The future of Twinning:
digitalisation, simplification

National Contact Points Meeting 2026

November 2026

European Commission

TWINNING
MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER
WITH EU EXPERTISE

AGENDA

(1) Twinning state of play and outlook

(2) Simplification

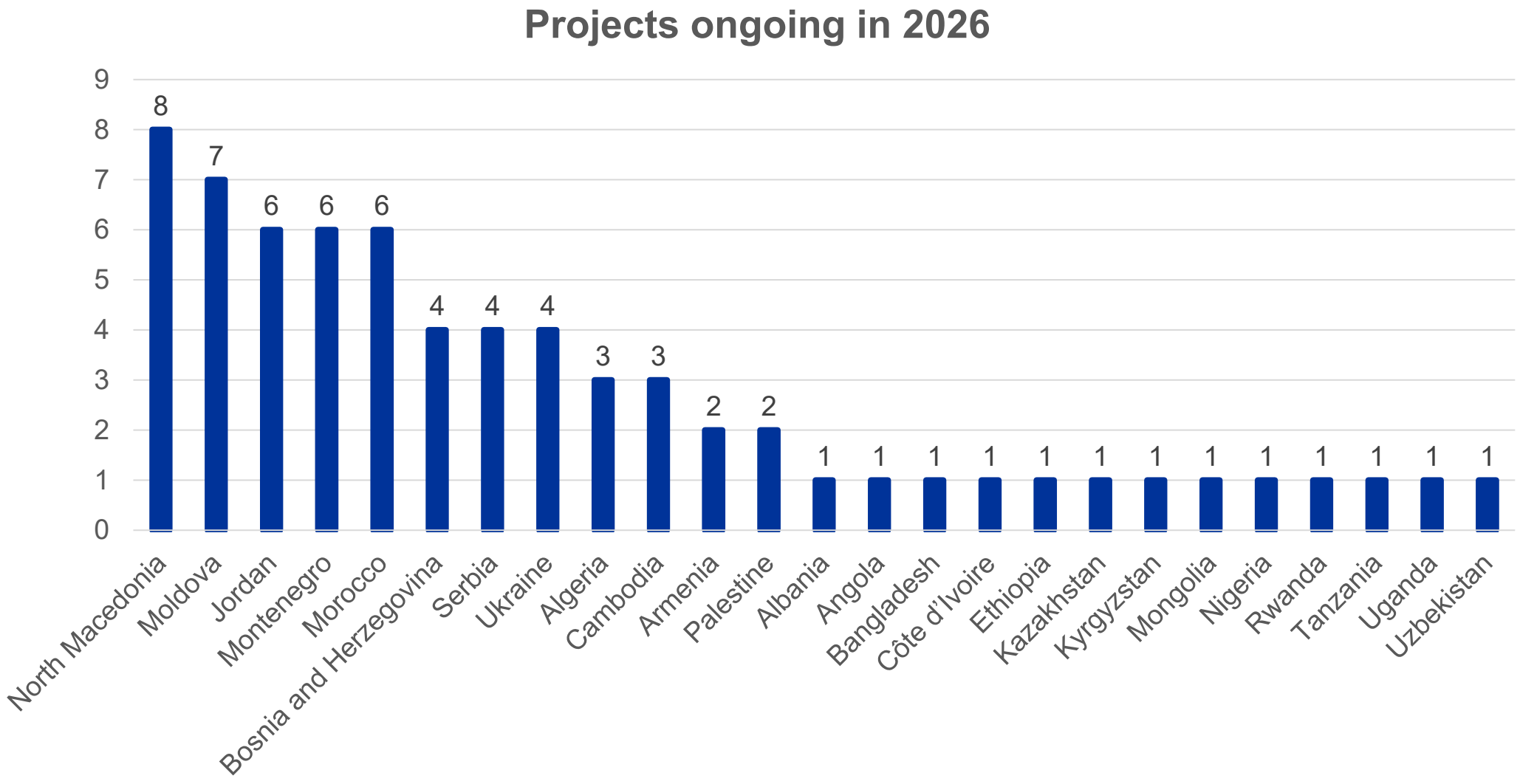
(3) Pilots, timeline and how to prepare

(4) Call document training / Twinning Manual update

Twinning state of play & outlook

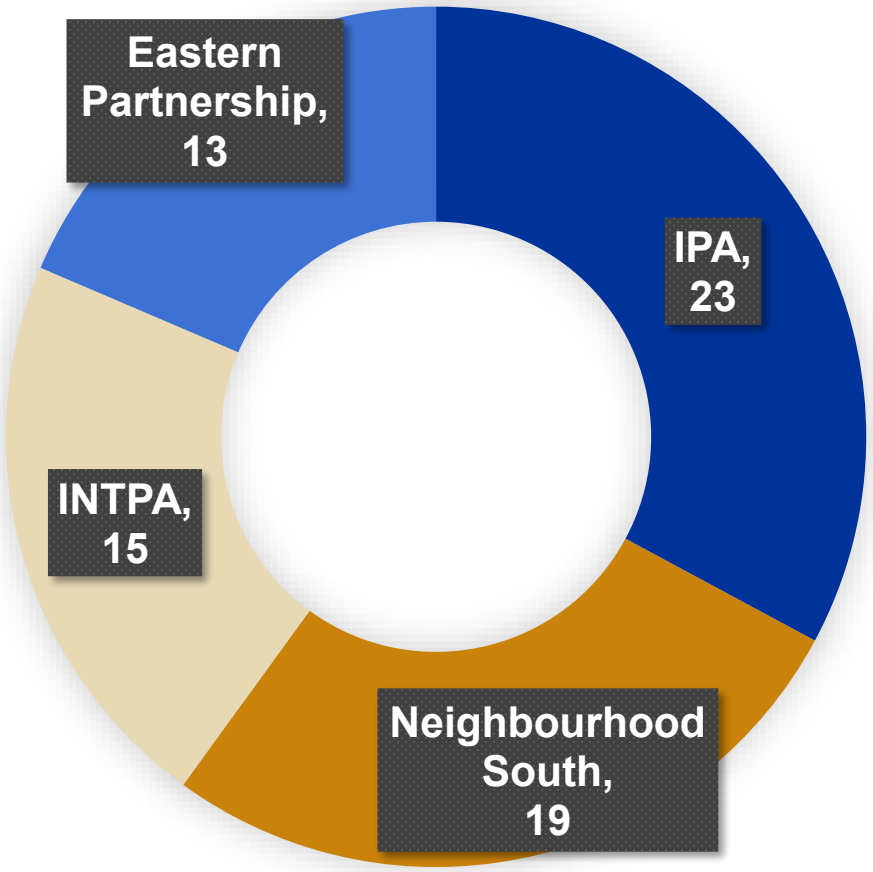
Twinning Coordination Team

Snapshot – Twinning in 2026

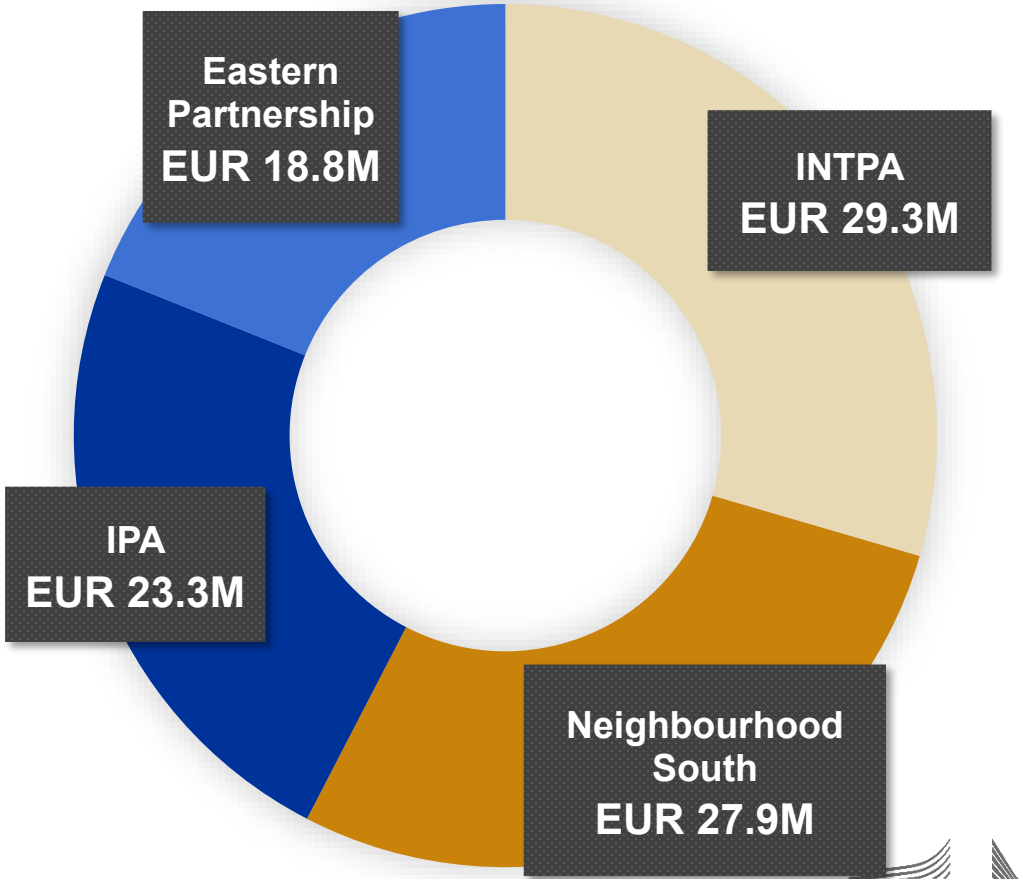


