



The European Union's IPA 2010 programme for Albania

***Technical Assistance for Strengthening the
Capacity of the Ministry of Environment, Forests
and Water Administration in Albania for Law
Drafting and Enforcement of National
Environmental Legislation***

(EuropeAid/I 30987/C/SER/AL)

**STUDY TOUR REPORT
Irish EPA visit 16 -18 April
Activity C.3**

Draft



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This report has been prepared by a project team working for Grontmij. The findings, conclusions and interpretations expressed in this document are those of Grontmij alone and should not in any way be taken to reflect the opinions and policies of the European Commission.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAT	Best Available Techniques
BREF	Best Environmental Reference Note
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Information System
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPL	Environmental Protection Law
EUD	European Union Delegation to Albania
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology system
LAN	Local Area Network
MoEFWA	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Affairs
NEA	National Environmental Agency
QA	Quality Assurance
REA	Regional Environmental Agencies
SELEA	Support Environmental Laws Enforcement Albania
ToR	Terms of reference

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF STUDY TOUR

From 12th March till 11th May two NEA staffs have joined the Irish EPA in Wexford, Ireland, as internships. The internship arrangement was a first step in a possible continued cooperation between the Irish EPA and NEA, Albania.

The overall idea of the Study tour was to assess the tangible first item of cooperation (the internships) and discuss possible further cooperation between the two parties.

1.2 COOPERATION IRISH EPA AND NEA

A first informal Note on cooperation between the Irish EPA and NEA was facilitated by SELEA. The Note is attached as Annex B.

For further cooperation has been discussed:

- Irish EPA assistance to promote NEA
- Transfer of Irish Know-how on IT systems
- Electronic equipments as gifts

In addition to the possible items mentioned above it is also foreseen to pursue the possibility for direct bilateral cooperation between Ireland and Albania.

Cooperation between the Irish EPA and NEA will however remain informal and be implemented step by step as the parties might agree.

1.3 CONCLUSIONS

The parties have agreed informally to continue cooperation.

A next step will be to finally evaluate the internships to see if cooperation should continue along these lines.

Further on an expert from the EPA might be involved in the further development of the Data Management System as initiated by CEMSA. TOR for such assistance is being prepared.

Finally the EPA will look for portable computers outdated for the EPA but of a relatively good quality as gifts for NEA.

2 VISIT

2.1 PROGRAMME

The draft programme was prepared. Please see Annex A.

The overall idea of the programme was to get an impression of:

- The general cooperation and possibilities for the future
- The EPA ICT system
- A specific assessment of licensing old landfills
- The capacity building results of the internships
- The internships assessment of the stay in EPA

Finally the possibility for further cooperation should be pursued.

2.2 CONDUCT OF VISIT

The programme was conducted as drafted.

Two persons, the director of NEA, Mr. Tonin Hysi, and a SELEA Key Expert for NEA, Mr. Kurt Terpgaard-Jensen took part in the conduct of the programme.

Mr. Tonin Hysi came directly from Tirana and Mr. Kurt Terpgaard-Jensen came independently directly from Tirana and Copenhagen respectively Tuesday 16 April.

On the first evening the two internships, Ms. Etleva Sinoimeri and Ms. Olkida Mersini, came to an informal first meeting to give a general informal opinion of the stay.

All second day – Wednesday 17 April – was dedicated to meetings in the EPA.

An introductory meeting with Programme Manager, Frank Clinton, and Senior Inspector, Karen Creed, gave a first impression of the existing organisation of the EPA and its regional offices.

The EPA has been in a transition process reducing the staff component and at the same time developing the IT infrastructure to optimise the resources. The EPA has succeeded due to this approach to become more efficient and undertake the same tasks with less staff.

Tom Stafford, Reporting and Assessment Manager, gave a presentation of the development of the ICT system. It was highlighted that the system had taken off in several data management systems that was now combined into one comprehensive system. The system includes among others an on-line application system for developers, a permit and licensing development system as well as a data management system. The system has been developed over the past 20 years and examples of the result were given. It was concluded that a strategy for development of an IT system was most important. The ICT as such is not suitable for Albania for the time being but the experiences from the development of the Irish system could be important for NEA.

Breen Higgins, Inspector, gave a presentation of the Licensing process of old landfills. It was evident from the presentation how efficient the IT system (ICT) has supported the process of setting conditions and prioritising remedial actions for the licensing process.

