



DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION TIPS TOOLS INSIGHTS PRACTICES

In practice

MOBILISING PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS TO SUPPORT PARTNER COUNTRY REFORMS THROUGH EU TWINNING AND TAIEX

Key messages

Poland engages actively in the European Union's Twinning and TAIEX programmes to help build well-functioning public sectors in its partner countries. Contributing to the programmes requires the Polish government to co-ordinate and mobilise expertise across its public administration.

Keywords

Governance | Partnerships | Human resources

Key partner

Poland

Challenge

Engaging in the European Union's (EU) Twinning and Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) development co-operation programmes is in line with Poland's foreign policy priorities around democracy, the rule of law and a free market economy in neighbouring countries. Doing so requires effective co-ordination and mobilisation of the knowledge and expertise that exist within Poland's public institutions. Building interest among the different actors and technical experts, who often face significant work demands of their own, can be challenging.

Approach

- **A well-established mechanism.** The EU's [Twinning](#) and [TAIEX](#) initiatives are well-established tools for supporting public sector reforms. Having been the largest beneficiary of Twinning and TAIEX activities in Europe in preparing for EU membership, Poland is now well-placed to share its experience with other countries.
- **Building awareness on the value of participating in and maintaining an effective network of practitioners.** Generating awareness at the political level, including among heads of public administration units, of the role Twinning and TAIEX can play in building political and economic stability

in Poland's region can be challenging. A central contact point in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs helps to co-ordinate and promote the involvement of officials. Training and activities aimed at promoting participation in projects also contribute to maintaining the interest of the Polish administration.

- **Streamlining administrative practices.** The contact point in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has developed standardised guidelines, explanatory notes and road maps to facilitate the participation of Polish institutions in the programmes. This includes supporting individual experts to set up tax and social security records when working for longer periods in partner countries.
- **Collaborating with other EU countries.** Prioritising consortia Twinning projects facilitates two-way learning for Polish experts and ensures the necessary complementary skills in each project.
- **Sequencing for greater impact.** Co-operation through short-term TAIEX projects can help build deeper collaboration. For instance, it enables partners to get to know one another, providing a solid basis for future, longer term Twinning projects that can then evolve into a bilateral Polish development co-operation project funded by Polish taxpayers.

Results

- **Greater buy-in of the Polish administration.** At the political level, there is greater awareness of the tangible benefits for Poland and partner countries of participating in the Twinning and TAIEX programmes. Poland is actively engaged in projects that deal with auditing public finances, banking, regional development and agriculture. Polish institutions win an average of 4 Twinning projects annually, and on average 80 TAIEX mini-projects are carried out by Polish experts annually.
- **A well-functioning network of practitioners facilitates knowledge sharing.** The creation of a strong network of experts in Polish institutions through Twinning and TAIEX has allowed good practices to be shared across the Polish administration.
- **Valuable support to partner countries.** The National Bank of Poland's involvement in the reform of the Ukrainian Central Bank has contributed to better alignment with EU standards. The involvement of the Polish Centre for EU Transport Projects is helping to reform the road safety system in Azerbaijan, and the assistance of the Supreme Audit Office in the reform of the audit system in Jordan is strengthening public financial management.

Lessons learnt

- Creating a culture of sharing practical knowledge among public administration institutions and among individual experts is an important enabler for meaningful international collaboration and support. Raising awareness among technical experts of the benefits of participation, such as gaining international experience and financial benefits, has been important to generate interest at the expert level.
- The optimal situation is when the political will to participate in projects is accompanied by experts' genuine willingness to participate in projects at the micro level.
- Conducting training and promoting Twinning and TAIEX programmes among officials is an ongoing task due to the frequent staff changes in the public administration. Documenting guidelines and good practices for programme participants can help to build important institutional knowledge and memory.
- One of the key principles of Twinning is that countries may only submit one proposal per project. As different public administration institutions often have many direct relations with one another, it can

easily lead to Polish institutions preparing multiple competitive bids for a project. According to the Twinning rules, such an action would result in the formal rejection of the proposals. Therefore, maintaining central co-ordination of programmes is crucial for proper participation.

Further information

Poland's official website on Twinning and TAIEX: <https://twinning.msz.gov.pl> (in Polish)

European Commission's Twinning website: https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-technical-assistance/twinning_en

European Commission's TAIEX website: https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-technical-assistance/taix_en

European Commission's latest report on Twinning and TAIEX: https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/taix-and-twinning-activity-report-2021_en

25 years of Twinning history: https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-technical-assistance/twinning/twinning-25-years-moving-forward-together-eu-expertise_en

OECD resources

OECD (2023), *OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Poland 2023*, (forthcoming).

OECD (2022), "Whole-of-government development co-operation", *Development Co-operation Tips – Tools Insights Practices*, OECD, Paris, https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=1167_1167391-sbagwxqvuf&title=Whole-of-government-development-co-operation.

OECD (2021), "Scaling up government-to-government knowledge co-operation", *Development Co-operation Tips – Tools Insights Practices*, OECD, Paris, www.oecd.org/development-cooperation-learning/practices/scaling-up-government-to-government-knowledge-co-operation-e078b571.

To learn more about Poland's development co-operation see:

OECD (2023), "Poland", in *Development Co-operation Profiles*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/2dcf1367-en> (accessed on 13 Oct 2023).

See more *In Practice* examples from Poland here: www.oecd.org/development-cooperation-learning?tag-key+partner=poland#search

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