Snapshot – Twinning in 2026

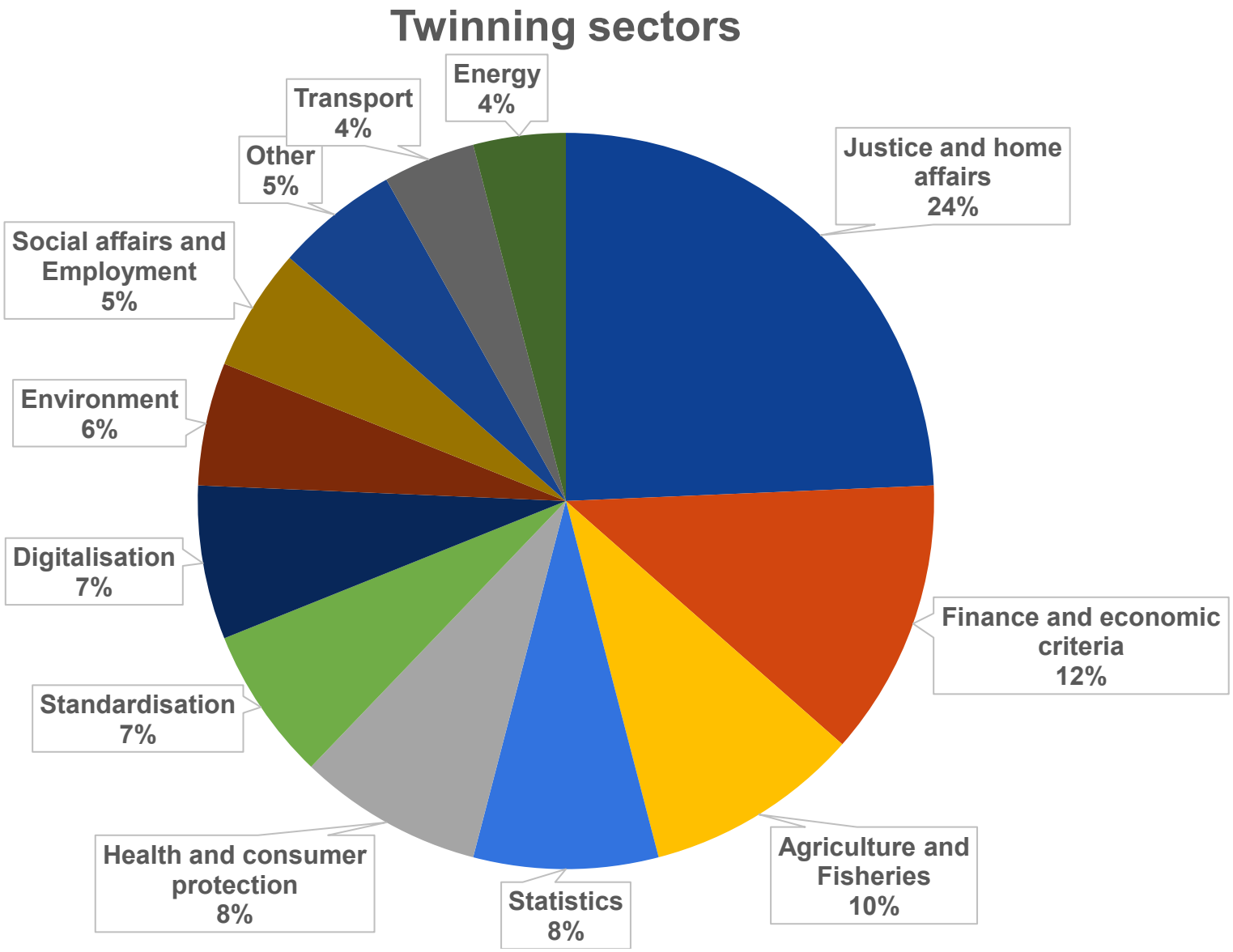
Number of projects ongoing in 2026



Combined Budget of ongoing projects in 2026



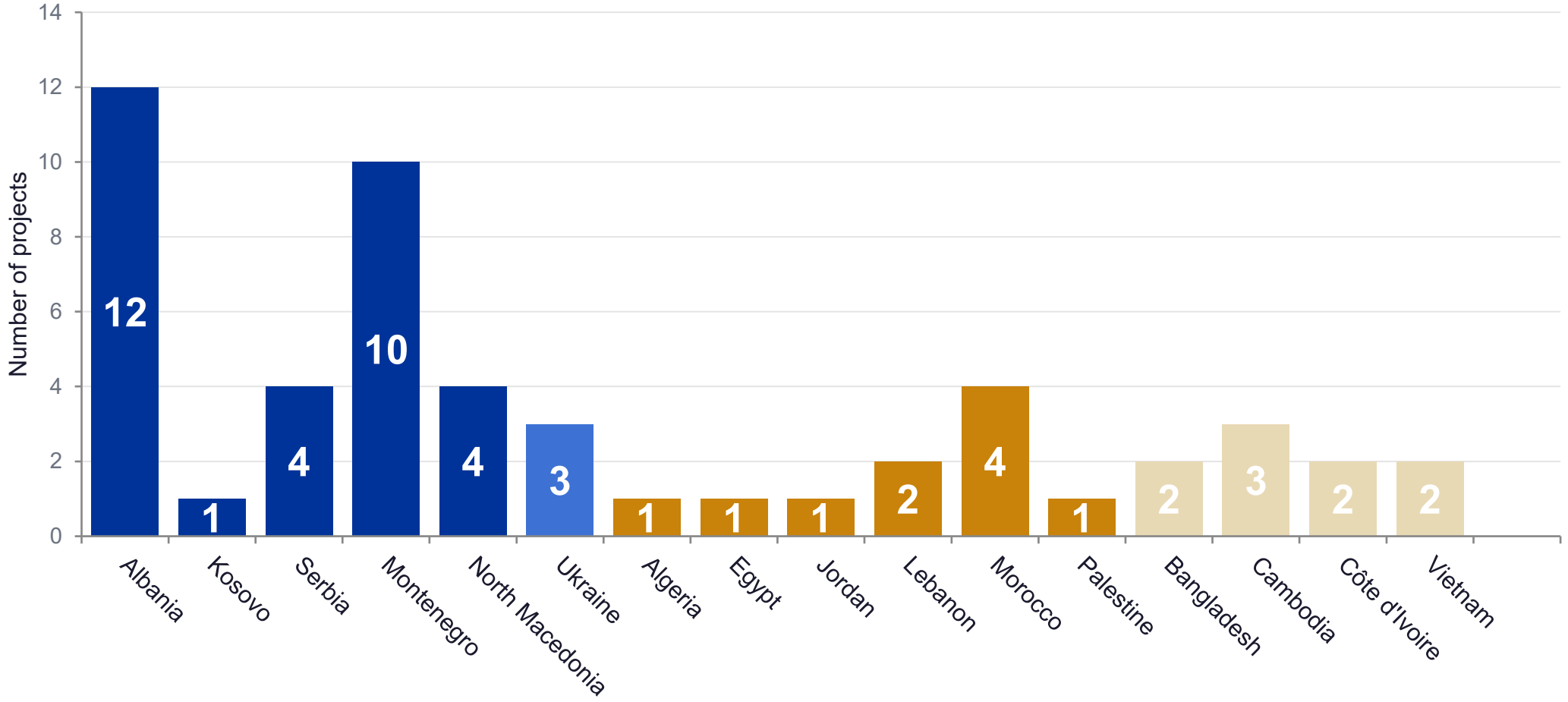
Snapshot – Twinning in 2026



Looking forward – pipeline (Oct 2026)