Ms. Etleva Sinoimeri and Ms. Olkida Mersini gave presentations on examples of licences they had both been involved with. It was obvious how the stay had provided a comprehensive input to the building of their individual technical capacity and understanding of the implementation of the EU system in Ireland.

A discussion followed about all issues raised.

In the evening a farewell dinner was given by SELEA. During the dinner the last items on the cooperation were informally discussed.

The overall conclusion was that all parties had gained most positive experiences.

2.3 INTERNSHIPS

Two internships have spent most of their time in EPA Home office in Wexford, Ireland.

They have however also had an opportunity to travel for work and socially over a couple of weeks. A couple of days were spent in the EPA Cork offices and fitting in a visit to Fota at the same time. They also spent a long weekend travelling across Ireland to Galway with one of their EPA colleagues and have visited Kilkenny and Waterford and Dublin in quick succession.

As two direct outputs were prepared:

- Waste Water Discharge, Certificate of Authorisation
- Waste Water Discharge License

ANNEX A: STUDY TOUR PROGRAMME

Study Tour – Detailed programme Ireland, 16-18 April 2013

Subjects: Internships, ICT, Organisation of Irish EPA, Management structure, Vision & Mission and development plan

Day	Location	Subjects	Contacts	Logistics
Tuesday 16				
8.15	Tirana	Check in Airport		Check-in
9.15	Tirana	Departure Tirana via Istanbul		Flight
15.50	Dublin	Arrival Dublin, travel to Wexford		Travel by bus
20.00	Wexford	Arrival		Hotel Whitesofwexford
Wednesday 17				
09.30-13.00	Irish EPA	Presentation of Irish EPA Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EPA existing situation •EPA development plans •Future cooperation 	Mr. Frank Clinton Ms. Karen Creed Mr. Tom Stafford Ms. Mary Turner Mr. Breen Higgins	Headquarters Wexford
13.00-14.15	Irish EPA	Lunch		
14.30-17.00		Mid-term Evaluation of internships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Meet internships •Meet superior •Joint Evaluation 	Ms. Olkida Mersini, NEA Alb. Ms. Etleva Sinoimeri, NEA Alb.	
19.30 -		Dinner (on behalf of SELEA)		Hotel Wexford
Thursday 18				
07.00-9.40	Wexford	Travel		Travel by bus
9.40		Check in Airport		Flight
11.05		Departure Dublin via Istanbul		
19.50		Arrival Tirana		

ANNEX B: NOTE ON COOPERATION - INTERSHIPS

Proposal for cooperation National Environmental Agency (NEA), Albania with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ireland - to provide placements for Staff of the NEA in EPA.

Executive Summary

This is a proposal for cooperation between Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland and the National Environmental Agency (NEA) Albania. The objective of the proposal is to promote institution- to- institution and peer-to-peer working-relationships and professional networking between the EPA and the NEA to support the NEA meet the challenges of implementing new EU legislation in the areas of Industrial Emissions and Environmental Impact Assessment. This will be achieved through the provision of placements with the EPA for selected NEA staff to assist the NEA to develop the capacity to implement permits for industry to EU standards.

Costs for a Phase 1

2 staff in 2 months + 1 flight for the Director

All prices in EURO

	Unit price	Units	Total
Flights	600/return per person	3 persons	1,800
Per Diem	50/day	120 days	6,000
Accommodation	650/month/person	2 month	2,600
Life insurance	50/month	2 months	200
Reserve	N/A	N/A	400
Total			11,000

Proposal for Cooperation between Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland and the National Environmental Agency (NEA) Albania

The proposed cooperation would focus on an institution to institution and peer-to-peer cooperation between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland and the National Environmental Agency (NEA) Albania. The proposal will promote long-term and structural working-relationships and professional networking between the EPA and the NEA to support the NEA meet the challenges of implementing new EU legislation in the areas of Industrial Emissions and Environmental Impact Assessment. This will be achieved through the provision of placements with the EPA for selected NEA staff to assist the NEA to develop the capacity to implement permits for industry to EU standards.

Relevant Background

Ireland:

- Ireland is a small open economy with a population of 4.5 million.
- For historic reasons Ireland mid 20th century was one of the least developed economies in Europe. From this low base Ireland developed an outstanding track in job creation and in attracting direct foreign investment.
- Ireland demonstrates that industrial development and the attraction of global foreign investment are not in conflict with strong Environmental regulations for industry.
- The Irish system is based on the view that a single national regulatory authority, for environmental aspects of industrial activities is attractive for inward investment, and can contribute to consistency and certainty in the decision making processes.

