

News in Brief:



On May 19, 2014 on behalf of Georgian Government the EUD launched a call for proposals for the Twinning project "Capacity Building of the Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia". The deadline for submitting the proposals from the EU MS is 15th of September 2014.

On May 22, 2014 on behalf of Georgian Government the EUD launched a call for proposals for the Twinning project "Legal approximation of Georgian Civil Aviation". The deadline for submitting the proposals from the EU MS is 18th of September 2014.

On May 28, 2014 on behalf of Georgian Government the EUD launched a call for proposals for the Twinning project "Capacity Building of the Employment Support Service in Georgia". Beneficiary of this project is the Social Service Agency under the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs". The deadline for submitting the proposals from the EU MS is 30th of September 2014.



An Expert Mission on compliance with the EU Acquis in the field of air transport took place on 3-7 March, 2014. The aim of the assistance was to identify needs for improvement of the air transport system in Georgia, including capacity building needs for transport employees, and to assess compliance of Georgian legislation with the EU acquis as envisaged by the AA between the EU and Georgia. The BI was the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (MESD).

An Expert mission on biosafety focusing on genetically modified organisms (GMO) took place on 4-7 March, 2014. The aim of the assistance was to inform about EU best practice and to advice on possible harmonization of relevant Georgian legislation with EU Acquis in the field of biosafety focusing on GMO. The BI was the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia

An Expert Mission on compliance with the EU Acquis in the field of maritime transport took place on 17-19 March, 2014. The aim of the assistance was to identify needs for improvement of the maritime transport system, including capacity building needs for transport employees, and to assess compliance of Georgian legislation with the EU acquis as envisaged by the AA between the EU and Georgia. The BI was the MESD

A Peer assessment mission on Visa Liberalization took place on 7-10 April, 2014. The aim of the assistance was to analyze progress in the implementation of the visa liberalization action plan. The BI was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

An Expert Mission on strengthening the capacities of the Georgian Office for Diaspora Issues took place on 29-30 April, 2014. The aim of the assistance was to strengthen the capacities of the Office for Diaspora Issues in terms of enhancing the cooperation with Georgian communities abroad, involving diaspora in sustainable return or circular migration activities. The BI was the Office of the State Minister for Diaspora Issues.

An Expert mission on methods to detect and seize criminal assets took place on 28-29 May, 2014. The objectives of the mission were: to develop & implement new methods to fight economical and financial crimes; to improve current capacities in the field of search & seizure of criminal assets within the territory of Georgia and abroad; The BI was the Investigation Service.

An Expert Mission on the Georgian Postal Law took place on 3-5 June, 2014. The aim of the mission was to provide EU expertise on postal services, particular to support the beneficiaries in drafting a new postal law. The BI was the Georgian Post of the MESD.

An Expert Mission on compliance with the EU Acquis in the field of railway transport took place on 3-5 June, 2014. The aim of the assistance was to assess the railroad transport system of Georgia by helping: - to prepare a legal and economic analysis of the existing transport system; - to conduct a needs assessment; - to assess compliance with the EU acquis; The BI was the Georgian Railway JSC.

The Twinning Project Delivered the New Incentive Based Methodology in Georgian Energy Sector

The ENPI 2011 twinning project "Strengthening capacities of the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (GNERC) in updating incentive based electricity tariff methodology" had as its purpose the strengthening of the - especially - regulatory and institutional capacities of the Georgian regulatory authority (GNERC) and develop jointly an incentive based electricity tariff methodology on the basis of EU requirements.

On Wednesday, 14 May 2014, public and press were invited to attend the final conference of the Twinning project "Strengthening capacities of the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (GNERC) in updating incentive based electricity tariff methodology", funded by the European Union with a budget of € 1.1 million.

