



Guidelines for Fact Finding Missions

Notification of a Fact Finding Mission

The EU Member State that wishes to organise a fact finding mission (hereafter "the initiating MS") notifies accordingly the European Commission.

In the *IPA context*, the notification is sent to the Twinning coordination team of DG Enlargement and the competent EU Delegation (EUD); in the *ENPI context*, to the competent EUD, with copy to EuropeAid A6¹.

The notification includes:

- a) Written approval to receive a fact finding mission undersigned by the Beneficiary in the *IPA context* and by both the Beneficiary and the PAO in the *ENPI context*.
- b) A list of issues that the fact finding mission will explore
- c) Date of the mission
- d) Participants to the mission

The person to be proposed as Resident Twinning Adviser for the project concerned cannot be associated to the fact finding mission.

The mission should be scheduled at least 21 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals².

Information and involvement of other EU Member States (MS)

Following the notification from the initiating MS, the Twinning coordination team in the *IPA context* and the respective EUD in the *ENPI context* inform all MS National Contact Points (NCP) about the fact finding mission and its planned contents.

Any MS may require being associated to the fact finding mission, designating participants from its Administration.

A MS that does not wish to participate in the fact finding mission may alternatively suggest, before the beginning of the mission, that the initiating MS addresses additional issues during the mission.

¹ Copy to EuropeAid-TWINNING-OPERATIONS@ec.europa.eu

² In line with the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions (Section 6.4.4): Applicants may submit questions in writing up to 21 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals. The Contracting Authority must reply to all such questions at least 11 days before the deadline for submission of proposals. In the interests of transparency and equal opportunity, the answer provided to one applicant on points which may be of interest to the other applicants should be made available to all the others. The way to achieve this is to publish on the Internet a table of questions and answers provided. This must be updated regularly until 11 days before the deadline for submission of proposals.

Participation of the EUD

In both the IPA and ENPI context, the EUD in the beneficiary country is kept informed about the programme and the participants, in parallel with the national authorities (including the PAO in the *ENPI context*). The EUD can participate as observer at the fact finding mission and ensure that it is carried out in a way that does not impinge on the transparency and fairness of the selection procedure.

Participants

All participants designated by the initiating MS or by another MS must be officials of the institutions potentially interested or involved in the Twinning project.

Circulation of the outcome of the mission

The initiating MS establishes, in agreement with the Beneficiary Administration, minutes of the fact finding mission addressing all relevant questions and aspects discussed and circulates these, at the latest 11 days before the deadline of the Call for Proposals, to all MS NCPs and to the European Commission (Twinning coordination team in DG Enlargement in the *IPA context* or EuropeAid A6 in the *ENPI context* and the competent EUD). Comments and observations by other participants to the fact finding mission are communicated directly to the same addressees.

Costs

All costs related to the organisation and execution of fact finding missions are borne directly by each MS involved. They cannot be included among the reimbursable preparatory costs of the Twinning project.