation services, where necessary.

Twining Projects cover a wide range of areas such as **finance and internal market, environment, justice and home affairs, energy, transport, trade and industry, agriculture, employment, social affairs, health & consumer protection**, etc.

Twining as an Institution Building tool rests upon **common features and the** Common results of Twining projects include, among others:

- **Improved legislative and regulatory context** in line with EU legislation and regulation in key priority areas;
- **Improved institutional capacity** of the national public administration particularly in fields specified in the national reforms agenda and, in line with EU-partner countries strategic frameworks;
- Improved conditions necessary for the EU-partner countries **economic cooperation and other cooperation areas** (e.g. political development and governance, and social development);
- **Enhanced political dialogue** for further strengthened relations.

Purpose and scope

The generic purpose of the evaluation is to provide an overall independent assessment and evidence on the contribution of the Twining instrument in the period 2010-2017 to support candidate countries and potential candidates and neighbourhood countries in meeting their respective commitments in the framework of their relationships with the European Union (EU).

The specific objectives are:

1. To provide an assessment in both qualitative and quantitative terms on the relevance, conditions of implementation and performance of the Twining instrument, particularly its efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and added value. This assessment will be done as regards the achievement by candidate countries and potential candidate of their commitments for EU membership and the achievement of neighbourhood countries to the overall objectives of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and to the countries' institutional modernisation efforts and public administration reforms.
2. To provide to the Commission lessons learnt and recommendations on the institutional setting and implementation of the Twining instrument to improve current support to candidate countries, potential candidates and neighbourhood countries.
3. Moreover, special attention will also be drawn to the coherence/complementarity of Twining with what other EU-funded institutional building tools do, more particularly TAIEX and SIGMA, complementary support of Budget support (BS) programmes, and other institutional building tools (incl. Technical assistance, but not only).

Both Twining and Twining light fall under the scope of the evaluation.

The results of the evaluation will feed the ground for: (i) a potential re-setting of Twining (including further simplification if needed); (ii) defining greater synergy effects with the EU's political and reform objectives (iii) as well as for the overall programming of financial assistance having in mind the complementarity of the tools available for implementing assistance in Partner Countries.

The Rule of law, Public administration reform (PAR), and within the latter Public financial management related issues, as well as Economic governance and Competitiveness (including in relation to energy related issues), are among the areas that have received greater attention by Twining projects in the evaluation period. As such, they will be treated in different sectorial Evaluation questions (EQs). More transversal EQs will cover Twining projects regardless of their areas of intervention (the case studies to be proposed by the evaluation team, and agreed by the Interservice Consultation group (ISG) at the end of the inception report, will determine the final scope). The

preliminary list of evaluation questions, to be finalised later in the process, is:

1. To what extent and how has, and is at present affecting, the institutional set-up, programming approach and implementation procedures of the Twinning instrument the capacity of the Twinning projects to generate the expected (mandatory) outputs and contribute to the achievement of the expected outcomes and impacts?
2. To what extent is the Twinning instrument adding value to what other institutional building tools do (i.e. TAIEX, SIGMA, complementary support of Budget support (BS) programmes, other institutional building tools (incl. Technical assistance, but not only) in non-BS programmes linked to country reforms) in a way that enhances complementarity and potentially multiplies results in support of the overall EU and partner countries goals? Are there political, institutional, organisational and individual, but also technical and financial incentives in the use of the Twinning instrument?
3. To what extent has the use of the Twinning instrument taken the key principles of public administration and horizontal public administration reforms into consideration thus contributed to the reform processes i.e. by ensuring more implementable laws and policies and more streamlined administrative structures and procedures in candidate countries, potential candidates and neighbourhood countries? In case this didn't happen, what were the obstacles encountered?
4. To what extent has the use of the Twinning instrument in the area of Public Financial management contributed, and is at present contributing, to the improvement of sound public financial management reforms in line with candidate countries, potential candidates and neighbourhood countries' public financial management strategies in support of their commitments for EU membership/alignment with the EU acquis? In case this didn't happen, what were the obstacles encountered?
5. To what extent has the use of the Twinning instrument in the area of Rule of law contributed, and is at present contributing, to the strengthening of the institutional setting in line with good governance principles and the effective functioning of the institutions guaranteeing democracy and rule of law basic principles in candidate countries, potential candidates and neighbourhood countries? In case this didn't happen, what were the obstacles encountered?
6. To what extent has the use of the Twinning instrument in the area of economic governance and competitiveness (including in relation to energy related issues) contributed to the improvement of the relevant institutional frameworks and structures and therefore contributed to socio-economic development of candidate, potential candidate and neighbourhood countries by inter alia an improvement of the business climate, an increased competitiveness of the economy and a better economic integration with the EU? In case this didn't happen, what were the obstacles encountered?