During the event at the new premises of GNERC in Tbilisi, the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Georgia, Boris Iarochevitch, noted that within the framework of the enhanced energy cooperation with the EU this project supports making one step forward towards the Energy Community membership. Mariam Valishvili, Deputy Minister of Energy of Georgia, stated that by becoming a member of the Energy Community and implementing EU energy legislation, Georgia will have closer ties with the EU's energy market, while Mr Roman Kakulia, Director of the Programme Administrative Office at the Ministry of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, emphasized the importance of such cooperation between Georgian and EU authorities. Mrs Irina Milorava, the Chair of GNERC, added the results would boost investments and increase the financial sustainability of the energy sector.

Martin Graf, the Executive Director of E-Control, spoke about the new methodology and its advantages, while Hansjörg Tengg, CEO of smart technologies, explained the challenges of the energy market opening.

Within their presentations, the project leaders - Mr Dietmar Preinstorfer of E-Control Austria and Mr Gocha Shonia of GNERC - gave more details about the project results and expressed their satisfaction with the work of the whole project team. Mrs Eva Berger, Honorary Consul of Austria, closed the

event and underlined that the friendship and cooperation between Austria and Georgia with the support of the European Union produced important results for the Georgian energy



Mr. Martin Graf, the Executive Director of E-Control, Mr. Dietmar Preinstorfer, Project Leader

market.

The project activities delivered the new incentive based methodology which was developed for Georgian circumstances on the basis of EU requirements and which helps the relevant companies to invest in the electricity network for its development. Furthermore, recommendations were made for the initial implementation of the mentioned methodology and BC experts were trained in order to ensure the correct application of the regulatory approaches.

The purpose of the project was successfully completed and all the mandatory results have been achieved to full extent. The concept of Twinning is based on cooperation, and from the very beginning of this project, the cooperation between GNERC and E-Control worked extremely well.

As the Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia is planned to be signed and the membership of Georgia in the Energy Community is scheduled for 2014, this Twinning project was perfectly timed to support the Georgian authority during this crucial phase.

The Second Twinning Project of the Georgia Revenue Service Is Launched

On June 10, 2014 the Georgia Revenue Service (GRS) of the Ministry of Finance launched its second Twinning project and this time their partner is the Agency for European Integration and Economic Development (A.E.I.). The duration of this EU funded project is 18 months and the total value of the project amounts to € 1,300,000.

Mr. Roman Kakulia Head of PAO, Mr. Irakli Gvaramadze Head of GRS, Mr. Nodar Khaduri Minister of the MoF, H.E. Philip Dimitrov Head of the EUD, Mr. Samson Uridia BC Project Leader, Mr. Gerhard Levy MS Project Leader.



The overall objective of this twinning project is the development of an efficient and effective tax administration system in harmony with the economic and financial interests and activities of businesses and citizens of Georgia. For modern every tax administrations it is a great importance to provide qualitative services to the taxpayers and citizens, and to have a strong and efficient tax control system in place, all to ensure a low burden on taxpayers and high tax compliance. To achieve this there must be

constant focus on improving knowledge and skills of employees, upgrading technical infrastructure, improving work procedures and processes, and simplifying the obligations of the taxpayers.

To protect taxpayers' rights and to carry out measures to ensure tax compliance are among the main priorities of the GRS.

It includes protection of the state's and taxpayers' interests, detection of non-compliance, simplification of administrative procedures, prevention of fraudulent activities, tax collection, enforcement of tax debts, high quality audit and improved targeting of audit resources through case selection, and cooperation with foreign tax administrations. In line with the Association Agreement also the Georgian VAT law will be partially aligned with the VAT Directive.

Meeting with the EU Member State Representatives on the Implementation of the Association Agenda Priorities

The Coordination Meeting for EU Member States and other donor representatives was organized on 28 May, 2014 by the Office of the State Minister on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration (OSMEEAI) with the support of the PAO Support project and with the active participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the State Chancellery of Georgia and of the EU Delegation to Georgia.