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Pipeline of Twinning projects by country

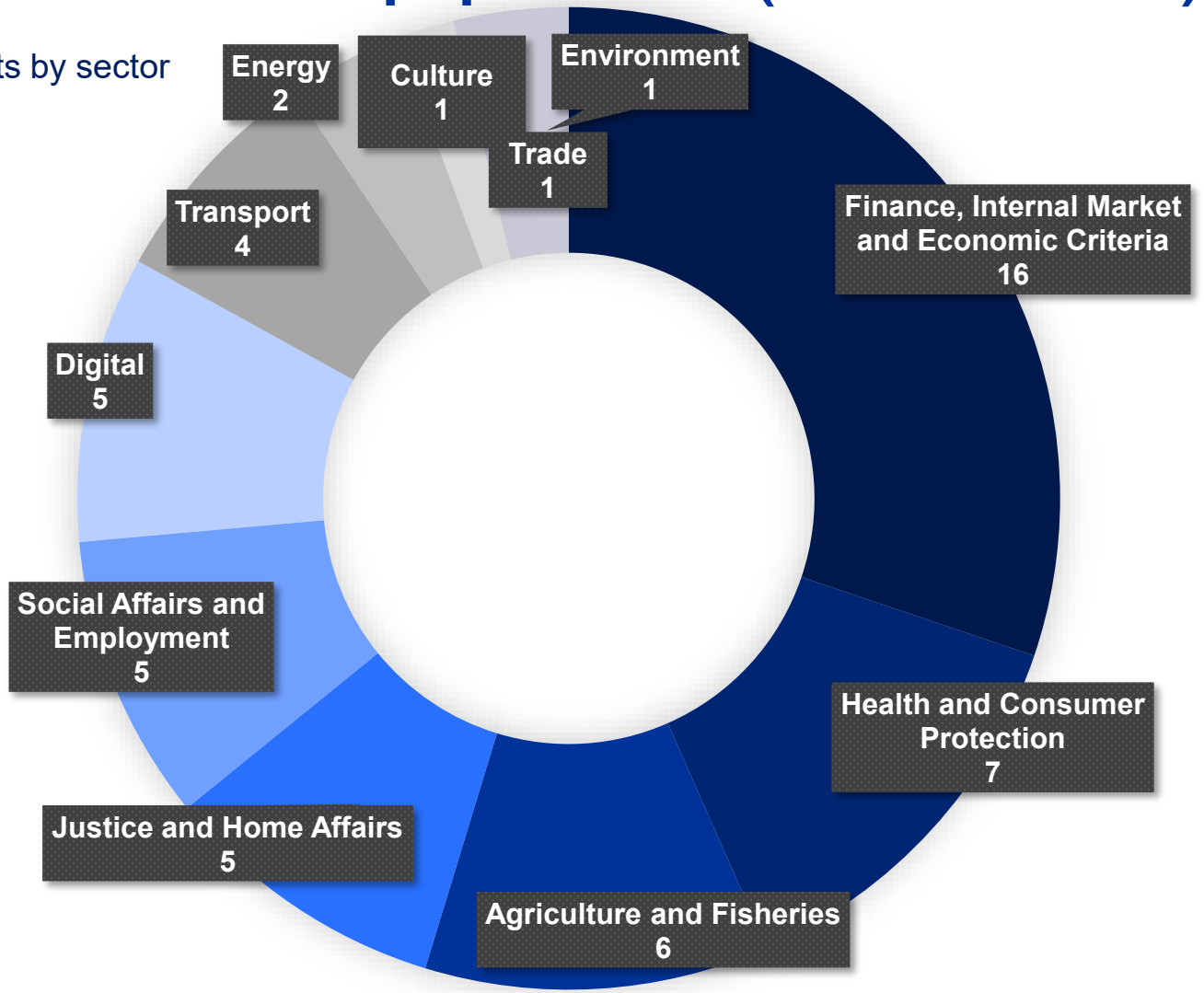


Link to Twinning pipeline: Twinning - Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood - European Commission

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Looking forward – pipeline (Oct 2026)

Pipeline of Twinning projects by sector



Link to Twinning pipeline: Twinning - Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood - European Commission

Twinning Simplification

Twinning Coordination Team

Twinning reform: why & what

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Key principles

Simplification
Less administrative burden for everyone involved

Coherence
Smarter, more digitalised, harmonised processes

Trust
Confidence in partners, not just controls

Impact
More focus on results, less on controls

Digitalisation

Moving Twinning onto e-Grants

- Move from paper-based files to a single digital platform
- One data entry point, shared across all actors
- More coherent, harmonised way of working

Simplified financial management

From actual costs to lump sums

- Lump-sum funding replaces actual-cost reimbursement
- Shift the focus from financial control to implementation, trust, and cutting red tape

Objective: *a Twinning instrument that is lighter to manage, easier to implement, grounded in trust, and focused on impact*

Digitalisation

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eGrants system	• **Platform ready by January 2027** • Templates available on EU Funding & Tenders Portal
Role of MS NCP	• The role of the NCP will essentially **not change**
PIC Number	• **One time process** • **Not required at application stage**, but can be completed at contracting stage post-award
Participants	• **No change** - situation remains the same as currently (lead MS, junior MSs)
Timing of Call for proposals	• Intermediary step to request publication = opportunity for **more detailed pipeline**