In accordance with the Better Regulation, the following evaluation criteria will be used: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and added value, complemented with impact, sustainability and complementarity.

The temporal scope is 2010-2017. The analysis will cover both the late part of the previous (2007-2013) and the current (2014-2020) programming period.

In the considered period, the Twinning instrument has covered geographically the following beneficiaries:

- [Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance](#) (IPA): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo *, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. Before joining the EU, Croatia benefitted also from Twinning projects.
- European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP):
 - ENI South: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.
 - ENI East: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

B. Better regulation

Consultation of citizens and stakeholders

Not being a major evaluation, and in line with the Better Regulation guidelines, the present evaluation will not develop an on-line open public consultation ([OPC](#)).

The main objectives of the consultation activities will be to gather data, opinions and test hypotheses.

The main stakeholders to be consulted during the entire evaluation exercise from inception to final/reporting phase (either via interviews and/or surveys) include:

* 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.

- National authorities and structures in candidate countries, potential candidates and neighbourhood countries responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of EU support (mostly those related to the Twinning Instrument, but not only), beneficiaries of EU support and other national stakeholders;
- EU stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): EU Delegations/EU Office in candidate countries, potential candidates and neighbourhood countries, Commission services, the European External Action Service, EU Member States, several Member State Embassies in the beneficiary countries, European financial institutions.

The list will be further defined during Inception phase.

Data collection and methodology

The evaluation process will be carried out in four phases: an Inception Phase, a Desk Phase, a Field Phase, and a Synthesis Phase. Among the pool of main methodological techniques, the following key elements can be already pinpointed:

- A. Evaluation Questions. A draft set will be presented in the Terms of Reference and the evaluation team, in consultation with the Commission Evaluation manager, will finalise and complete it (with Judgement criteria (JC) and indicators for each JC and relevant data collection sources and tools) during the inception phase. When relevant, cross-cutting issues will be considered. Expectations expressed by the ISG members and other key informants as well as the feasibility of arriving at an answer (based on a first desk review), will be considered.
- B. Evaluation Matrix. Judgment criteria, indicators and sources. Judgment criteria determine the appropriate indicators and, more generally, the nature of the data collected and the type of analysis. The indicators will need to allow cross-checking, triangulating and strengthening the evidence base on which the questions are answered. The information gathered for each indicator will need to be presented as an annex of the desk and final reports.
- C. Data collection tools. Several tools will be used for collecting, structuring, processing and/or analysing data throughout the evaluation process: Inventory of Twinning interventions, Literature review, Interviews, Case studies, Survey, Quantitative analysis.

Deliverables in the form of reports and/or slide presentations should be submitted at the end of the corresponding phases.

Key sources of information already available are (this list will be further detailed once a set of case studies are defined (see below):

1. EU policy and strategy documents (Enlargement Strategies, European Neighbourhood Policy, etc.);
2. IPA beneficiaries and neighbourhood countries policy and strategy documents (Enlargement: Association Agreements and Accession Partnerships; Association Agreements for ENP-South countries and Partnership and Cooperation Agreements and Association Agreements for ENP-east countries, etc.);
3. IPA beneficiaries and neighbourhood countries official documents (i.e. national programmes for integration into the EU, sector strategies, etc.);
4. Twinning projects related documents (incl. Results Orientated Monitoring reports)
5. Previous evaluations, studies, etc.

Available evaluations (non-exhaustive list) are:

1. [Evaluation Twinning versus Technical Assistance](#), Final report, May 2012, ECORYS Nederland BV
2. Evaluation of the Institutional Twinning Instrument in the Countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy, Final Report, June 2012, HTSPE
3. Country level evaluations of the Twinning instrument (IPA: Turkey; [ENI](#) South: Algeria, Jordan, Tunisia; ENI east: Azerbaijan, Georgia)
4. Twinning review mission reports,
5. [Twinning manual](#)
6. [Twinning activity reports](#)
7. Twinning: a tested experience in a broader European context, 2006, European Commission