

The European Union

The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable 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 Public Administrations in the Beneficiary Country (BC) and equivalent institutions in EU Member States. It aims at upgrading/modernising and supporting the institutions in the Beneficiary Country through training, reorganisation as well as approximation of legislation to EU norms and standards.
- Both the Beneficiary and EU partners commit themselves to work towards a commonly agreed result.
- Twinning projects are financed by the European Commission. The Beneficiary partners contribute to the project with human resources, office space, equipment and meeting venues.
- Public officials of the participating EU Member States (MS) institutions provide technical assistance to the Beneficiary Institutions. One of them, the Resident Twinning Adviser stays in the Beneficiary Country for the whole duration of the project.
- In parliamentary twinning there is a further benefit for the participating institutions: greater political commitment can be achieved on both sides – Beneficiary Country and the EU – for the integration process, based on a spirit of deepening mutual understanding and strengthened political cooperation.

Facts and Figures

- Parliaments of 3 EU Member States (Hungary, Austria and Croatia) implemented the project
- 7 parliamentary chambers from 5 other EU Member States contributed to the implementation
- More than 60 EU Member State experts implemented activities in 4 Components
- Total budget available: 2.3 million Euro
- Duration: 30 months, May 2019 – October 2021

Financing

The project was financed by the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) which aims at providing targeted financial assistance to countries which are candidates and potential candidates for membership to the EU.

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TWINNING PROJECT

EMPOWERMENT AND FURTHER SUPPORT TO THE PARLIAMENTS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA IN EU INTEGRATION TASKS



Implementation framework

The concept

- This Twinning Project had a strategic mission to strengthen the capacities 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, as well as the Cantonal Assemblies, to exercise their EU-related tasks in the EU accession process and implementation of the requirements of the EU-BiH Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA).
- The Twinning Project built on the results of two former Twinning Projects: Twinning Project “Enhancing the role of parliaments in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the EU integration context” (2014-2016) also implemented by the Hungarian National Assembly in cooperation with the French National Assembly which covered wide variety of fields to enhance the legislative and administrative capacities of the Parliaments of BiH and to strengthen their role in the EU integration process; and Twinning Light Project “Support to the administrative structures for EU integration related tasks of the Parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (2017) implemented alone by the Hungarian National Assembly which focused on the assistance to the setting up and functioning of the EU Units of the Parliaments of BiH; and on the assessment of the needs of the Cantonal Assemblies in the EU integration context.

Participants of the Project

Participants from the Beneficiary Country:

- Members of the Parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Administration of the Parliaments of Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Members and administrations of the Cantonal Assemblies from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Representatives of invited governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Participants from EU Member States:

- The project was implemented by the Office of the Hungarian National Assembly, the Administration of the Austrian Parliament and the Croatian Parliament Staff Service. Furthermore, experts were also invited from 7 other parliamentary chambers of 5 other EU Member States (Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Portugal, Slovakia) in order to find – on the basis of European best practices – the most suitable, well-functioning structures and procedures for the BiH Parliaments.

Project achievements

Based on the activities performed in the four Components, the Twinning Project achieved the following main results:

- Priority Plan for Parliaments of BiH for accelerating the European integration process was endorsed by each BiH Parliament in line with their internal regulations after Joint Statement on the support of the Priority Plan was signed by all Speakers and Deputy Speakers of the four BiH Parliaments;
- Customized Action Plans for enhancing the role of Parliaments in the EU accession process for each of the four Beneficiary Parliaments were revised and updated;
- Tailor made EU Communication Action Plans were prepared for each Parliament;
- 30 pilot information activities implemented, among them 19 printed materials for MPs and for broader public were prepared and the electronic EU Resource Centre for BiH Parliaments launched;
- 61 specific consultation workshops and on-the-job trainings conducted in the four BiH Parliaments apart from continuous coaching activities;
- 17 draft laws examined in the frame of on-the-job trainings from legal approximation and legal drafting point of view;
- 19 parliamentary EU cooperation events were implemented;
- Common Action Plan for the Cantonal Assemblies was endorsed and signed by all ten Speakers of Cantonal Assemblies;
- Complete training programme with 14 training activities delivered to Cantonal Assemblies.

Project Components

1. Enhancing the capacities of the EU Units of BiH Parliaments

The aim of Component 1 was to achieve that EU Units – which serve as focal points and centres for EU expertise in the administrations of BiH Parliaments – are able to provide efficient professional support to the EU integration tasks.

Component 1 also focused on the support to the implementation and the regular update of EU Integration Action Plans which provide a detailed list of tasks helping the BiH Parliaments to get prepared their institutions for EU integration and perform their related tasks.

BiH Parliaments were also assisted in preparing and implementing their EU communication action plans to enhance their role and intensify their efforts in informing Members and administrations of Parliaments, civil society organizations, media and the general public about the benefits and challenges of EU integration process.

2. Strengthening cooperation among the BiH Parliaments on EU related issues

Component 2 turned the cooperation mechanism of the BiH Parliaments – adopted as a key result of the first Twinning Project – fully operational. For that purpose, organization of political level coordination meetings (Conference of Speakers of the BiH Parliaments, Parliamentary Forum on EU Integration, Cooperation of sectoral committees) and administrative level cooperation were assisted and facilitated by the Twinning Project. The Component also aimed to provide specialized and up-to-date information (strategic guidance, consultation and training) on the role and involvement of the Members and staff of the European integration committees and the Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee, further to enhance the involvement of other standing committees of BiH Parliaments in the EU integration process.

3. Enhancing legal approximation capacities of the parliamentary administrations

The objective of this Component was to enhance the capacity of the administrations of BiH Parliaments in the EU legal approximation process especially in the compatibility checking and legal drafting activities. Based on the outcome of the previous Twinning Light Project, structures and procedures of law approximation in the BiH Parliaments were improved, as well as the legal approximation skills of the staff were enhanced through regular practical and coaching exercises.

4. Developing capacities of the Cantonal Assemblies

Component 4 aimed at ensuring the Cantonal Assemblies' engagement in the European integration process by the elaboration and introduction of a Common Action Plan for the Cantonal Assemblies, enabling them to perform their share of constitutional responsibilities and accomplish their institutional adaptation especially in exercising their tasks in the coordination of EU integration activities and the implementation of the SAA. Component 4 also focused on raising capacities of Representatives and administrations of Cantonal Assemblies by training activities to assist them to perform their EU integration related work more efficiently.

**More information about the Twinning Project
can be found on its webpage:**

www.bih-parliamentary-twinning.eu