Lump Sum

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Application & Work Plan	• Level of detail remains **comparable to current system,** incl. Work Plan • Rolling Work Plans **developed with the Partner Country**
Budget	• Based on **simplified cost options** (Lump sum decision soon available on EU Funding & Tenders Portal) • Expert fee and ceilings **updated to inflation**
Consortium Agreement	• Required, but **not submitted to EU**
Pre-financing & Payment	• Default is **90% initial prefinancing** • Flexibility to include a lower initial prefinancing + further prefinancing for large Twinnings • Payment is linked with **completion of work packages** (i.e. activities)
Audit	• Audits will focus on the **proper implementation of the work packages** (not based on financial aspects)

eGrants pilots, timeline, how to prepare

Twinning Coordination Team

eGrants Twinning pilots

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Country	Title	Beneficiary	Description	Budget
Albania	Competition Authority	The Albanian Competition Authority	The exact scope of the twinning is being defined based on must urgent needs of the competition authority. It will include administrative and institutional strengthening of the authority, including its ability to investigate strategic cases and ensure effective implementation of competition rules. The Authority may soon also be made responsible for state aid, which would significantly enlarge the scope of the project.	EUR 1 MIL
Albania	Strengthening the capacities of Albanian Financial Supervisory Authority	Albanian Financial Supervisory Authority (AFSA)	The objective is to strengthen its legal and institutional framework, administrative capacity and supervisory practices in support of Albania's EU accession process. It will include revision of the AFSA organic Law; Assess AFSA's current organisational structure against the new functions and administrative responsibilities arising from alignment with the EU acquis; Translate new legal requirements into day-to-day regulatory and supervisory practice through implementation planning, operational procedures, guidance and practical training for AFSA staff; Update and/or develop supervisory manuals to reflect the new legislative framework and base on relevant EU supervisory best practices.	EUR 1 MIL

Indicative pilot timeline

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November 2026

Pipeline published

Nov-Jan 2026

All guidance documents available to EU MS:

- eGrants templates
- Lump Sum Decision
- Twinning Manual for eGrants/lump sum

January 2027

Call for proposals open

NCPs receive invitation link by email

Jan-Feb 2027

Info sessions

- Project and application content

- eGrants for applicants

April 2027

Call for proposals deadline

April-May 2027

Selection process

Starting May 2027

Grant Agreement Preparation

Summer 2027

GA signature and project start

How to prepare for the call?

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I

Consult the key documents for Twinning-eGrants

- Twinning eGrants templates
- Lump sum decision
- Twinning Manual (eGrants-LS)

II

Consult eGrants guidance material

- EU Funding & Tenders Online Manual
- IT How To

III

Prepare potential applicant institutions

- Early identification of applicants
- PIC registration

Preparing the call (I): consult key documents for Twinning

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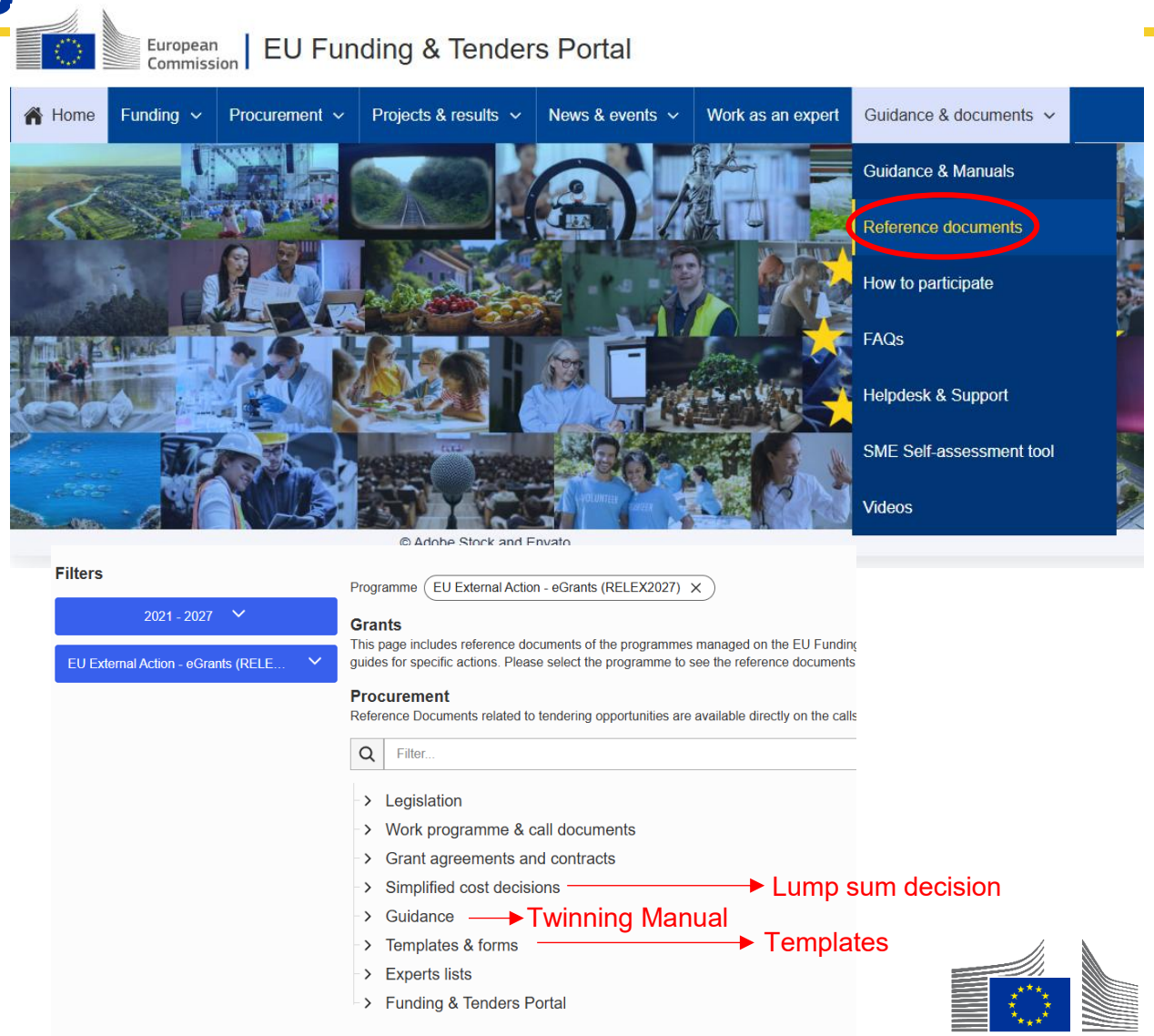
Twinning resources to be available on the portal