Ireland and Direct Foreign Investment

Ireland has an outstanding track record in attracting direct foreign investment.

There are now 1,004 overseas companies with Irish bases. These companies employ 146,000 people between them and contribute to €110bn in total exports.

Ireland now ranks first in the world for value of investment projects and second in the world for inward investment per capita. That is according to IBM's 2011 Global Location Trends Report.

According to the 2012 Foreign Direct Investment Report from Foreign Direct Intelligence — a London-based subsidiary of the Financial Times Group Ireland significantly outperformed the rest of Europe in attracting foreign direct investment last year.

According to figures published by the US Department of Commerce. US investment in Ireland surged in 2011 to reach a new record. The value of all direct investment by US firms in Ireland stood at \$188 billion at the end of 2011, an increase of just over \$30 billion on 2010.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland has responsibilities for a wide range of licensing, enforcement, monitoring and assessment activities associated with environmental protection. The Agency is a 'one stop shop' which includes responsibility for the environmental inspection under the enforcement function.

The EPA is an independent public body established under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992.

There are 321 full-time staff equivalents currently employed in the EPA and it has an annual budget of approximately €60 million in 2011.

Due to economic cutbacks the Agency is managing an increasing workload with a reduced budget and staff numbers. Due these constraints in the Agency in common with most Irish public sector institutions is not involved in the EU Institutional Twinning Programme.

Industrial Emissions

The Irish system is based on the view that a single national regulatory authority for environmental aspects of industrial activities is attractive for inward investment, and can contribute to consistency and certainty in decision making processes.

The EPA is responsible for regulating activities that have significant polluting potential this includes Integration Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) Licensing. The EPA through its licensing and enforcement activities seeks to ensure sustainable industrial activities within the state. These activities also assist in promoting a level playing field for regulated enterprises in Ireland and as part of the European Union and the elimination of illegal operations that undermine legitimate activities.

As at March 2011, the EPA had issued 1,500 licences. The effectiveness of EPA licensing procedures has been verified through the internal EPA audit of the Environmental Licensing Unit, and external reviews (OECD 2010; NESC 2010).

Placements

The provision of placements for NEA staff with the EPA in Ireland will provide direct experience and the development of practical skills and best practice on Industrial Permits to EU standards. This would include hands-on supervised experience on Permit process and procedures provided by EPA Ireland for new permits and amendments and review of existing permits under the EU Industrial Emissions Directive (IED). The IED will be effective in Member States from January 2013. In Ireland this process is known as the licensing process. A licence is a single integrated licence which covers all emissions from the facility and its environmental management. The licensing process is broken down into six key Stages. NEA participants would have the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the process set out below.

Stage One: Applicant makes pre-application enquiry

Stage Two: Applicant Applies for licence

Stage Three: EPA Issues Proposed Determination (PD)

Stage Four: Objection(s) received by EPA

Stage Five: Objector requests oral hearing

Stage Six: EPA issues a Final Determination

The EPA licensing and enforcement activities produce a significant body of guidance that is intended to assist regulated activities in the operation of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable enterprises. The EPA also works with industrial and NGO partners in Ireland and across the EU in the definition of best technological and operational standards for regulated enterprises.

EIA

The EPA will consider the provision of placements for EIA for NEA staff when its role in the EIA process is clarified by the Government of Ireland and on the basis that this future role is compatible with NEA EIA capacity building needs. According to the ECJ legislation on environmental impact assessments in Ireland still contains shortcomings. Concerns remain regarding the complete transposition of Article 3 of the Directive, avoiding any negative consequences of split decision making between Irish planning authorities and the Irish Environment Protection Agency. A decision by the Irish Government is expected in the near future.

Placement Costs

The EPA will provide placements for NEA staff. However, due to budgetary constraints in the public administration in Ireland it is not possible to provide for costs associated with travel, accommodation and per diems for the NEA participants.

It is estimated that costs for one NEA participant will be 1500 Euro per month based on 50 Euro a day per diem for each participant to cover transport and food, plus a two bed apartment in the centre of Wexford town, the closest town to the EPA, at an estimated cost of 1050 Euro per month, including the utilities. The cost for two NEA participants per month will be approximately 4050 Euro as there are economies with shared accommodation. In addition, flight costs are estimated at 600 Euro Tirana/Dublin/ Tirana.

Estimated Budget	Euro
Flights Tirana/Dublin/ Tirana	600
Accommodation (2 bed apartment)	1050 per month
Per Diem (to include transport in Ireland)	50 Euro