



PARTNERSHIP FUNDS IN THE NEW EU MEMBER STATES

PARTNERSHIPS STRENGTHEN BILATERAL RELATIONS



tries. These partnerships focus on sharing experience in the various fields. As a result, institutions and government agencies in the new EU member states can benefit from Swiss expertise. At the same time, Swiss organisations can extend their networks and expertise thanks to partnerships with organisations in the partner countries.

Through the partnership funds, Switzerland is supporting around 280 small projects which will help solve concrete problems in the partner countries and improve the living conditions of their citizens. Only non-profit organisations are accepted as partners in both Switzerland and the partner countries, i.e. organisations that do not pursue any commercial interests through their participation in projects, such as foundations or associations. Public authorities such as municipalities or cantonal administrative bodies are also eligible to access these funds. Trade unions can also be admitted as partners. Town twinning is a traditional example of such a partnership.

The partnership funds set up under the auspices of Switzerland's enlargement contribution facilitate the exchange of experience between institutions in the new EU member states and Swiss partners - in areas such as non-motorised transport, teacher training and biodiversity, for instance. The Swiss contribution to partnership funds for financing small projects is approximately CHF 25 million.

Switzerland possesses a great deal of experience in areas such as research and environmental protection, and in other fields too. Given the lack of experience of the partner countries in a wide range of areas (usually for historical reasons), Swiss organisations can consequently make a significant contribution to active knowledge transfer.

FOCUS ON SHARING EXPERIENCE

The partnership funds in Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and the Czech Republic support and foster institutional partnerships between Switzerland and the respective coun-

MANY SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

The partnership fund programmes in Poland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia have been completed. Programmes are still in progress in Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia. The completed projects have produced numerous encouraging results. For example, Swiss expertise helped to implement a project to promote non-motorised transport in the Czech Republic. Another project concerned incorporating the rights of children in teacher training. As part of the Slovenian partnership fund, a joint research project to preserve biodiversity was implemented.

In Poland the focus was placed on partnerships between towns and municipalities. For instance, Polish cities and municipalities were able to discuss matters relating to spatial planning and public transport with Swiss authorities.



MUTUAL BENEFITS OF COOPERATION

By expanding its horizons through establishing and maintaining long-term partnerships between public agencies and institutions, Switzerland also benefits from the mutual exchange of experience. Partnership projects allow Swiss partners to play an active role in reducing economic and social disparities between the new member states and the EU.

Projects are submitted to the national institution nominated to manage the fund. A broad-based selection committee, on which Switzerland is also represented, decides which projects will be financed.

The partnership funds set up as part of the Swiss enlargement contribution:

- will co-finance around 280 partnership projects;
- will create and foster institutional partnerships between public bodies in the new EU member states and Switzerland;
- will enable the exchange of specialist knowledge between the new EU member states and Switzerland to the benefit of all parties.

THE PROGRAMME IN BRIEF

SUBJECT

Strengthening civil society

COUNTRIES

Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary

PARTNERS

Swiss non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and public bodies

STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For historical reasons, institutions, organisations and public bodies in the new EU member states lack expert knowledge in many specialist fields. Swiss expertise can help to fill these knowledge and experience gaps.

PURPOSE

- Expand existing and foster new institutional partnerships between non-governmental organisations, research institutes and public agencies from the partner countries and Switzerland.
- Implement partnership projects that will actively contribute to improving the living conditions of citizens, also with the help of Swiss expertise.

ACTIVITIES

- Selecting and implementing around 280 partnership projects
- Transferring Swiss expert knowledge
- Establishing and expanding institutional partnerships
- Fact-finding visits to project partners
- Joint evaluation and drafting of reports
- Creating long-term international relationships in the project area

TARGET GROUPS

Non-governmental organisations and public bodies in the respective partner countries and Switzerland

COSTS

Total project budget (amount of Swiss contribution)
CHF 25.3 million

Amount of funds by country:

Bulgaria: CHF 2.2 million

Croatia: CHF 2 million

Poland: CHF 3.4 million

Romania: CHF 5 million

Slovakia: CHF 2.5 million

Slovenia: CHF 1.1 million

Czech Republic: CHF 5.1 million

Hungary: CHF 4 million

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Institutions in the new EU member states in collaboration with a Swiss partner

DURATION

Different durations in each country

Bulgaria: 2012-2017

Croatia: 2017-2021

Poland: 2009-2015

Romania: 2011-2019

Slovakia: 2011-2016

Slovenia: 2010-2014

Czech Republic: 2009-2016

Hungary: 2010-2013