Guidance & Docs → Reference documents → Filters: 21-27; RELEX

Twinning templates
Application, detailed budget, work plan, etc.
The templates contain essential information on the call requirements and Twinning architecture.
Status: available on the portal
*Note: **call doc** template to be shared for the purpose of the pilot only -> Do not circulate further.*

Lump sum decision
Eligible costs.
Status: to be available in coming weeks

Twinning Manual for eGrants and lump sum
Additional guidance on Twinning procedures
Status: In development – on portal before call launch



EU Funding & Tenders Portal | EU Funding & Tenders Portal

Preparing the call (II): consult eGrants guiding material

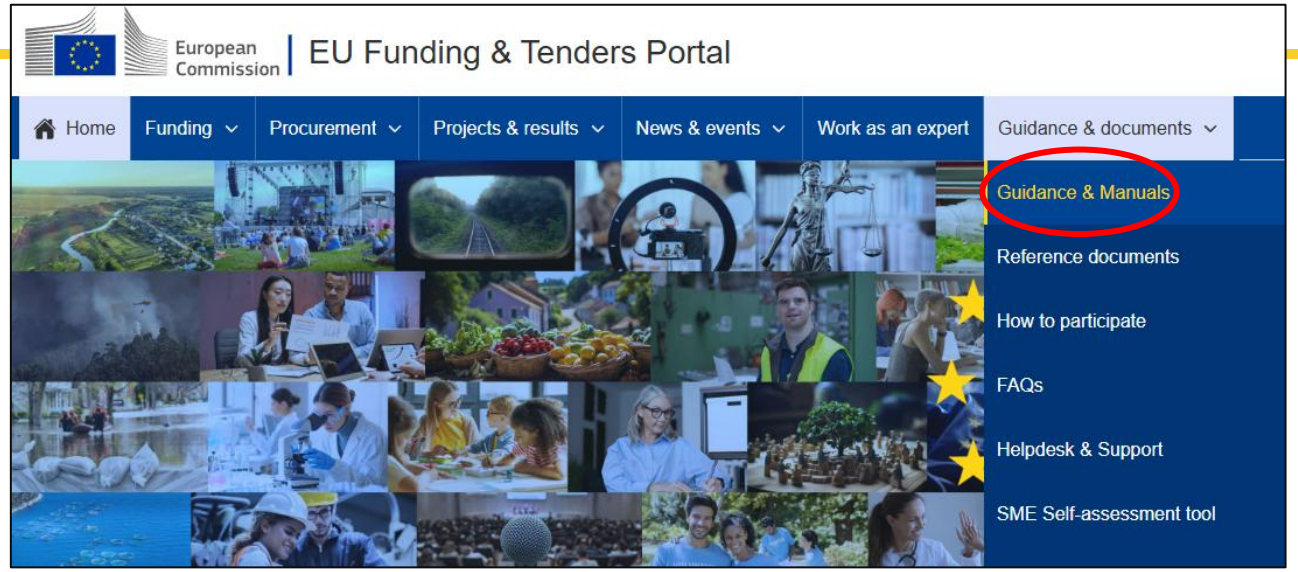
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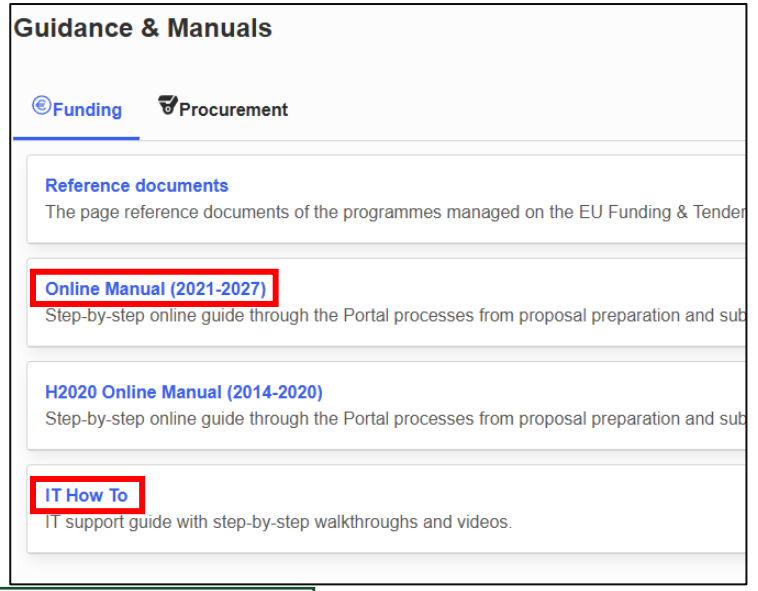
All useful resources on the portal

