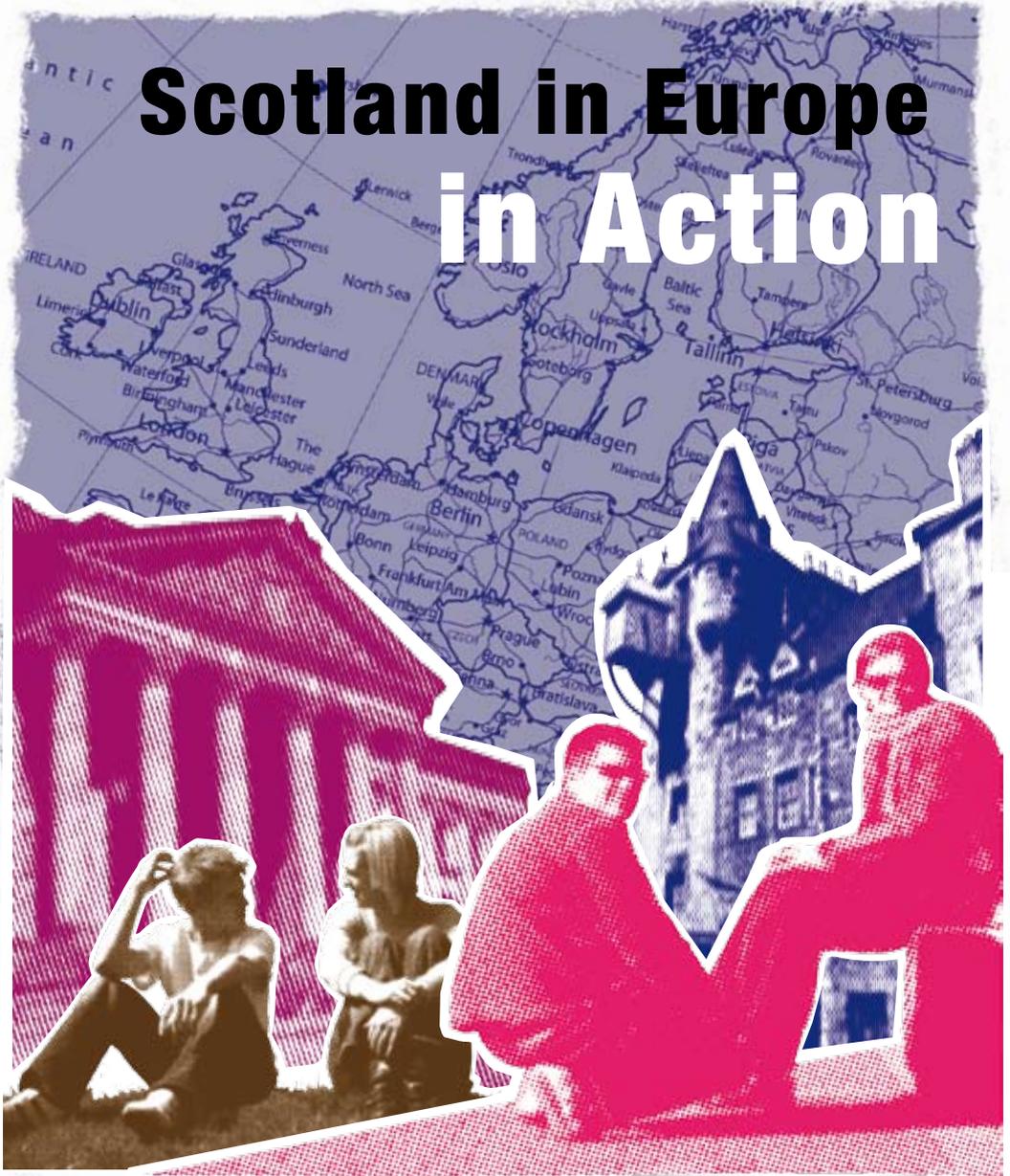


Scotland in Europe in Action



Town Twinning and Exchange Visits

An introduction to EU budgets and how you and your town can use them

Alyn Smith MEP

Preface

LINDA FABIANI MSP

Scottish Government Europe, External Relations and Culture Minister

There are a host of opportunities across the EU and wider world for Scotland to take part in. As Minister in the Scottish Government, I want to see Scotland take her rightful place in the world; playing an active and full role.

A step towards achieving this aim is through the promotion of twinning and exchange projects. Twinning and exchange allows people in all parts of Scotland to reach out to communities across the EU: to go meet them; see how they live; and share experiences.

The European Union has recognised the value of such projects and has created budgets to support these enterprises. It is a shame, therefore, that so few Scottish organisations are aware of them. Alyn's booklet will encourage Scots to look across the EU for new friends. It will help you to access budgets already in existence in Brussels, and to take full advantage of the opportunities that are open to you. I commend him for producing it.



Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Fabiani". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda Fabiani MSP
Edinburgh January 2008

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Introduction

ALYN SMITH MEP

SNP Member of the European Parliament for Scotland

Everyone knows that Scots are well-known and well-liked the world over. I want to see us build on such great foundations.

With a new government at Holyrood, the SNP wants to see Scotland make links across the world while Scots make friends all over Europe.

Town twinning is part of that enterprise, and I have been inspired by seeing people of all ages and from all walks of life taking part in exchanges from Scotland to other EU countries. However, we could always have more exchanges and more town twinning agreements!

As a Member of the European Parliament representing the whole of Scotland, I have often been asked for help to find money for exchanges or for assistance in locating partner towns.



I'm happy to report that the EU has created a budget specifically for the development of twinning schemes. Sadly, however, barely a handful of Scottish organisations applied to it because it appears to be so little-known.

