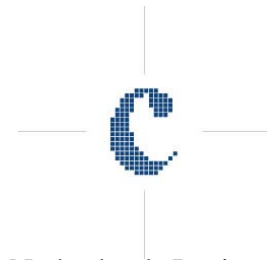


MATRA TRAINING FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION

(MTEC)

HOW TO COOPERATE WITH BRUSSELS

9 – 20 November 2009



The Netherlands Institute of
International Relations, **Clingendael**

Introduction

Countries all over the world increasingly have to deal with the European Union (EU) in addition to their bilateral relations with EU member states. This is particularly the case for countries in the vicinity of the EU. For them, the EU has become the point of reference for negotiations and agreements on trade, visa policy, cross-border crime, environmental pollution and many other issues. Cooperation takes place in the context of different policies, like the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the four common spaces with Russia.

For the administrations of neighbouring countries, dealing, interacting, and negotiating with 'Brussels' can sometimes be a complex task. Given the complexity of EU decision-making, it is not always easy to understand who represents the EU and who is in charge with regard to the different external policies. Yet, the ability to cooperate with Brussels is a precondition for an effective representation of national interests in the relationship with the EU.

With these challenges in mind, the Matra Training Programme for European Cooperation (MTEC) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers the course 'How to Cooperate with Brussels'. In line with MTEC's objectives, this course aims to promote 'Good Neighbourship' with Eastern and Southern neighbours. It prepares government officials from six countries (Belarus, Jordan, Morocco, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine) for cooperating with Brussels.

The course 'How to Cooperate with Brussels' is organised by the Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael', with support of EVD International Business and Cooperation /CROSS, who executes the MTEC Programme.

Objectives of the course

The main objective of this training is to deepen the participants' understanding of the relationship between their country and the EU and to develop the necessary skills required to represent their national interests in this relationship in an effective way.

By participating in this programme, the participants will:

1. Gain practical knowledge and insight in the decision making procedures of the EU and contents of its policies, particularly those most relevant for the countries in the EU's vicinity;
2. Get familiar with the requirements for effective interest representation vis-à-vis the EU institutions and EU member states and develop relevant skills for cooperating with Brussels;
3. Increase their understanding of the position of their own country and other countries in the vicinity of the EU with a view to identify possibilities for joint interest representation (coalition formation).

Approach

The programme has an interactive and practical character. There will be ample room for open discussion and many practitioners will be involved in the programme (e.g. diplomats, civil servants, trainers). 'Learning by doing' is the didactical philosophy. The participants will exercise with practical and recent EU examples, case studies and simulations. Delegations will work on defining national priority areas in their relationship with the EU, and transform them into a real 'Back Home Action Plan', to be presented at the end of the course.

The development of individual skills is at the heart of the course. Active participation is constantly promoted by seducing and challenging the participants to leave their comfort zone, show themselves, and push beyond their limits. After having followed 'How to Cooperate with Brussels', the participants are better professionals able to be serious and effective players when interacting with the EU.

Programme

The programme consists of three components: theory, skills development and working visits.

I. Theory

The theoretical part of the programme will cover the following topics:

➤ **The EU playing field**

An introduction will be given to the workings of the different EU institutions, procedures, and informal policy making practices. This will set the ground for the participants to understand the theory of interest representation and how to influence key actors in the decision making process. Particular attention will also be given to current trends in the EU (e.g. the Lisbon Treaty, financial crisis).

➤ **Selected EU policies**

The participants will receive lectures on key EU policies affecting their countries on a day-to-day basis. Some of the topics under discussion will be:

- Latest developments in the European Neighbourhood Policy (i.e. Eastern Partnership, Union for the Mediterranean);
- EU foreign and security policy;
- The internal market and its external dimension;
- EU trade policy;
- The external dimension of justice and home affairs (e.g. visa, migration).

II. Skills development

Theory will be complemented by trainings, focusing on the following skills:

- Presentation/debating;
- (EU) negotiation;
- Interest representation;
- (EU) networking;
- Intercultural communication;
- Working in a team.