Following the initialing of the Association Agreement (AA) between the EU and Georgia at the Vilnius Summit on 29 November, 2013 the Government of Georgia (GoG) is undertaking the necessary steps and preparations for the signing of the AA, expected to take place in June 2014. These preparations include the development of an Action Plan for the implementation of the Association Agenda.

With the aim of supporting the OSMEEAI in the coordination of the Association Agenda implementation, and in order to support the GoG in carrying out the necessary reforms in the priority areas of the Association Agenda the project supported the OSMEEAI in the organization of a round table with the participation of the EU Member States representatives (as well as Switzerland, USAid and UNDP), the EUD, the MFA and the State Chancellery of Georgia.

The event brought together a total of 35 participants and it was opened by the Deputy State Minister on European Integration of the OSMEEAI, Ms Mariam Rakviashvili, followed by Mr Ramon Reigada, Head of Operations of the EUD to Georgia. This was followed by a short intervention by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms Tamar Beruchashvili.

The event increased the awareness of the EU Member States and other donors of the challenges facing the GoG in relation to the implementation of the Association Agenda and strengthened the platform for continued exchange of information and cooperation between the GoG and the EU Member States in relation to the implementation of the reforms and activities needed as part of the Association Agenda implementation process.

SIGMA Developments

SIGMA experts continue cooperation with the Georgian Public Administrations according to agreed agenda.

During the months March-June the SIGMA experts held series of meetings, workshops & consultations, also prepared recommendations for each BI.

On March 25, 2014 the workshop with the Government's Civil Service Reform Co-ordination Council & Working Group on "Developing a new Civil Service Law of Georgia" was held. The workshop aimed to discuss the main outstanding issues/policy options to be presented and approved by the Government before the legal drafting process of the new Civil Service Law could start; the main policy options for developing the new civil service law has been discussed with the representatives of the Civil Service Bureau and the Government Chancellery.

SIGMA actively cooperates with the newly established Policy Analysis, Strategic Planning and Co-ordination department of the Government Chancellery within the project "Review of the functions of the Chancellery of Government".

It was agreed that the main focus of SIGMA will be to provide the support to:

- ◇ Making the new structure functional, increasing organisational capacity and developing new internal working procedures and tools;
- ◇ Developing new procedures and practices through what the Chancellery can co-ordinate the activities the ministries, for example Government work plan and monitoring principles;
- ◇ Implementing other recommendations and creating suitable legal framework to the new way of functions of the Chancellery, but also of the Government decision making process as a whole.

The SIGMA expert also participated in the workshops organized by the Government Chancellery for representatives of the different line Ministries during the months May and June 2014. As planned during programming period the assistance is delivered to the State Procurement Agency and the Ministry of Finance as well.

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The E-Governance Twinning Project Came to the End

On May 21, the Data Exchange Agency of Ministry of Justice, together with the Austrian



Mr. Irakli Gvenetadze Head of DEA, Project Leader

Agency for European Integration and Economic Development (AEI), held the official closing ceremony of the Twinning Project at the hotel Sheraton Metekhi Palace.

The 2 year project has started in December

2012 with a total budget of 1.2 million Euros.

The goal of the Twinning Project was the promotion and strengthening of e-governance in Georgia and ensuring the long-term cooperation in this direction.

The event was opened by the Deputy Minister of Justice, Mr. Alexandre Burchuladze. Participants were also addressed by the Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to Georgia, Ms. Sylvia Meyer Kajbic, the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Georgia, Mr. Boris Iaroshевич, representative of the Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Mr. David Kalatozishvili.

The project leaders from the EU Member State

country Mr. Christian Rupp and the beneficiary country Mr. Irakli Gvenetadze,

spoke about the ortance of the project.

"The goal of E-government is to increase the quality and efficiency of public administration, facilitate communication with the citizens and business sector, reduce costs and significantly accelerates the state administration procedures. Thus, the term 'E-government' is a symbol of a modern state. We are delighted that within 18 months of the twinning project we had an opportunity to productively work with the DEA and the public sector representatives of various Ministries and agencies of Georgia."
stated the
Federal Executive Secretary of the
Austrian Federal Government,
Christian Rupp.