This booklet aims to raise awareness of this budget, and encourage you to apply. It should serve as an introduction to the scheme and as a user-friendly guide. Clearly, it does not replace the official European Commission guidance, though it should help to explain it. Sadly, EU-speak often seems difficult to penetrate and the good intentions of EU initiatives can be lost. This booklet should be viewed as your translator.

I thank Liam O'Keefe (an Allan Macartney intern in my office in Brussels) for working so hard on this project, though responsibility for any errors is mine. The Allan Macartney internship scheme helps bright Scots work in my office managing projects like this. I welcome applications year round and details can be found on my website. I would also like to thank John Atkins and his team at the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency of the European Commission (EACEA) for their time and help.

Scotland has so much to offer the rest of Europe, as well as having so much to learn from others. Twinning and exchanges are fantastic opportunities to export Scottish culture, heritage and traditions whilst also gaining experience of lifestyles and cultures from other European countries. I would also hope that as well as being so educational, twinings and exchanges should be hugely rewarding and enjoyable experiences too. So go on, give it a go!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alyn Smith', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alyn Smith MEP

Brussels, January 2008

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The “Europe for Citizens” Programme

What is it?

Basically, the EU is keen to see people from EU countries getting to know people from other areas of the EU. A great deal of EU funding is dedicated to programmes that aim to encourage this.

Students can use the ERASMUS programme to fund their study abroad. Other budgets exist to aid co-operation across the EU in university research, film production, tourism promotion and almost every other field, but it was felt that “regular people” were missing out.

The “Europe for Citizens” programme was created to fill this gap. It encourages active citizenship, town twinning and exchanges across the EU.

The programme funds meetings and exchanges; supplementing the travel costs and organisational costs involved in hosting an event. This makes twinning more attractive and makes exchanges possible by financing them where other funding might not be available.

How does the programme work?

The programme is administered by the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency of the European Commission (EACEA). The programme is worth € 215 million (at time of writing roughly £150 million). It started on 1 January 2007 and will run until the end of December 2013.

The programme encourages activities and organisations that promote a range of “permanent themes” which are designed to bring EU citizens together. Any bid to the budget must meet one of the objectives set out below, though it is preferred if they meet more than one. The themes are:

1. The future of the EU and its basic values;
2. Participation and democracy through active citizenship;
3. Intercultural dialogue;
4. Employment, social cohesion and sustainable development of the people of Europe;
5. The impact of EU policies in societies.

These objectives are pretty broad and, in practice, any meeting of people from one country with another will cover most of the points above, but it is useful to spell it out in your application.

The programme focuses on town twinning, so any town looking to apply to the programme must already have an existing or prospective (officially in preparation and to be concluded within two years) twin town or towns.

The programme funds two types of event. To make any town twinning official, people from the towns will need to meet up in a “**citizens’ meeting**”. This may lead on to a network of towns meeting to discuss a particular common issue (like former mining towns, rural towns, island towns, towns with problems recycling, the list is endless), therefore creating a “**Thematic Town Network**”.

The programme, therefore, breaks into two strands: one, encouraging citizens’ meetings; the other, thematic networking. Both are explained in more detail below.

Who can apply?

While town twinning agreements will be signed between the local council and the partner municipality, the scheme is open to any organisation. This can be a church, voluntary group and so on. They can apply for funding provided they have documented permission from the local authority to be the town's official twinning representative.

My town has no twins! Can we apply?

Not yet. You need a town twinning agreement already in place or in preparation and to be concluded in two years. So go find some twins! Across the EU, there will be somewhere suitable and towns across Europe are only too keen to hook up with hospitable and popular Scotland.

If you are looking for partner towns, get in touch with your local council. Each councillor in Scotland has received a copy of this booklet. You can also get in touch with Alyn Smith MEP, who has access to MEPs from the Algarve to the Arctic Circle, Western Ireland to Cyprus.

Unfortunately, neither the EACEA nor the Commission assist with finding twinning partners. Rather, this is up to you and your town or local council. If you are in need of a starting place, have a look at the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) sponsored website. The address is below:

http://www.twinning.org/en/index_en.htm

For more on the "Europe for Citizens" programme, see the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/guide/index_en.htm

Citizens' Meetings

What is a "citizens' meeting"?

A town twinning citizens' meeting is a key stage in the twinning process. EU funding is allotted to help arrange a citizens' meeting to "provide a forum for education and cultural exchange". A citizens' meeting usually takes the form of a conference, workshop or similar event and it is held in the applicant town.

How much EU funding is available?

A town can receive as much as €20,000 (roughly £14,000) including travel in order to hold a meeting. The minimum amount of funding, provided the application is accepted, is €2,000 (roughly £1,400).

What should our event involve?

The programme requires citizens' meetings to feature all of the following three aspects:

- a commitment to European integration through discussion of the EU, its values and features;
- solidarity and friendship between the towns should be encouraged; and
- active civic participation by the local community. This is achieved through involvement in planning and implementation of the project and by giving participants an active role in displays, workshops and activities.

In practice, any gathering of people from different countries will cover these sorts of things, though again, it is worth spelling this out in your application.

How much organisation is needed before we apply?

A citizens' meeting does require careful planning and preparation before the bid goes in. The overall quality of the application is the basis on which it is chosen, or not, to receive a grant. Speculative "we'll work out the details later" applications will not be successful.

There are five "phases" each year in which a meeting can occur, with five submission deadlines. These can be consulted in the annex.

How to apply and deadlines

The application can be filled in and submitted online or downloaded and sent by post. The application form can be found at the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/action1/towntwinning/funding_en.htm

Although it may seem daunting at the beginning, don't be put off. It asks questions relating to the expected number of participants, dates, and the planning and execution of the proposed citizens' meeting. Just read it carefully, follow the instructions, and you shouldn't go wrong.

Remember that the quality of the application ought to be high in order to have a good chance of receiving funding.

Thematic Town Networking

What is “Thematic Town Networking”?

