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This programme is implemented by Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and Agrarmarkt Austria in co-operation with the French Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries and the Agricultural Paying Agency of the Slovak Republic. The final beneficiary is the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, Paying Agency for Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development in Croatia.

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Agrarmarkt Austria and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

This project is funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION



The Twinning programme is one of the principal tools of Institution Building accession assistance. Twinning aims to help beneficiary countries in the development of modern and efficient administrations, with the structures, human resources and management skills needed to implement the *acquis communautaire* to the same standards as Member States. Twinning provides the framework for administrations and semi-public organisations in the beneficiary countries to work with their counterparts in Member States. Together they develop and implement a project that targets the transposition, enforcement and implementation of a specific part of the *acquis communautaire*. Since 1998, beneficiary countries have benefited from over 1,300 Twinning projects.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

The European Union's IPA Programme for Croatia

EU Twinning Project

**Capacity Building
of the Croatian Paying Agency**

HR 07 IB AG 01

A project implemented by



Capacity building of the Croatian Paying Agency

This project will assist Croatia in its preparation to use European agricultural funds that will be available after accession to the European Union. The exchange of know-how with Austrian, French, and Slovak experts will help the Croatian Paying Agency (PA) to put in place the system to manage EU agricultural funds.

Together with a technical Assistance project related to software development for the use of agricultural funds and the financing of equipment for the Croatian Paying Agency, this project highlights the European Union's significant support to Croatia's preparation in the field of Agriculture.

This project consists of five basic components so that most of the required activities of the PA are addressed. These include:

Component 1: Establishment of Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS)

The objective of this component is a fully established Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) through:

- Preparation of written procedures and forms for the submission of aid applications, administrative control and authorisation of Direct Support Schemes and RD schemes (area based)
- Preparation of functional claims for the IT programme support for Direct Support Schemes
- Simulations of process flow
- Preparation and conducting of trainings for the PA staff
- Preparation of system for the identification and registration of payment entitlements and integration with other registers
- Preparation for integration of LPIS with other elements of IACS, process flow for updating
- Preparation of on-the-spot control system including cross-compliance control, remote sensing and field reporting
- 150 working day study tour on three topics: structural organisation of the PA and IT program support, IACS including rural development and LPIS

Component 2: Adjustment of existing procedures and the software development regarding EU rural development (RD - which are not area based) including fishery of the Croatian Paying Agency

The objective of this component is to establish a system for rural development support through:

- Adjustment of existing written procedures and forms for the submission, administrative control and payment authorisation of applications for Rural Development measures
- Simulation of the process flow
- Preparation of functional claims for the IT programme support for Rural Development (RD)
- Training of the PA staff in the field of the EU RD
- Supporting of administration of measures in the field of Fisheries (EFF)

Component 3: Establishment of the system for reporting and X-table and adjustment of procedures for payments and accounting

The objective of this component is to fully establish a system for reporting as well as a system for X-tables support through:

- Preparation, adjustment and implementation of written procedures for all payments and accounting including functional claims for the IT programmes
- Analysing the legal background for reporting
- Preparation for establishment and implementation of the reporting system analyses, specifications for program support upgrade
- Providing proposals for reporting system establishment
- Establishment of central coder for following the measures regarding reporting system

Component 4: Preparation and performing of workshops on IT risk assessment and preparation of documents on results of IT risk assessment workshops

This component will be tackled through:

- Preparation and performing of 2 workshops on risk assessment on IT risks with PA management and Internal Audit Service employees
- Preparation of 2 documents on IT risk assessment concerning results of carried out IT risk assessment workshops
- 30 working days study tour to member states regarding IT audits in Paying Agencies

Component 5: Elaboration and Integration of all the processes necessary to make payments and preparation for accreditation

The objective of this component is to fully integrate all processes and databases including administrative control, on-the-spot control, payments, accounting and reporting as well as to prepare the accreditation package through:

- Analyses and review of all existing written procedures and integration of processes necessary to execute payments
- Simulations of the process flow
- Preparation of process risk analyses
- Monitoring and evaluation of all processes and databases related to final payments in order to ensure their compatibility
- Preparation of the accreditation package

A mutual cooperation of national experts (BC) with their counterparts from Member States (MS) in the framework of this project will support the Croatian Paying Agency so that it meets all accreditation criteria. Upon accession, an accredited Paying Agency is a prerequisite for release and use of resources from EU agricultural funds.

Key positions in the project

- MS Project Leader Mr. Franz PATSCHKA, Agrarmarkt Austria, Austria
- FR Junior Project Leader Mr. Emmanuel DE LAROCHE, Agency for Services and Payments, France
- SK Junior Project Leader Mr. Tibor GUNIŠ, Agricultural Paying Agency, Slovakia
- HR Project Leader Mrs. Anica Lucević, Paying Agency for Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, Croatia
- Resident Twinning Advisor (RTA) Mr. Vladimir ECK
- RTA Counterpart Mrs. Sanja Krivanek Mahmuljin

Resources

- 1160 working days Member States (MS) short-term expert input
- 180 working days study visit in MS for Croatia officials

The project, with a budget of € 2 million, is financed by the European Union and will last until early 2012.