

TWINNING LIGHT PROJECT WITH SPAIN

The Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, the Hon. Dolores Cristina and the Ambassador for Spain, H.E. Maria Rose Boceta Ostof exchanged contract documents during the launch of the Twinning Light Project of the European Social Fund (ESF) Community Initiative, EQUAL.

Present for the signing of the EQUAL Twinning Light Project's contract were the team of four Spanish Short Term Experts, Ms. Cristina Sacristan, Ms. Susana Clement, Mr. Jose Maria Laclea and Ms. Ana-Isabel Vega, who all form part of Spain EQUAL National Support Structure (NSS). They will be advising Malta's newly set-up EQUAL NSS in its preparations for the Administrative Capacity, Programming and Implementation of the ESF's Community Initiative EQUAL, for the first time.

EQUAL is the ESF's Community Initiative Programme designed to establish new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality in the field of employment by creating trans-national partnerships that provide support through projects for those seeking access to the labour market, or those who are already in work. Malta has already programmed some 1.65 million Euros apart from the ESF funds, to undertake EQUAL Projects that will address social inclusion issues in the labour market in the areas of Employability, Entrepreneurship, Equal Opportunities and Asylum Seekers.

The Twinning Light Project, which has been allocated 72,000 Euros, will last for three months. The Spanish Experts will advise Malta's administrative capacity and potential Development Partnerships on EQUAL's Programming requirements, the design of its Management Information System, the Information and Publicity materials, and the overall equal Project Management, Monitoring and Control aspects.

Seven half-day workshops and a study visit to Spain will be held for the benefit of Malta's prospective EQUAL Development Partnerships, in order to best prepare them for Malta's first EQUAL Programme's official call for proposals, which will open during the last week of June.

Further information is available from the EQUAL National Support Structure, European Social Fund Unit, EU Affairs Directorate, Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, Palazzo Ferreria, Republic Street, Valletta, CMR 02. Tel : 2590 3180, Fax : 2590 3189, Email : esf.mfss@gov.mt, Web: www.esf.gov.mt

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