Thematic town networking encourages places with similar issues or characteristics to get together to discuss common issues. Many places across the EU have common problems, but deal with them in very different ways. We could all learn a lot from each other by getting together to swap notes and discuss best practice.

Thematic town networking is therefore deeper than just twinning. It focuses on specific issues, for instance: former mining towns; coastal towns; towns investing in renewable energy; or any similar topic.

How does it work?

The programme provides financial support for conferences and workshops involving at least three towns in a framework of town twinning. Consequently, it is aimed towards towns where there is already a twinning project underway.

A thematic conference should have a focus on specific issues of relevance to all the participating towns. It therefore provides a real learning experience for members of the community. Examples of possible themes would be:

1. how to build better relations between younger and older members of the community;
2. how to encourage recycling;
3. how to source power from renewable energy;
4. how to regenerate former mining or heavy industry towns; or
5. how to encourage local food production.

The list of issues and ideas is endless.

What should the event involve?

There are three main features of thematic networking conferences:

1. There should be a defined target group, such as the education sector, old people or young people, for which the selected theme is of particular relevance. The meeting should involve members of the community active in that sector.
2. At least one of the Commission’s “priority themes” should be addressed. An example of this could be European policy and its implementation at local level.
3. The conference should serve as a basis for future initiatives between the involved towns on issues of further common interest.

How much funding can be provided towards the costs?

There is no quoted figure for the maximum grant available for thematic town networking. However, the minimum grant awarded is €3,500 (roughly £2,400). Travel and organisational costs are calculated separately but are given as a combined grant.

In addition, supplementary grants for ‘communication tools’ are also available for thematic networking projects. This provides for the production of a publication, a DVD/CD-ROM or a website. A flat rate of €1,500 (roughly £1,000) is provided for each, with a maximum award of €4,500 (roughly £3,100) if all three are produced.

Does this take a lot of planning?

Frankly, yes, and a lot of it must be up-front in order to make the application for funding successful. A rule of thumb is that the more planning you do before the application goes in, the higher the chance of success.

How to apply and deadlines

Due to the preparation that is required for thematic town networking, there is only one annual deadline, 1 December. However, this date can be over a year in advance of the applicant's proposed workshop so check the annex or website.

The official application form can be found at the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/action1/towntwinning/thematic_funding_en.htm

Annex 1: Official Commission Guidelines

Citizens' Meetings

1) The Concept

Citizens' meetings should bring together a wide range of citizens and citizens' groups from twinned towns. This will benefit the municipalities and develop strong, informal and personal relations between their citizens.

Those meetings should present the following three features:

a) Commitment to European Integration

Town twinning citizens' meetings should reinforce the participants' commitment to European integration. This may be achieved through:

1. discussing the basic idea of the European Union, its future and its values;
2. learning about participation in the democratic life of the European Union;
3. sharing the experience of concrete benefits of European integration at the local or individual level;
4. demonstrating solidarity and a feeling of belonging together among the people of twinned towns, as an example of belonging together in Europe as a whole;
5. exchanging views and experiences relating to the themes of the programme;
6. sharing points of view, from a local perspective, on European history, in order to learn from the past and build for the future.

b) Friendships in Europe

Town twinning citizens' meetings should foster mutual understanding and friendship between people from the twinned towns. To this end, the meetings should provide an opportunity for the participants:

1. to get to know people from their twinned towns and to develop personal friendships with them;
2. to become familiar with the day-to-day life of people in the twinned towns;
3. to experience and share together cultural diversity and common cultural heritage in Europe.

c) Active Participation

Town twinning citizens' meetings should be an experience of active civic participation at local level. Because the European dimension is inherent to such meetings, the experience should also encourage citizens to become more involved at European level, therefore contributing to the development of an active European citizenship. The meetings should thus be based on large local participation and on the active involvement of the participants in all activities. This can be achieved through:

1. involving the local community in the planning and implementation of the project;
2. giving participants an active role (displays, workshops, joint cultural performances, education through sport, etc);

3. assuring joint working of groups from different towns.

2) What are the eligibility criteria?

The applicant must be from the municipality in which the meeting takes place (or its twinning association/twinning committee) with a legal status (legal personality), and be established in a participating country.

Town twinning citizens' meetings must:

- be organised in the framework of already existing or prospective (officially in preparation and to be concluded within 2 years) town twinning arrangements;
- involve municipalities from at least two participating countries, from which at least one is an EU Member State;
- involve the following minimum number of participants:
 - in bilateral meetings: at least ten participants from the invited municipality;
 - in multilateral meetings (more than two municipalities involved): at least five participants from each invited municipality. The EACEA may revise these minimum figures so keep checking the website.

The maximum accepted duration of a meeting is 21 days. This maximum will be applied by the EACEA in grant calculations for meetings scheduled to run for a longer period.

The following is not eligible:

- invited groups, in which more than a half of the participants are elected local government representatives or municipal officials.

NOTE: A town can only be supported once in a calendar year for hosting a citizens' meeting.

3) Filling out the application

Only proposals submitted using the official application form for Town Twinning Citizens' Meetings 2007-2013, including the grant calculation sheet, completed in full, and submitted within the deadlines applicable to this measure, will be considered.

NOTE: Handwritten applications will not be accepted.

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the official EU languages. Applicants must enclose with their application form:

- an official covering letter introducing the application, signed by the legal representative of the applicant;
- proof of town twinning: an official document from the municipal administration stating the existence or preparation of the twinning arrangement;
- the financial identification form (bank details), signed by the applicant and, if required for the country in question, certified by the bank. If certification by the bank is not required, the financial identification form must be accompanied by a copy of a bank statement;
- the legal entity form, duly completed and signed. For twinning committees/associations, the legal entity form must be accompanied by an official document attesting to the establishment of the twinning committee/association (articles of association, registration document indicating date and the place of the registration), together with any related updates or changes. Applicants who have a VAT number must send an official VAT document with their legal entities form.