III. Working visits

Several working visits will be scheduled. At the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the participants will learn about Dutch views on EU policy towards its neighbourhood. They will also meet with their relevant country/region desk officers in parallel sessions. During the second week, a working trip to Brussels will take place. During this trip, in which we will visit the main European Institutions, a number of EU officials will provide insight into how EU policymaking works in practice.

Social Programme

To stimulate the networking function of the course, a social programme will be organised as well, including activities such as:

- Boat trip through the canals of Amsterdam during the weekend;
- Dinner party on the first evening;
- Bowling night;
- Social drinks.

Teaching Staff

The teaching staff will consist of:

- Academic staff members from the Clingendael Institute;
- Academic lecturers by senior staff of universities;
- Skills trainers and consultants with working experience in training international groups;
- Representatives from Dutch Ministries, European officials and others.

Learning Materials

The learning materials will provide relevant background information to the lectures and skills trainings. The participants will receive a reader with several articles. In addition, three books will be handed out:

- Elizabeth Bomberg, John Peterson and Alexander Stubb (2008), *The European Union: How Does it Work?*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press
- Stephan Keukeleire and Jennifer MacNaughtan (2008), *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan
- Mijnd Huijser (2006), *The Cultural Advantage: A New Model for Succeeding with Global Teams*, Intercultural Press Incorporated.

Dates and Accommodation

The course will be held at the NH Hotel, The Hague, from 9-20 November 2009. The participants will be accommodated in this hotel as well.

Expenses

The Dutch government will pay for all costs (travel to and within the Netherlands, visa, board and lodging, health insurance, the course itself and study materials). Lunch and coffee/tea during the course are organised and dinners are taken care of as far as possible. For additional costs the participants will be granted a small allowance.

Course Participants

The course group consists of government officials from six neighbouring countries, who are working with EU-related files on a regular basis. The eligible countries are: Belarus, Jordan, Morocco, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. A balance between the numbers of participants from the different countries will be taken into account during the selection procedure. The maximum number of participants is 25.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be taken into account during selection:

- Relevant professional background (i.e. involvement in European dossiers);
- Excellent command of English;
- Enthusiasm and motivation;
- Level of seniority;
- Gender balance.

Application

Applications should be made through the Netherlands Embassy in the applicant's country. Application forms should be downloaded from the website <http://www.cross-agency.nl>. Go to downloads, click on application form for the relevant course, click on your country; you can then download the application form.

Applications (duly signed by the applicant and his or her employer) should be submitted latest on the **25th of September** through the Royal Dutch Embassy in the applicants' country. By this date, all forms, including the signed employer statement, must be received by the Royal Netherlands Embassy. Please note that the application instructions on the website need to be followed carefully.

Only fully documented applications will be considered. The total number of applicants will be limited to 25. Admission will be on a competitive basis.

Applicants who have been accepted for the course are expected to duly attend. In case of no-shows or (too) late cancellations, i.e. within three weeks before the course commences, the course organiser has the right to claim all costs incurred from the candidate's employer.

Project team

Clingendael project team consists of:

- Ms Sarah Wolff, Project Coordinator, Fellow CESP;
- Ms Keti Peters, Project Assistant CESP;
- Ms Louise van Schaik, Fellow CESP;
- Ms Suzanne Nollen, Deputy Head CESP;
- Dr. Mendeltje van Keulen, Senior Research Fellow CESP;
- Secretariat of the Clingendael European Studies Programme (CESP).

Course Organiser

'How to Cooperate in Brussels' is organised by the European Studies Programme of the Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael'. The Clingendael Institute is an independent, non-profit, academic institute situated in The Hague, specialising in policy-making in the field of international relations. It acts as a think-tank as well as a diplomatic academy in order to identify and analyse emerging political and social developments for the benefit of government and the public.

Further Information

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More information on the courses developed under MTEC programme:

For further information you can either contact the Royal Netherlands Embassy or EVD/CROSS:

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