

THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership of 28 democratic countries. It aims at peace, prosperity and freedom for its more than 500 million citizens – in a fairer and safer world. Together, during a period of enlargement of half a century, they have built an area of stability, democracy and development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

WHAT IS TWINNING?

It is a cooperation tool between a Public Administration in a Beneficiary Country and the equivalent Institution in an EU Member State. It aims at upgrading/modernising the institution in a Beneficiary Country through training, reorganisation as well as approximation of legislation to EU norms and standards and its enforcement. One of its key features is the concept of mandatory results: both the Beneficiary and the EU partner commit themselves to work towards a commonly agreed result.

Twinning projects are financed by the European Union. The Beneficiary partner contributes to the project with human resources, office space and equipment, and training venues.

Public officials of the participating EU Member State institutions provide technical assistance to the Beneficiary Institution. Usually only one of them, the Resident Twinning Adviser stays in the Beneficiary Country for the whole duration of the project, but in this project for the Parliaments of BiH three more resident Member State experts (Component Leaders) provided permanent support as in this special case there were four Beneficiary Institutions.

In parliamentary twinning there is a further benefit for the participating institutions: larger political commitment can be achieved on both sides – Beneficiary Country and the EU – for the integration process based on deepening mutual understanding and strengthened political cooperation.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

108 experts from Hungary, France and 11 other EU Member States implemented more than 170 different activities in 7 components aiming different goals: assessment and evaluations, trainings (seminars, workshops and study visits), roundtables, guidelines and recommendations.

BASIC DATA OF THE PROJECT

- Total budget: 3,5 million Euro
- Duration: 25 months, February 2014 – February 2016

FINANCING

The project was financed by the European Union's IPA fund. The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) provides assistance within the framework of the European Partnership of the potential candidate countries and the Accession Partnership of the candidate countries.

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TWINNING PROJECT

Enhancing the role of parliaments in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the EU integration context

The European Union's IPA Programme
for Bosnia and Herzegovina



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The project is implemented by the Hungarian National Assembly
in consortium with the French National Assembly

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The concept

The project's objective was to enhance the role of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the National Assembly of Republika Srpska and the Brčko District Assembly in the accession process of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU and the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

The project's purpose was to strengthen the capacity of Members of Parliament (MPs) and the administrations of the Parliaments in BiH for strategic guidance of the EU accession process; improve alignment of legislation with EU law and effective oversight functions and to enhance cooperation and coordination of the Parliaments of BiH in these processes.

Participants from the Beneficiary Country

Members and civil servants of the Parliaments of BiH, invited governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Participants from EU Member States

The project was implemented by the Hungarian National Assembly in consortium with the French National Assembly, but the Consortium Partners also invited experts from several other EU Member States in order to present a wide variety of EU best practices which can contribute to find the most suitable structures and procedures for the Parliaments of BiH.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Based on the activities performed in the 7 components, the Twinning Project achieved the following main results:

- Concept on the cooperation mechanism for the Parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the tasks of the EU integration process was signed by the Political Leaders of the Parliaments;
- Joint Statement on the commitment of the Parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the EU integration by taking measures to implement the recommendations of the Twinning Project was adopted by the Collegiums of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Assembly of Republika Srpska; while the Assembly of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina also approved the Joint Statement at its plenary session;
- Customized Action Plans for enhancing the role of Parliaments in the EU accession process for each of the 4 Beneficiary Parliaments were elaborated and adopted;
- Complete package of recommendations for improvement in 20 fields (with hundreds of concrete actions) were elaborated and presented and served as the basis for the adopted Action Plans;
- More than 40 training type activities were conducted;
- More than 700 pages of training manual (textbook on EU standard parliamentary functioning) was elaborated and presented;
- Various publications were prepared;
- Content of an EU resource centre for the 4 BiH Parliaments was elaborated for further electronic use.



PROJECT COMPONENTS

The Project was implemented in seven components with similar methodology. First the Twinning team analyzed and assessed the current situation, then implemented a detailed training programme. Based on the assessment and training results, guidelines and recommendations were elaborated in close cooperation and agreement with the BiH Parliaments.