The official application form can be found on the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/action1/towntwinning/funding_en.htm

The financial identification form and the legal entity form can be found on the following websites:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/ftiers_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/legal_entities_en.htm

The application form and supporting documents must be signed and dated by the person empowered to enter into a legal commitment on behalf of the applicant.

If, after submission of the application, it becomes impossible for the beneficiary, for fully justified reasons beyond his or her control, to implement the project during the scheduled period, a change of the dates may be granted only within the calendar year in which it was intended to complete the project. Such a change cannot, however, lead to an increase in the grant amount.

Applicants may not submit parallel grant applications for the same activity to the 'Europe for Citizens' programme or other programmes of the European institutions. Applicants who submit parallel grant applications for the same activity will have their application automatically excluded.

4) What are the award criteria?

The eligible projects will be evaluated based on qualitative and quantitative criteria. Qualitative criteria will represent the majority of points available within the evaluation procedure. The criteria are defined as follows:

a) Qualitative criteria:

The quality of the project is defined by:

- The European content of the programme, particularly in terms of:
 - providing knowledge about the European Union and about the lives of its citizens;
 - increasing participants' commitment to European integration.
- The adequacy and adaptation of the proposed activities to the target group of the project;
- The active participation demonstrated by:
 - involvement of the local community in the project during its preparation, implementation and possible follow up;
 - active role of participants in the activities;
 - joint working of groups from different towns.
- The visibility of the project and its planned follow-up, including:
 - concrete follow-up in participating municipalities;
 - measures to raise awareness about the project in the broader public;
 - measures to raise awareness about its results at different political levels.

b) Quantitative criteria:

Projects which correspond to the following points will be given special attention:

- proposals for new twinning agreements (highest scoring);
- meetings involving at least three eligible countries;
- meetings involving both the municipalities from Member States which joined the EU before 1 May 2004 AND those which acceded as from that date;

- meetings held on occasions such as the celebration of anniversaries of long-standing twinning arrangements (5, 10, 15 years, etc.), the award of a prize, the celebration of the Day of Europe (9 May);
- projects involving young people, disadvantaged groups or aimed at ensuring gender balance.

5) How to make a good project

Applicants will find some hints below for improving the quality of their project. Because the project is evaluated on the basis of the information included in the application, it is very important that applicants present clear and complete documentation with a detailed, well-structured and informative programme of the meeting.

- Pay attention to the objectives of the programme, to its priority themes and to the concept of this measure;
- Prepare a clear and detailed presentation of the meeting's programme;
- Explain what will happen, what the role of the participants will be and what will be learnt;
- Make sure that the programme foresees an active role for the participants;
- Explain how the local community is involved in the meeting (during the preparation, during the actual meeting, during the possible follow-up);
- Explain what publicity and other coverage the meeting will receive.

6) When to apply?

In 2008, the programme will cover citizens' meetings throughout the whole calendar year. Therefore, the first two deadlines for 2008 projects were in Autumn 2007, as indicated in the table below.

The deadlines for submitting applications for citizens' meetings taking place as from 2008 will be as follows:

Phase number:	For meetings starting between:	Deadline for submission:
First phase	1 January and 31 March	1 September in the year prior to the planned meeting
Second phase	1 April and 31 May	1 December in the year prior to the planned meeting
Third phase	1 June and 31 July	1 February in the same year as the planned meeting
Fourth phase	1 August and 30 September	1 April in the same year as the planned meeting
Fifth phase	1 October and 31 December	1 June in the same year as the planned meeting

Where the deadline falls on a weekend or public holiday, no extension will be granted. Applicants must take this into account when planning the submission of their application.

7) How to apply?

Applications can be either:

- filled in online. The form can be found at the following address:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/symmetry/public.jsp>

- sent by post or by courier service to the address below, for which purposes the relevant date is to be the date of despatch by post, as evidenced by the postmark; or by the registered delivery receipt issued by the postal services/courier service;
- delivered by hand. No applications will be accepted by hand after 5.00 p.m. on the stated deadline for submissions.

Applicants will be informed in writing of the receipt of their application.

The address is:

**EACEA
Unit P7 Citizenship
Applications – ‘Town Twinning Citizens’ Meetings’
Avenue du Bourget, 1 (BOUR 00/13)
B-1140 Brussels, Belgium**

Applications submitted by fax will not be considered.

No modification of the application will be authorised after the deadline of submission of applications. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects, the EACEA may contact the applicant for this purpose.

8) How and when are the results communicated?

The intention is to inform applicants of the outcome of the selection procedure no later than:

Phase number:	Expected outcome of the selection procedure:
First phase	on 1 December at the latest
Second phase	on 1 March at the latest
Third phase	on 1 May at the latest
Fourth phase	on 1 July at the latest
Fifth phase	on 1 September at the latest

The lists of selected projects will be published on the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/compendia/index_en.htm

Applicants whose applications have not been selected will be informed in writing.

It is foreseen that beneficiaries of successful applications shall be awarded a grant decision before the start of their project.

9) Calculation of grants

The grants for town twinning citizens' meetings are targeted to co-finance the organisational costs of the host town (accommodation, meals, local transport, meeting rooms, etc.) and the travel expenses of the invited delegations. The grants are calculated based on flat rates and are not directly linked to any specific costs, which therefore do not have to be accounted for or justified.

