European Neighborhood Policy

EU-Israel Twinning Project

On

EU and Israel Partnership

The EU and Israel share a long common history, marked by growing interdependence and cooperation. More than five decades of trade, cultural exchanges, political cooperation and a developed system of agreements have cemented the partnership. Relations between the EU and Israel began with a Cooperation Agreement signed as far back as 1975 that was replaced by an Association Agreement in 2000.

Through the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and an EU/Israel Action Plan approved in 2004, there is a sustained effort to move beyond cooperation to a significant degree of integration, in particular in relation to the EU’s internal market and the possibility for Israel to progressively participate in key aspects of EU policies and programs.

Both the Association Agreement and the Action Plan set specific joint targets and indicated areas of cooperation in the field of environmental protection.

The Association Agreement states that, “the Parties shall promote cooperation in the tasks of preventing deterioration of the environment, controlling pollution and ensuring the rational use of natural resources, with a view to ensuring sustainable development and promoting regional environmental projects. Cooperation shall focus, in particular, on: ... the use of advanced tools of environmental management, environmental monitoring methods and surveillance, including the use of environmental information systems (EIS) and environmental impact assessment, the impact of industrial development on the environment in general and the safety of industrial facilities in particular”.

The Action Plan further elaborates on the areas for joint cooperation in the field of environment, notably to “Strengthen the administrative capacity [of the Ministry of Environmental Protection] and other relevant Institutions” (section 2.5).

The present Twinning project will contribute to these objectives, and fit into the reforms initiated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Twinning: Sharing expertise and information

The Twinning project is a European Union initiative to help countries acquire the necessary skills and experience to adopt, implement and enforce EU legislation. On a demand-driven basis, the project brings together public sector expertise from EU Member States and partner countries, with the aim of enhancing cooperation activities. Twinning projects are joint projects, awarded following a call for proposals and shared by the partner
administrations – in this case the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, together with other German administrations, and the Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Israeli Context: Establishing a system of integrated environmental permitting for industry.

The move toward progressive environmental regulation of industry in Israel, led by the Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection, has been launched. It will lead to a substantial reform in the relations between the public, industry and the environment, by enabling industrial development while minimizing its environmental impact. In addition there will be more transparency and regular updates for the public on industrial emission.

The Law for Integrated Environmental Licensing (“Green Licensing” Law), being advanced by the MoEP, is a key measure for implementing this process and will guarantee compliance with advanced European standards, reduce administrative burden, improve environmental performances of industrial installations and promote innovative green production technologies.

The main principles are as follows:

1. Gradual implementation of advanced environmental standards in industrial installations and businesses, based on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC), the principles of which are detailed in the EU Industrial Emissions Directive EU/2010/75 (IED).

2. Clear criteria and timetable to be adhered to by industrial installations and businesses dealing with permitting.

3. Reduction of administrative burden—simplification of administrative processes, with the aim of integrating environmental permits and licenses required from industrial installations and businesses through a process of coordination and unification, a process that will increase effectiveness and reduce “bureaucracy costs.”

4. Prioritization of pollution prevention at source and of environmental efficiency, in a way that will decouple production and environmental pollution, and will create opportunities for economic growth based on pollution prevention and on implementation of more effective green techniques and technologies.

5. Distribution of responsibilities between central and local government.

6. Examination of incentives for industrial installations and businesses that are leaders of change: incentivizing industrial installations and businesses that go beyond the minimum legal environmental requirements and take a leading role in preventing pollution and waste beyond required standards, through pollution prevention at source, environmental efficiency, implementing innovation and other steps.

7. Establishment of procedures to enable and incentivize the implementation of Israeli-developed environmental innovations, including testing and demonstration facilities, as well as initial commercial installations.

8. Development of evaluation mechanisms for technologies developed in Israel that are not recognized in EU reference documents, for the purpose of recognizing them as emerging technologies that are applicable in industrial installations and businesses for compliance.


The promotion of the above principles is part of the National Green Growth Plan for Israel for 2012-2020.

This plan was consolidated in a joint process of structured round table discussions that were carried out over a period of a year and a half, with the participation of representatives from government, industry and civil society, as well as hundreds of other stakeholders.
“Green Growth” – economic and social growth without environmental damages, while using natural resources sustainably and efficiently.

The main recommendation regarding green growth in the production sector is the establishment of a system of integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC), modeled on the EU directive.

Integrated Environmental Permitting – based on the Directive of the European Commission for Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC), the principles of which are detailed in EU Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) EU/2010/75. The aim of the directive is to prevent industrial emissions from industrial installations to air, water and ground, and when this is not possible, to reduce them, and to keep a high level of protection to the environment as a whole. The directive defines criteria for permit requirements, including prevention of pollution and implementation of Best Available Techniques (BAT).

Twinning Project

The consolidation of the legal, professional and organizational regulatory framework for advanced environmental regulation for industry will be supported through a Twinning project. The project, carried out in collaboration with the European Union and Germany, began in late May. In the framework of this project, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) will provide a Resident Twinning Expert Adviser (RTA) who will join the MoEP for a period of 18 months to provide training and guidance.

Additional experts from German environmental administrations will visit Israel and pass on their knowledge and expertise. The project is funded by the European Commission with a sum of 900,000 Euro.

The Twinning project is carried out in the framework of an action plan from April 2005 between Israel and the European Union. The objective of the Twinning project is to support Israel’s public administration through connections with a comparable administration in a European Union member state. The project enables the beneficiary’s public administration to benefit from knowledge and experience of the other in building new and advanced systems.

Over the next year and a half, throughout the course of the project, Israel will host a large number of experts from Germany’s environmental administrations, in addition to the RTA. They will assess the existing situation in Israel, provide knowledge and training based on their own experience and help with the establishment of the legal, institutional, administrative and procedural frameworks necessary to reach the defined objectives.

One of the key features of the Twinning project is the concept of mandatory results. Both the beneficiary and the EU partners commit themselves to work toward commonly agreed-upon, measurable and precise results.

The Twinning project includes three components:

- Support to the establishment and operation of an integrated permitting system.
- Support to the establishment and operation of an integrated inspection system.
- Support for improvement of the Environmental Information System through the establishment of a PRTR and a Service Centre for IPPC.
The defined objectives of the Israel-Germany Twinning project are:

- Integrated system for permitting of industrial operations, ready for adoption and implementation.
- Integrated system for inspection of industrial operations, ready for adoption and implementation.
- Improvement of the environmental information system through a functioning PRTR; necessary prep work is to have been completed for the establishment of a "green growth" knowledge center, where stakeholders can network and can collect and distribute knowledge about clean technology and green production.

The advanced environmental regulation of industry is expected to lead to:

- Prevention of environmental pollution from industrial installations in business management procedures of Israeli industry, through a system of permitting that focuses on pollution reduction at source and environmental efficiency.
- Significant improvement in transparency and raising of public awareness about the ability to influence the management of industrial installations and businesses.
- Reduction in environmental bureaucracy costs.

Find out more about EU-Israel cooperations

Delegation of the European Union to Israel:

Europe in Israel Facebook page:
http://www.facebook.com/Europe.in.Israel

ENPI Info Centre webpage – Israel:

The EU and Israel Association Agreement:

The EU/Israel Action Plan:

ENP website:
http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm

The ENPI:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview

EuropeAid Development Cooperation – Neighbourhood:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/index_en.htm
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- Hebrew:
- English:
- Arabic:
  http://www.sviva.gov.il/Arabic/SubjectsEnv/BusinessLicensingIndustry/Pages/TwinningProject.aspx
- Website of The Federal German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU):
  http://www.bmu.de/en/
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