Guidance & Docs → Guidance & Manuals

Online Manual
Comprehensive guide for eGrants lifecycle
Application → Evaluation & signature → Management

IT How To
Step-by-step didactical approach for the IT aspect of every phase of the project, with walkthrough screenshots and videos
E.g.:
- *How to submit an application*
- *How to create a PIC*
- *How to prepare the Grant Agreement*
- *How to make an amendment*
- *Etc.*





EU Funding & Tenders Portal | EU Funding & Tenders Portal

Preparing the call (III): Participant preparation and PIC

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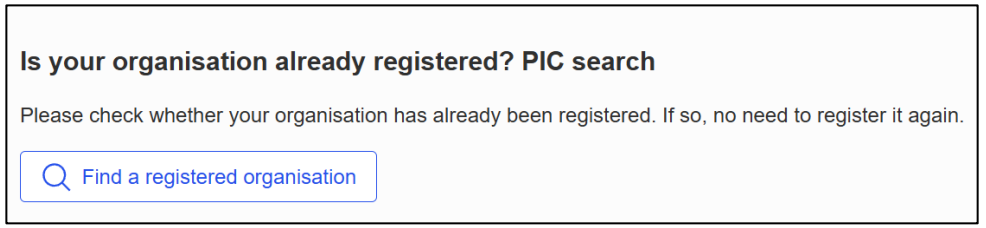
1) Identify **potential participants** and direct them towards the Twinning/eGrants framework

2) Check their **PIC** situation

3) If the institution does not have a PIC, **encourage them to create one ASAP.**

- Twinning templates
- Lump Sum Decision
- Twinning Manual
- Grant Agreement template
- Annotated Grant Agreement
- eGrants online Manual
- IT How To

Participant Register



Online Manual: Registration and Validation of your organisation

- The registration process is **fast** and **straightforward**.
- The **PIC** is delivered in minutes. It is **sufficient to apply for calls**.
- **If the proposal is awarded**, the institution will be contacted through the platform to **validate registration,** by providing justifying documents.

Call Document training & Twinning Manual development

Twinning Coordination Team

The Call Document



External Action (RELEX)

Call for proposals – Invitation to submit a proposal

[Name of the call]
(RELEX-[IPA]-202X-TWIN-XXX-IBA)

Call purpose and framework

- Invitation to submit a proposal for an EU action grant.
- The regulatory framework.
- The call is managed by the EU Delegation
- The call title and topic
- A Member State can NOT submit more than one proposal.
- Call documentation with links

1. Background

Twinning is an institution-building tool based on partnership cooperation between public administrations of EU Member States and partner countries, with a view to achieving concrete results/outputs in a project jointly agreed by the EU and the partner country where the project will take place.

The project targeted by this call is described in the Twinning Project Fiche *(Annex 1)*.

⚠ In order to ensure full ownership and participation, the partner country will be closely involved throughout the process (representatives will participate both in the selection and the monitoring of the project; the partner country will be added as associated partner to the selected project and will provide project counterparts and partner country staff to participate in the project activities, etc).

2. Objectives — Activities that are funded — Expected results/outputs

The objectives, activities and expected results/outputs under this call are set out in the Twinning Project Fiche *(see Annex 1)*.

3. Available budget

The estimated available call budget (= project budget/maximum grant amount) is set out in the Twinning Project Fiche *(see Annex 1)*.

⚠ Only 1 project will be funded.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	dd Month 202X
[Information meeting:	dd Month 202X]
Deadline for submission:	dd Month 202X – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)[1]
Evaluation:	Month-Month 202X
Selection meeting:	dd Month 202X
Information on evaluation results:	Month-Month 202X
GA signature:	Month/Month 202X

Background, Objectives, Budget & Timetable

1. Background

- What is twinning

- Ownership and participation of the partner country

2. Objectives

Activities; Expected results/outputs (as per Annex 1- Twinning Fiche)

3. Available Budget

Maximum grant amount (as per Annex 1 - Twinning Project Fiche)

4.Timetable and deadlines

indicative

5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted before the **call deadline** *(see timetable section 4)*.

Proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the link in the invitation letter). Paper submissions are NOT possible

....

Proposals must be **complete** and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents:

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project *(to be filled in directly online)*
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project *(template to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded)*
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** *(templates to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded)*:
  - detailed budget table/calculator
  - CVs (standard) of core project team (project leaders (PLs), resident twinning adviser (RTA) and component leaders (CLs)
  - work plan
  - logframe
  - timetable/Gantt chart
  - strategic communication plan
  - RTA availability declaration
  - [other annexes].

.....

Admissibility, Eligibility and Capacity

5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be complete and submitted before deadline

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants and consortium composition.