The grant calculation will be made as follows:

- The grant for organisational costs is calculated by multiplying the number of participants from the invited municipalities, by the number of days of the meeting, and by a 'daily rate' of the country in which the meeting takes place. The 'daily rates' for different countries are attached to the application form. The weightings applied to the 'daily rate' are calculated by the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) and reflect the cost of living for each country.
- The grant for travel expenses is calculated for each invited delegation by multiplying the number of participants by the number of kilometres travelled (round trip distance travelled for return journey) and by a flat rate of 0.025/km/ participant. The maximum grant to be awarded is € 20,000 per project. If the calculation based on the flat rates indicates a total amount over € 20,000, the EACEA will apply this ceiling to the grant.

The minimum grant to be awarded is € 2,000 per project. If the calculation based on the flat rates indicates a total amount of less than € 2,000, no grant will be awarded.

10) Payment procedures

In the event of definitive approval of the application by the EACEA, a decision on the award of a grant, drawn up in Euros and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary.

No pre-financing will be paid.

The grant will be paid to the beneficiary (host town) after submission to, and acceptance by, the EACEA of a payment request together with a report from the meeting and a list of participants signed by them and certified by the beneficiary.

The final grant will be calculated based on the following principles:

- The maximum duration of the meeting and the maximum number of the participants from the invited municipalities;
- Should the actual duration of the meeting be less than the duration indicated in the decision and/or the actual number of participants from the invited municipalities fewer than the number indicated in the decision, the grant will be reduced accordingly;
- If the final grant calculation amounts to less than €1,000, no payment will be made.

ANNEX 2: Official Commission Guidelines

The Thematic Networking of Twinned Towns

1) The Concept

The thematic networking between municipalities on issues of common interest is an important means for enabling informed discussions and exchange of good practice to take place.

Town twinning provides a framework for developing this thematic cooperation and networking. A large number of municipalities in Europe are twinned with other towns, which might be themselves twinned to further towns. Twinning is a strong link that binds two municipalities; therefore, the potential of the networks created by a series of town twinning links should not be understated in terms of its importance for developing thematic cooperation.

This multilateral cooperation will enable the strategic dimension of town twinning to be developed, structured and strengthened. This programme supports thematic conferences and workshops involving at least three towns, developed within the framework of town twinning. These events should be milestones for networking and should encourage the development of a long-lasting, dynamic, multifaceted cooperation between twinned towns. Additionally, communication tools produced in the context of these events with the aim of promoting a structured and sustainable thematic networking may also be supported.

The conferences and workshops developed within this thematic networking of twinned towns should include the following three features:

- They should have a defined target group for which the selected theme is particularly relevant and involve community members active in the subject area;
- They should address the priority themes of the programme. To this end, the programme should engage participants in dialogue on these themes, which includes, for example, European policies and their implementation at local level. The programme should include a mix of expert /informed presentations with opportunities for debate, discussion, and dialogue involving the participants;
- They should serve as a basis for future initiatives and action between the towns involved, on the issues addressed or on further issues of common interest.

2) What are the eligibility criteria?

The applicant must be an organisation with a legal status (legal personality) and be established in a participating country.

Only the following types of organisations are eligible to submit an application:

- municipalities and twinning committees;
- local and regional governments;
- associations representing local authorities.

Conferences and workshops must:

- correspond to the objectives of this programme and to the concept of networking between twinned towns;
- always take place in the framework of town twinning. This means that each municipality involved must be linked by an existing twinning agreement or by a twinning cooperation officially in preparation with at least one other municipality involved. A twinning cooperation is considered to be officially in preparation when the municipalities have officially committed themselves to the

preparation, and the twinning agreement is planned to be signed within two years;

- involve at least a total of 20 participants from at least three municipalities from three different participating countries of which at least one is an EU Member State;
- present a balanced participation of the delegations involved: at least 25% of the participants must come from eligible countries other than the host country;
- take place in one of the participating countries;
- have a minimum duration of 1 day. The maximum duration taken into consideration in grant calculation is 3 days.

A project may cover either a single conference/workshop or a maximum of two conferences/workshops held in different eligible countries during the same application phase in which case the requirements stated above apply to each conference/workshop.

Example of a suitable project:

Town X in country Y is reflecting on how to better integrate elderly people and how to build bridges between younger and older generations at local level. Town X representatives are interested in developing a systematic exchange of experience on such initiatives with the towns U and V from countries Z and W to which Town X is twinned. To this end they organise a thematic conference attended by the town representatives, education sector, social services and citizens' groups from all three towns. Optionally, town X can also involve its neighbouring towns and their twinned towns in the project.

An example of an ineligible project:

Inspired by an EU policy paper on sustainable development, town X in country Y has decided to develop its public transport system. For this reason, it is interested to learn from the experience of similar-sized towns in other EU countries. It identifies 10 towns from different countries which have recently developed public transport systems. Town X will organise a thematic conference on this issue, inviting experts and decision-makers from these towns. This project would not be eligible for town twinning grants because the participating towns are not linked by town twinning. Therefore the conference – which as such might be high quality and foster links between local authorities in Europe – does not take place within the framework of town twinning.

Only proposals submitted using the official application form for town twinning networking of twinned towns 2007-2013, including the grant calculation sheet, completed in full, signed, and submitted within the deadlines applicable to this measure, will be considered.

NOTE: Handwritten applications will not be considered.

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the official EU languages.

An application may cover either a single conference/workshop or a maximum of two conferences/workshops held in different eligible countries.

All applicants must enclose with their application form:

- an official covering letter introducing the application, signed by the legal representative of the applicant;
- a project summary in English, German or French (part II of the application form);
- a proof of town twinning: an official document from the municipal administration stating the existence or preparation of the twinning arrangement;
- the financial identification form (bank details), signed by the applicant and certified by the bank. The bank stamp and signature of its representative are not required if this form is accompanied by a copy of a bank statement. The signature of the account holder is obligatory in all cases;
- the legal entity form, duly completed and signed. For twinning committees / associations representing networks of local authorities, the legal entity form must be accompanied by an official document attesting to the establishment of the entity (articles of association, registration document indicating date and place of the registration), together with any related updates or changes. Applicants which have a VAT number must send an official VAT document with their legal entities form.
- Applicants which are not public bodies must submit with their application the official annual accounts and balance sheet of the organisation for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed.

