

EU development Twinning project in Ukraine led by State plant protection service concludes in November

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On 21 November, the EU Twinning Project "Approximation of Ukrainian legislation on national surveillance of GMOs in open systems, plant variety protection and production of seeds and plant propagating material in accordance with EU norms and standards" held a results debriefing conference in Kiev.

The State Plant Protection Service (SPPS), in partnership with the Polish State Inspection Service for Plant Health and Seeds, the Crop Research and Analysis Centre and the Netherlands Agricultural Inspection Service, implemented a three-year Twinning project in Ukraine "Alignment of Ukrainian legislation on national supervision of GMO in open systems, plant variety protection and seed and plant propagating material production with EU norms and standards".

The project assessed Ukrainian legislation, the national monitoring and control system, and held numerous meetings and consultations with representatives of the country's competent authorities, non-governmental organisations and scientific institutions. As a result, three new draft laws, guidelines, recommendations, communication materials, methodological materials and laboratory standards have been developed on improving the national surveillance system in the field of GMOs, plant variety protection and seed and planting material production according to EU standards in implementation of the EU *acquis*.

The project provides face-to-face, online and on-site training for Ukrainian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Service staff, including managers, inspectors and laboratory experts, during study visits to Latvia and Poland.

☞ "Seed production is one of the most important sectors of agriculture. Especially now, with so many challenges in the world, the importance of seed production is increasing. In the context of sustainable agriculture, seeds are a strategic product. This project is an important contribution to bringing Ukrainian legislation and the national control system closer to European Union standards, to improving the competence of staff and the standards of laboratories. The project has produced many documents which will be of great help to Ukrainian colleagues in their daily work and will serve as a basis for the development of the legislative base," said the project leader, Kristine Lomakina, Director of the State plant protection service. She adds that during the project, many obstacles had to be overcome - both the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression - but despite all this, the experts of the State plant protection service taking part in the project travelled to Ukraine and continued to work side by side with their Ukrainian colleagues.

The Head of the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection, Serhiy Tkachuk, expressed gratitude to the Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine, as well as to the project member states, for their support and stated:

"The achievements of the Twinning project make it possible to accelerate Ukraine's accession to the EU. We are confident that, thanks to our joint efforts, Ukraine will become a full-fledged member of the European Community in the near future."

Meanwhile, the coordinator of the project from the Ukrainian side, Deputy Head of the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection and Ukraine's Chief State Phytosanitary Inspector, Vadym Chaikovskiy, warmly thanked to the Twinning project team and European partners for their technical assistance to Ukraine on its path to European integration. He also expressed special gratitude for the strong support at the onset of the full-scale aggression by the Russian Federation, which helped Ukraine endure and continue its fight for a better future for the Ukrainian people.

The closing conference of the project was attended by representatives of the Agrarian and Land Policy Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy, the Delegation

of the European Union to Ukraine, representatives of the embassies of Latvia, Poland, and the Netherlands, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection.

A total of 23 experts from Latvia, Poland, and the Netherlands were involved in the project, implementing 137 missions, comprising 633 working days.

The project began on April 1, 2021, and concluded on November 30, 2024. From March 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022, the project was suspended due to the war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

The project is funded by the EU. The total project budget is €1.1 million.



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