The project was implemented in three main stages: 1) implementation of best EU practice in e-Policies and e-Government legislation; 2) implementation of interoperability framework including relevant regulation and standards; 3) effective functioning information security system with institutionalized strong and efficient CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) namely, CERT.GOV.GE. The project has helped the Georgian authorities to establish a consistent legislative and regulatory framework for e-governance. It has also developed a policy in this area, linking e-governance reforms to the overall country's development.

Workshop for Journalists on the Association Agreement Process

On the 3rd of April, 2014 a "Workshop for Journalists" was organized by the Office of the State Minister on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration (OSMEEAI) with the support of the PAO Support project and the active participation of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MoESD), the EU Delegation to Georgia and the Latvian Embassy to Georgia.

The aim of the event was to increase the visibility of the Association Agreement (AA) process among the Georgian media and, by extension, among the general public and to raise the awareness of the latter in relation to the developments taking place in the context of the country's deeper integration with Europe in the aftermath of the initialing of the AA between the EU and Georgia at the Vilnius Summit in November, 2013.

OSMEEAI is responsible for the supervision of the European integration related activities of the Government of Georgia (GoG) and for the coordination of the implementation of the AA Agenda at the level of the governmental institutions. In this context, among the tasks of the OSMEEAI is to coordinate the implementation of the GoG's Communication and Information Strategy on EU Integration and to strengthen the visibility of Georgia's European integration process, both at the inter-ministerial level and among the general public.

The event brought together a total of 56 participants including numerous representatives of the Georgian media who were very active and keen to learn more of the implications of the implementation of the AA notably for the local business sector.

The event was opened by the Deputy State Minister of the OSMEEAI, Ms Mariam Rakviashvili, followed by the intervention of the Head of the EU Delegation to Georgia, Mr Philip Dimitrov who referred to the significant step in the direction of closer integration with the EU which will be taken by Georgia in relation to the forthcoming signing of the AA.

Thereafter the Senior Advisor to the State Minister of the OSMEEAI, Ms Eka Sepashvili, gave a detailed presentation of the main political elements of the AA and outlined the Government's plans for the implementation of the Association Agenda Action Plan.

Closing Conference of the Waste Management Twinning Project

The closing conference of EU funded Twinning project "Strengthening the Capacities of the Ministry of Environment Protection in Development and Improvement of the Waste Management System in Georgia" was held in Sheraton Metekhi Palace, on May 20, 2014.

The project started in July, 2012, under the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and was implemented by the MoENRP of Georgia in cooperation with European partners - Environment Agency of Austria and Executive Environment Agency of Bulgaria.

The conference was opened by Khatuna Gogaladze, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia, the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Georgia Mr. Boris Iaroshевич also addressed the audience emphasizing the importance of the waste management at large. Experts and representatives of other Ministries, international and local non-governmental organizations attended the event. The Twinning project aimed to support the development of an efficient waste

management system; technical support in improving the environmental conditions in Georgia by introducing internationally recognized principles for waste management



Mr. Davit Kalatozishvili PAO, Mr. Boris Iaroshевич EUD

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partners developed the integrated Waste Management Law, "Codex on Waste Management". The Law implements European waste management principles adapted to the Georgian legal practice. The project has developed drafts for future regulations based on the Waste Management Act, and other related legislation.

The European twinning partners have supported the Ministry in developing drafts of a Waste Management strategy with a 15-20 years perspective and a Waste Management plan with detailed measures.

The partnership with Austria and Bulgaria has been significantly useful for Georgia, since it combined the experience of a long-standing EU Member State with a high level of achievement in good waste management practices, and of a New Member State of the EU which has gone through a recent adaptation process to European legislation and practices - comparable to the situation in which Georgia is now.

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