The official application form can be found on the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/action1/towntwining/thematic_funding_en.htm

The financial identification form and the legal entity forms can be found on the following websites:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/ftiers_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/legal_entities_en.htm

The application form and supporting documents must be signed and dated by the person empowered to enter into a legal commitment on behalf of the applicant.

NOTE: Two copies of the application form must be sent, the original being identified as such.

3) What are the award criteria?

The eligible projects will be evaluated based on qualitative and quantitative criteria. Qualitative criteria will represent the majority of points available within the evaluation procedure. The criteria are defined as follows:

a) Qualitative criteria:

The quality of the project will be defined by:

1) The relevance of the proposed activities:

- to the objectives of the 'Europe for Citizens' Programme;
- to the priority themes of the 'Europe for Citizens' Programme;
- to the horizontal features of the 'Europe for Citizens' Programme;
- to the concept of this measure;
- to the target group(s) of the event(s);

2) The structure and content of the planned event(s), revealing the methods chosen for addressing the theme and for conducting the conference/workshops. For example, this includes: the choice of speakers or moderators; the format chosen for the event; the tools that will be used; and so on;

3) The coherence and completeness of the action plan, showing how, when and by who the

different tasks will be carried out;

4) The expected impact of the action:

- on the potential development of sustainable networks of cooperation;
- on the target group(s), and how this will be achieved using the project's final products;

5) The visibility of the project and its planned follow-up, including:

- measures to raise awareness about the project in the broader public;
- measures to raise awareness about its results at different political levels;
- concrete future action plans involving participating local and regional governments and their citizens.

b) Quantitative criteria:

Projects involving partners from Member States which joined the EU before 1 May 2004 AND those which acceded as from that date will be given special attention.

4) How to make a good project

Applicants will find some hints below for increasing the quality of the content of their proposed project. Because the project is evaluated on the basis of the information included in the application, it is very important that applicants present clear and complete documentation with a detailed, well-structured and informative programme of the conference.

Some hints:

- prepare a clear and detailed presentation of the conference/workshop programme(s);
- explain the impact of the events to the future cooperation between the involved towns;
- use various methods of implementation in the programme (for instance, lectures, debates, discussions, workshops);
- focus on the informative and educational value of the content of the programme;
- discuss European policies and their implementation at the local level, the construction and the future of the European Union;
- prepare an activity that encourages debate and exchange of experience between them;
- invite local experts (as speakers or participants) specialised in thematic fields chosen for the theme of your conference;
- explain what kind of visibility the planned events will have.

5) When to apply?

The annual deadline for submitting applications for town twinning networking projects taking place in 2008 and subsequent years will be as follows:

For events starting between:	Deadline for submission:
1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010	1 December 2008
1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011	1 December 2009
1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012	1 December 2010
1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013	1 December 2011
1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014	1 December 2012

Where the deadline falls on a weekend or public holiday no extension will be granted and applicants must take this into account when planning the submission of their application.

6) How to apply?

Applications can be either:

- sent by post or by courier service to the address below, for which purposes the relevant date is to be the date of despatch by post, as evidenced by the postmark; or by the registered delivery receipt issued by the postal services/courier service. Applicants will be informed in writing of the receipt of their application;
- delivered by hand. No applications will be accepted by hand after 5.00 p.m. on the stated deadline for submissions.

The address is :

EACEA
Unit P7 Citizenship
Applications - 'Networking of twinned towns'
Avenue du Bourget, 1 (BOUR 00/13)
B-1140 Brussels, Belgium

Applications submitted by fax or directly by email will not be considered.

No modification of the application will be authorised after the deadline of submission of applications. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects, the EACEA may contact the applicant for this purpose.

7) How and when are the results communicated?

Selected proposals will be subjected to a financial analysis, in connection with which the EACEA may ask the persons responsible for the proposed actions to provide additional information.

It is planned to inform applicants of the outcome of the selection procedure no later than annually on 1 March during the years 2008-2013.

The lists of selected projects will be published on the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/compendia/index_en.htm

Applicants whose applications have not been selected will be informed in writing.

It is foreseen that beneficiaries of successful applications shall be awarded a grant decision, before the start of their project.

8) Calculation of grants

The system for calculating the grant based on flat rates and lump sums is being introduced to simplify the management both for the EACEA and for the beneficiaries. This system will be evaluated on the basis of its results and may be developed or modified.

The grant for the project of networking of twinned towns is mainly calculated on the basis of the number of participants in the thematic conferences or workshops per day. A lump sum may be added to this grant amount, provided that communication tools are also being produced.

This system of lump sums and flat rates enables the amount of the grant to be calculated on the basis of a fixed sum per participant per day; the beneficiary is at liberty to decide how to use the grant when implementing the project. A calculator, inserted within the application form,

enables the potential grant to be automatically calculated. A detailed budget does not have to be submitted. Similarly, a detailed final statement of costs will not be required, nor does supporting documentation for the expenditure have to be supplied with the final project report. The only requirement will be the submission of a report detailing the implementation and results of the project, a list of participants and copies of any items produced. Additionally, for statistical purposes, beneficiaries will be required to supply a summary breakdown of final project income and expenditure.

The cost of actions which are ancillary or complementary to the organisation of an event has been taken into account when setting the levels of flat rates and lump sums. Accordingly, these technical activities undertaken by the project organisers when preparing or monitoring the project may not be presented as events in their own right.

The minimum grant to be awarded is € 3,500 per project. If the calculation based on the flat rates and lump sums identified below indicates a total amount of less than € 3,500, no grant will be awarded.

