

Developing security education across borders: Twinning projects as a vehicle



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Who am I?

- retired 12/2021 after 11 years as the Rector of the Finnish Police University College (polamk.fi/en)
- former director of the Finnish NBI Forensic Laboratory 1991-2011
- Ph.D. in analytical chemistry, PGCert in criminal justice management
- adjunct professor in quality systems at University of Helsinki

- Twinning experience from four projects 2000-2021

A bit about EU foreign policy

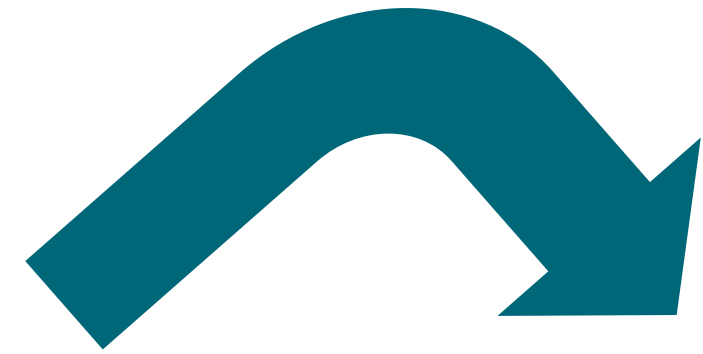
EU joint foreign and security policy is designed to resolve conflicts and foster international understanding. It is based on diplomacy and respect for international rules.

EU foreign and security policy seeks to:

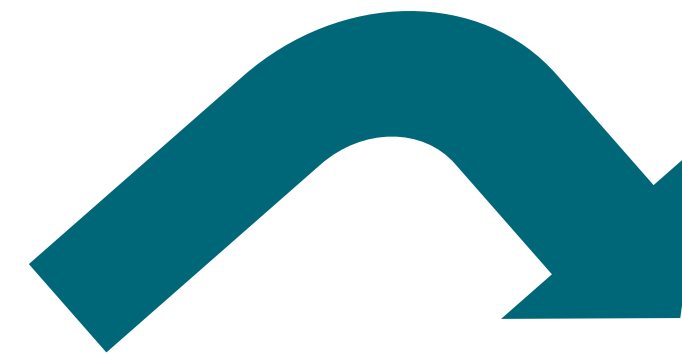
- preserve peace
- strengthen international security
- promote international cooperation
- develop democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms



military
crisis management



civilian
crisis management



support to
administration
building

What is Twinning? (I)

- an EU instrument for institutional cooperation between public administrations of EU Member States and of beneficiary or partner countries
- Twinning projects support the development of administration and legislation in EU enlargement and neighbourhood countries
- Twinning projects bring together public sector expertise from EU Member States and beneficiary countries with the aim of achieving concrete operational results *through peer-to-peer activities, i.e. through cooperation*



What is Twinning? (II)

- Twinning aims to transfer *good governance*, support administrative and legislative reforms of beneficiary countries and promote economic and social *stability*
- Twinning offers an opportunity for the participating agencies to develop their ideas and practices into products and even to promote commercial cooperation
- Other closely related EU mechanism are Twinning light and TAIEX



Principles of Twinning (I)

- the beneficiary administration is a public administration with *sufficient staff* and *absorption capacity* to work with a Member State institution having a similar structure and mandate
- the beneficiary country must mobilise its staff, demonstrate enduring commitment and ownership and take on board changes and best practices in a sustainable way
- Twinning *is not* a one-way technical assistance instrument but a *shared commitment*

Principles of Twinning (II)

- Twinning projects are implemented with a goal to achieve *mandatory results*
- Twinning projects are usually structured in components corresponding to the expected results
- Twinning projects include a variety of activities, including workshops, training sessions, expert missions, study visits, internships and counselling
- Twinning strongly relies on 1) learning by doing and 2) sharing of best practices

Twinning project initiative

... is in the hands of the beneficiary country!

Projects calls are listed in so called *Twinning pipeline* published by EU Commission.

Currently there are 43 project calls in 20 countries. Suggested project budgets are between 0.2 and 4.2 million euro. (Project management is the responsibility of the lead partner.)

Member State administration institutions (typically consortia) prepare project proposals to respond to beneficiary country requirements.

Some personal experiences from Twinning projects

Observations on cooperation

The willingness of the beneficiary organization to receive transfer of good governance (“absorption capacity”) is critical. This applies to upper levels of political and management hierarchy, too. Unfortunately this is almost impossible to assess at project planning phase.

It is almost always relatively straightforward, even easy, to work with expert staff. Certain level of resistance to change is understandable and bearable.

Organizational and managerial change in the beneficiary organization should be coordinated with Twinning project aims - otherwise there may be contradictory processes simultaneously underway.

Observations on domestic aspects

There is no clearly defined policy towards Twinning projects in the Finnish public administration. Institutions often feel pressure from above against active participation in projects. The broader benefit which relates to Finnish and EU foreign policy is not seen nor understood.

Twining project management is demanding. It is a considerable extra effort for personnel and financial unit staff - and they are the ones who are not rewarded.

For middle management it is often an uncomfortable challenge to invest expert staff time to external activities where the benefit is difficult to observe.

Twining is not costly - practically all costs are covered.

Observations on partnerships

It seems beneficial if Twinning consortia can be built on existing close partnerships. Project staff already know each other, collaboration is smooth, there is mutual experience of procedures and practices.

Twinning projects are mostly relatively long (often several years). Cooperation between partners - both on organization and individual levels - develops positively, and may lead to other types of collaboration.

Intensive communication between partners is vital!

Observations on individuals

Twinning projects open opportunities to improve an individual expert's skills in many ways:

- a benchmarking exercise: *am I able to manage? am I able to deliver in foreign language? am I competent in comparison to colleagues in partner and beneficiary institutions?*
- working in a Twinning project brings in international experience which is often difficult to achieve in other fora
- working in a Twinnign project often improves an individual's self-esteem

Concluding remarks

Twinning projects, as an EU instrument, is a reflection of European values. It should be seen as such on a national level.

At best, a Twinning project may result in major improvements in the beneficiary organization - provided the inclination to improve is strong enough.

On individual expert level, participation in Twinning projects considerably improves professionalism and expert self confidence.



Thank you

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