Eligible activities, geographic location, duration and expected project budget: as set out in the Twinning Fiche

7. Financial (n.a.) & operational capacity and exclusion

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score	Weight
Relevance			
Concepts and ideas	n/a	5	1
Work plan preparation, communication and visibility	n/a	5	1
MS administrative model	n/a	5	1
Other sector initiatives and previous projects	n/a	5	1
Total Relevance	16	20	n/a
Design			
Coherent concept	n/a	5	1
Adequate methodology	n/a	5	1
Measurable results	n/a	5	1
Coverage of all components	n/a	5	1
Total Design	n/a	20	n/a
Implementation			
Adequate RTA expertise	n/a	5	2
RTA project coordination and management experience	n/a	5	1
PL and PL administration management experience and capacity, JP complementarity and expertise	n/a	15	1
PL and PL administration project management experience	n/a	5	1
Component Leader specific expertise	n/a	5	1
Component Leader technical expertise	n/a	5	1
Total Implementation	27	45	n/a
Sustainability			
Tangible impact	n/a	5	1
Multiplier effect	n/a	5	1
Sustainability	n/a	5	1
Total Sustainability	n/a	15	n/a
Total	n/a	**100**	n/a

Evaluation & Award criteria, Legal set up, How to submit & Help

8. Evaluation (same procedure as now)

One-stage submission and one-step evaluation

9. Award criteria (slight reorganization)

- Relevance
- Design - former methodology
- Implementation - former op. capacity
- Sustainability

10. Legal and financial set up of the GA

Starting date and project duration, deliverables, payment arrangements, cost eligibility rules other specificities (as per AO decision)

11. How to submit an application

12. Help

Annex 1 - Twinning Fiche & Log frame

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (LOGFRAME)							
Results	**Results chain**	**Indicator**	**Baseline (value & ref year**	**Target (value & ref year**	**Current value (only for reporting)**	**Sources of data**	**Assumptions**
Impact (Overall Objective)							*Not applicable*
Outcome(s) (Specific Objective)							
Outputs (work packages)	**Work Package 4: Component 1 .....**						
	Output 1.1 ..... Output 1.2						
	Work Package X: Component X						
	Output X.1 ..... Output X.2 ...						
Activities for WP X	**Component X .....**						
	Activity X.1 -						
	Activity X.2 –						

For Twinning Light

Twinning Manual development

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Key principles to our approach

Consistency & coherence

Reduce contradictory or overlapping guidance and ensure that the Manual provides a consistent reference point for Twinning implementation.

A clearer user journey

Reorganise the Manual around the project lifecycle and key processes, defining roles and responsibilities first, then allowing users to navigate it progressively and find the information they need at each stage.

Guidance where it adds value

Avoid duplicating existing corporate guidance and regulations on eGrants and lump sum. Instead, guide users to it, and provide clarity where general rules need to be translated into the Twinning context.

Building on feedback

Use the revision as an opportunity to address feedback received from **all actors** since the previous Manual, including clarifying issues that can now be resolved through the simplification and digitalisation.

Process: Analysis → Feedback → Finalise drafting → Pilot → Feedback → Final Manual

Twinning documentation architecture

The Twinning Manual complements the grant documentation

Grant documentation
The funding framework

- **Call document, proposal and budget templates:** Structure for describing the project, defining work packages and estimating the budget used to establish the lump sum, details on implementation.
- **Lump-sum Model Grant Agreement (MGA):** Contractual provisions and obligations applicable to the grant **+ AGA**
- **Lump-sum Decision:** Legal and methodological basis to use lump sums for Twinning grants.

Specific requirements for the project and contractual framework

Twinning Manual for eGrants/LS
The compass and project cycle

- Purpose, principles and specific features of Twinning
- Roles and responsibilities of Twinning actors
- Project identification and preparation
- Project cycle, governance, implementation and monitoring

eGrants guidance
The digital procedures

- EU Funding and Tenders Portal: **Online Manual (2021-2027)**
- Practical guidance for applicants and beneficiaries on **navigating the platform**, from proposal preparation and submission to grant management, reporting and payment requests.

General information and navigational support

Navigating Twinning in eGrants:
where to find the right information at every step of the process

1 Call for proposals

Main reference: Call document

Project information (Twinning fiche), eligibility criteria, eligible costs, call requirements.

Also essential: Proposal templates (application, work plan, detailed budget, etc.)

2 Selection and results

Main reference: Call document

Information on interview, evaluation, selection and award requirements and criteria.

3 Grant agreement preparation

Main reference: Call document, Annotated Grant Agreement (AGA)

Understand the grant agreement provisions and how they should be interpreted when preparing the agreement.

4 Implementation, reporting, payments

Main reference: Call document and Twinning templates

Information on the project structures, deliverables, reporting and payments.

Also consult: Grant agreement and Twinning Manual.

Guidance throughout the lifecycle

These resources provide additional information and support you at any stage of the project

Eligible costs and lump sum

→ **Twinning Lump Sum Decision**

For rules on calculating and justifying eligible costs.

Twinning rules and procedures

→ **Twinning Manual for eGrants/LS**

For general guidance on the Twinning instrument

Using the eGrants suite

→ **eGrants Online Manual** and **IT How To**

For system guidance and practical instructions.

Need help?

Twinning coordination team for any Twinning-related question

eGrants team for any IT system-related question/bug reporting

Next steps

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MS NCPs

- ❑ Send feedback which you consider relevant for the Twinning Manual update to the Twinning Coordination Team (ENEST-Twinning@ec.europa.eu) **by 20 November.**

To prepare for the pilot:

- ❑ Familiarise yourself with the RELEX- and RELEX TWINNING-marked templates available on EU Funding and Tenders Portal under Reference documents.
- ❑ Review the eGrants Online Manual (2021-2027) and consult the IT How To.
- ❑ Outreach to relevant administrations to generate interest in the pilot projects with relevant information; determine whether they already have a PIC number and if not, encourage them to register ASAP through the Participant Register.

EC

- ❑ Publish **Lump Sum Decision and pilot Twinning Manual** on EU Funding and Tenders portal (by call launch date)
- ❑ Organise **info session** for interested MS with EU Delegation Albania on the pilot project once Call for Proposals launched (January/February 2027).
- ❑ DG RTD eGrants team will host an info session **on preparing and submitting applications** (February 2027)

Thank you



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