To calculate the total grant, calculations of amounts payable for the items 'events' and, where applicable, 'communication tools' have to be made. The total grant is arrived at by adding the amounts for these two items together.

a) Grant calculation for 'event'

Different flat rates are applied for participant days depending upon whether a participant is defined as local or international, and depending upon the location of the conference. The table below gives full details of the flat rates.

- A local participant is a person who resides in the country where the event takes place. The local flat rate as indicated below is applied in this case.
- An international participant is a person who resides in a country eligible for the programme which is not the country where the event takes place. The international flat rate as indicated below is applied in this case.

Example:

100 participants attending a 3-day conference in Lithuania (*75 local and 25 international*):-

75 local participants x 3 days = 225 participant days x €23.88 (fixed local participant rate for a conference in Lithuania) = €5,373.00

25 international participants x 3 days = 75 participant days x €36.99 (fixed international participant rate for a conference in Lithuania) = €2,774.25

Total number of participant days = 300

Total proposed grant: €5,373.00 + €2,774.25 = €8,147.25

- A maximum of 400 participant days, per grant application, will be taken into consideration for the grant calculation. This applies equally to projects where two events are proposed. If the total number of conference participant/days is greater than 400, the grant will be calculated taking into account a maximum of 400 participant/days. The applicant will, in this case, need to decide which 400 participant/days it includes in the grant calculation.

Example:

200 participants attending a 3-day conference in Lithuania (125 local and 75 international):-

- 125 local participants x 3 days = 375 participant days x €23.88 (fixed local participant rate for a conference in Lithuania) = €8,955.00

- 75 international participants x 3 days = 225 participant days x €36.99 (fixed international participant rate for a conference in Lithuania) = €8,322.75

Total number of participant days = 600 [maximum allowable is 400]

Grant calculation:

225 international participant days = €8,322.75, plus

175 local participant days = €4,179.00

Total number of participant days = 400

Total proposed grant: €8,322.75 + €4,179.00 = €12,501.75

- The grant calculation is made based on the number of participant/days. This is only a method of calculating the level of the grant. The grant as such is targeted to co-finance the entire project, not only costs directly related to the participants. The beneficiary may decide on the distribution of the grant between the different parts of the project; this provides flexibility concerning the optimal use of the grant.

As an example, it is possible to agree that all participants pay their travel expenses themselves but the organiser covers all local costs like meeting rooms, speakers' fees, interpretation, documentation, catering and accommodation. The same approach applies to projects covering two events: the grant is calculated based on the two events but is awarded to the entire project.

- You should apply the rate(s) for the country(ies) where the event(s) take place. Fixed rates are calculated using weightings produced by the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) and reflect the cost level for each country.

The following fixed rates for individual countries should be used in calculating your proposed grant:

Conference venue:	Fixed rate per local participant day:	Fixed rate per international participant day:
Belgium	€54.00	€83.66
Bulgaria	€14.74	€22.84
Czech Republic	€33.48	€51.86
Denmark	€57.08	€88.43
Germany	€50.19	€77.76
Estonia	€26.31	€40.76
Greece	€37.65	€58.33
Spain	€45.28	€70.14
France	€49.96	€77.40
Ireland	€63.19	€97.89
Italy	€47.11	€72.99
Cyprus	€38.25	€59.26

Latvia	€21.67	€33.58
Lithuania	€23.88	€36.99
Luxembourg	€63.65	€98.60
Hungary	€27.92	€43.25
Malta	€31.78	€49.23
Netherlands	€57.03	€88.36
Austria	€56.25	€87.15
Poland	€22.87	€35.43
Portugal	€32.70	€50.65
Romania	€15.93	€24.69
Slovenia	€26.64	€56.77
Slovakia	€25.26	€39.13
Finland	€52.07	€80.67
Sweden	€52.58	€81.46
United Kingdom	€53.54	€82.95

Remember that if your proposal is for two events, different fixed rates will be applicable for each event because the events must take place in two different countries. Do not forget that at least 25% of the participants for each event must come from eligible countries other than the host town.

- A minimum of 3 hours' activity (excluding receptions, meals or social activities) constitutes one day. The maximum duration taken into consideration in grant calculation is 3 days.

b) Grant calculation for 'communication tools'

Grants for communication tools are supplementary to the grants available for events and cannot be awarded separately. Such communication tools have to be connected to the events and be fully integrated in the planning of the event. Therefore, requests for such grants can not be introduced at a later stage.

The grant for 'communication tools' is calculated on the basis of the number and type of 'tools' produced by the project, and is based upon fixed amounts. There are three types of 'communication tools'. These 'communication tools' have to be specifically related to the project and produced exclusively within its framework. They must also meet one of the specific characteristics indicated below:

- A publication:
 - with a minimum of 8 pages;
 - published and disseminated with a minimum number of 1,000 copies.
- A DVD or CD-ROM:
 - a DVD with a minimum 15 minutes of recording, and produced and disseminated with a minimum number of 1,000 copies; or
 - a CD-ROM with a minimum 1GB of material (excluding photographs), and produced and disseminated with a minimum number of 1,000 copies.
- A website:
 - with an EU domain name;
 - having links to the site from a minimum of five other independent websites;
 - which is active for a minimum period of 12 months following the submission of the final report.

The flat-rate grant for each of the above three types of 'communication tool' is € 1,500. The same rate applies to all countries. Beneficiaries may receive a grant for a maximum of three separate 'communication tools' (i.e. no two products of the same type). Accordingly, the maximum total fixed-rate grant under the heading of 'communication tools' is € 4,500.

9) Payment procedures

In the event of definitive approval of the application by the Agency, a decision on the award of a grant, drawn up in Euros and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary.

Within ten calendar days from the notification of the decision, the beneficiary must send written notification of its intention to implement the project.