1. Strengthening capacities for strategic guidance of the EU accession process and dialogue with the European Parliament

The objective of Component 1 was to set up resources and mechanisms which are inevitable preconditions for a successful integration. This Component focused on four different issues to achieve this objective: 1. It analysed the needs of MPs playing key role in leading the EU accession related activities; 2. It targeted the strengthening of the knowledge and skills at the administrations of the Parliaments of BiH in EU accession related activities and proposed with concrete methodology and description of competences the setting up of EU units in the Parliaments; 3. It served to introduce better planning mechanisms for the EU-related work of the Parliaments; and 4. It intended to maximize the opportunities which lie in the cooperation with the European Parliament in the Stabilization and Association Parliamentary Committee.

2. Enhancing the mechanisms and capacity for legislative alignment

This Component focused on the legislative process of the Parliaments and the law approximation of the national regulations with the EU *acquis*. The activities targeted the improvement of the practice of legislation which is a precondition of the development of successful law approximation processes with the EU *acquis* and the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The Component concentrated on the duties and responsibilities of the different parliamentary bodies, as well as the working methods and mechanisms to improve the legislation in general and ensure a sustainable EU law approximation system. In addition it provided recommendations for improving the IT support of the legislative process.

3. Enhancing the mechanism for oversight of the government, of supervisory and regulatory bodies and improving cooperation with government on the EU accession process

The governments and supervisory and regulatory bodies play a crucial role in the course of the whole EU integration process since they are responsible for the development of the related preparation and implementation of the plans and policies and also for coordination of the law approximation process. Therefore the activities focused on the strengthening of the oversight function of parliaments at the level of plenary session and committees to achieve a structured and regular monitoring mechanism. Since the oversight activities of a parliament are largely dependent on its research capacities, the Component also focused on strengthening the parliamentary research functions, as a key background support instrument for effective oversight.

4. Increasing participation of civil society and visibility of the role of Parliaments in the EU accession process

The aim of the Component was to increase the visibility of the Parliaments in general but especially in the EU accession process. To achieve this aim a



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concept of an EU communication strategy was elaborated with recommendations to EU Communication Action Plans for the Parliaments. Methodology to improve the involvement and information of the civil society related to the legislative process and the EU related activities was also presented. Content of an electronic EU resource centre for the 4 BiH Parliaments together with proposal for the establishment of an EU-related parliamentary website was also elaborated.

5. Developing regular cooperation and coordination among the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, National Assembly of Republika Srpska and the Brčko District Assembly on EU-related issues

The objective of Component 5 was to establish a functioning cooperation and coordination mechanism among the Parliaments of BiH on EU-related issues. As a result a four level cooperation concept was elaborated: 1. to install regular cooperation among Speakers and Deputy Speakers of the BiH Parliaments; 2. to revitalize and strengthen the functioning of the Forum of EU integration committees; 3. to set up fora of parliamentary committees on different EU policies (key areas for EU approximation tasks) with regular information-sharing and coordination activities; 4. to establish regular consultation and cooperation framework for the parliamentary administration. In addition, the Component aimed to deepen the knowledge of Parliaments on the roles and duties of European Integration Committees, other standing committees and working bodies in the European integration process.

6. Raising capacity of MPs and parliamentary staff

In Component 6, raising capacity of MPs and parliamentary staff were in focus in order to enhance the general knowledge and also specific skills for better performance in all levels of parliamentary work. MPs had been supported by the possibilities of series of consultations on fields that could enrich their wide scope of capacities. Staff benefited from trainings to get to know various European practices in their respective policy fields which they are engaged in, and then to broaden their general knowledge on EU, which is more and more needed on the path of EU integration.

7. Improving internal resources management

Strategic planning of internal resources should be the basis for a successful resource management in the Parliaments of BiH. To achieve this aim, the Component focused on two fields: 1. It presented recommendations for a modern parliamentary human resources management policy and 2. It elaborated the framework to establish budgetary autonomy and independence for all the BiH Parliaments with the necessary improvements of the procedures to adopt and manage their budget more effectively.

More information about the Twinning Project can be found on its webpage www.bih-parliamentary-twinning.eu



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