For projects covering two conferences/workshops, a pre-financing payment equivalent to 50% of the total grant will be transferred to the beneficiary within 45 days following the date when the decision was issued and all the possible guarantees received. The pre-financing is intended to provide cash flow to the beneficiary.

If written confirmation is not received by the EACEA within the specified deadline, a single payment will be made based upon the final report.

The balance of the grant will be paid to the beneficiary after submission to, and acceptance by, the EACEA of a payment request together with a final report on the project and the supporting documentation set out below.

10) Payment of the balance

Should the actual duration of the conference/workshop be less than that which was planned the grant will be reduced accordingly.

The final payment under the heading 'events' shall be based upon the actual number of participants (local/international) and the actual number of participant days, and shall not be greater than the maximum foreseen under this heading in the grant decision with a maximum of 400 participant days. Calculation of the final amount of the grant for 'communication tools' will be based on the actual number of communication tools – within the maximum figure allowed for this item in the grant decision.

If the actual number of participant days for any event or the actual number of communication tools gives rise, on the basis of the system of lump sums and flat rates, to a lower entitlement than that given in the grant decision, the grant will be reduced accordingly. The beneficiary is, where applicable, required to repay any excess amounts already transferred by the EACEA under the pre-financing payment. The calculation should be made using the calculator contained in the application form.

11) Information on actual expenses

The beneficiary will be required to submit, together with the final report, a summarised, itemised statement of expenditure and revenue linked to the project. This information will be used by the EACEA for statistical purposes (and to amend the flat rates and lump sums in future years, if applicable).

The template for submission of the final statement can be found on the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/payment_en.htm

Final reports

On completion of a project that has received funding, the beneficiary must submit an activity report, including payment request accompanied by an attendance list signed by the participants and certified by the beneficiary. This report must give a succinct but full description of the results of the project as compared to the initial objectives and must be accompanied by any publications or products created under the project.

For statistical purposes, a breakdown of project income and expenditure must be supplied. The beneficiary must also be prepared to supply the EACEA with any information it may need to enable it to evaluate the project.

The report should present, among other elements:

- an overall assessment of the results of the project as compared to the initial objectives;
- complete information on the development, progress and achievements of the project, including, where appropriate, information on interaction with other projects;
- qualitative evaluation of the execution of all tasks;
- a list of main activities, number of participants, and so on;
- For each event organised, details must be provided of the place, dates, and total numbers of participants for each day (including those not taken into account for the purpose of calculating the grant), together with a note of the numbers of local and international participants;
- An original list, certified, dated and signed by the person authorised to enter into a legal commitment on behalf of the applicant, showing the persons who participated in the events organised which were included in the calculation of the grant. A list should be produced for each event and each day. The list should include the name, function, town/country of residence, email address or telephone number and signature of participants, together with the name of the event and the date in question.

A template to be used for the list can be found on the following website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/payment_en.htm

Beneficiaries are recommended to print the template for the list before each event, after typing in the participants' names in alphabetical order. Participants will then only have to sign the list on the day of the event. A list must be prepared for each day of the event.

An original of the programme for each event and of the documentation distributed, with an indication of the places, dates and timetable should also be included.

Supporting documentation for 'communication tools' where applicable:

- Two originals of publications, CD-ROMs or DVDs produced;
- The addresses of websites created for the project and of 5 other independent sites providing a link to the site(s) created;
- A copy of invoices for printing and publication, for the creation of the mastercopy, for copying, engraving, creation of the website – or any other supporting evidence;
- A copy of the distribution list for the tools.

What obligations arise from the decision?

Community funding will take the form of a decision by the EACEA. This unilateral act does not have to be signed by the grant beneficiary. By signing the grant application form, the applicant organisation commits itself to all the conditions specified in the programme guide as well as the general rules of the programme guide.

Any changes to the planned activities must be submitted to the EACEA in writing for prior approval. The changes are not allowed to alter the main concept of the project.

The EACEA attaches the utmost importance to sound administrative and financial management of projects. The beneficiary grants the EACEA and the Commission the right to make free use of the results of the action as it deems fit, provided it does not thereby breach its confidentiality obligations or existing industrial and intellectual property rights.

If projects are postponed so that the starting date of the meeting falls outside of the original period of eligibility, as defined in the decision, a formal request must be submitted. It must explain why the delay has come about and indicate the proposed modified timetable. Requests will be examined and – if accepted – an amendment to the grant decision will be sent to the beneficiary. In any event, requests for an extension greater than 3 months will not be accepted.

Multilateral projects

Town twinning originally concerns two twinned towns which are linked to each other through a bilateral twinning agreement. Each town often develops several town twinning partnerships. A frequent development consists in bringing together, in multilateral events, those different partners. This multilateral cooperation can be project or event-oriented.

An interesting development in the field of town twinning, however, consists in the formalisation of such cooperation through the establishment of a network. An agreement is signed between a number of towns, all twinned to each other, setting long-term objectives to this cooperation. A light administrative structure can be set up to ensure coordination.

The Commission supports the development of such networks which are important for ensuring long-lasting, structured, intense and multifaceted cooperation, thereby contributing to maximizing the impact of the programme. Therefore, a special category is to be created to provide adapted support to established networks of twinned towns.

However, due to budgetary reasons, this special category will only be introduced as from 2008.

Who implements this?

This action is managed by the EACEA, Unit P7 Citizenship.

All relevant information can be obtained from:

EACEA
Unit P7 Citizenship
Town Twinning
BOUR 00/13
B-1140 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 295 26 85 (Tuesday - Thursday 9.30 - 12.30: Town Twinning only)
Fax: +32 2 296 23 89

Sample forms

Application forms are available to download at:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/guide/index_en.htm

Notes

Notes

Alyn Smith MEP

Scottish National Party Member of the European Parliament for Scotland



The Greens | European Free Alliance
in the European Parliament