



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General Enlargement

D - Financial Instruments and Regional Programmes

D4 Institution Building

## SIGMA – 2007 ASSESSMENT

The key findings of the 2007 ex-post evaluation report "SIGMA Multi-beneficiary Programme" are as follows: SIGMA is a successful programme with a good overall performance. It is well focused on supporting public administration reforms in line with EU accession priorities and its tailor-made services are highly appreciated by beneficiaries. Although SIGMA has not funded large projects, it has been important for providing strategic impetus for reforms. Moreover, the deeper involvement of stakeholders in 2002-2004 programmes had a positive effect on long term sustainability. Despite these successful outcomes, programme design and monitoring still require further attention.

**Tailor-made services were highly appreciated by beneficiaries.** Tailor-made and small-scale projects allowed SIGMA to be highly responsive and to adapt to changing needs with diversified outputs. Beneficiaries expressed a high level of satisfaction about SIGMA interventions due to their technical relevance, high responsiveness and flexibility, and high quality of the expertise delivered. However, efficiency has been negatively affected by numerous short missions and the high costs of the SIGMA secretariat.

**Contributed to strategic impetus for reforms.** SIGMA made useful contributions to policy making and strategic planning, development of legal and regulatory frameworks, institutions and procedures for managing public service and suitable environment for internal and external financial control. The effectiveness of their interventions was enhanced through regular assessments of development of public administration reform and public financial control. However, the small scale of SIGMA projects could only lay foundations for reforms or provide ad hoc technical inputs targeted at specific aspects of these reforms. Substantive results on public administration reform depend primarily on the commitment of the authorities and require mobilisation of all the Community institution building instruments and private sector input rather than SIGMA alone.

**Deeper involvement of stakeholders had a positive effect on long-term sustainability.** Previous evaluations concluded that the potential for sustainability could be improved through greater ownership of results if stakeholders were more involved at the outset of project design. This has been taken on board for 2002 and 2004 SIGMA programmes, where the stakeholders have been involved in project design.

**SIGMA, TAIEX and Twinning are complementary instruments.** SIGMA usually provides support for development of horizontal cross-sectoral capacities; whereas the main focus of TAIEX and twinning is provision of support in various sectors of the *acquis*. Twinning provides assistance over the medium and long term whereas SIGMA provides short-term technical support. Synergy between the three institution building instruments is helped by the fact that they are coordinated by a single unit within DG ELARG.

The questions emerged in the report have been addressed and SIGMA was requested to do every effort to further improve programme performance.

*Twinning and SIGMA Co-ordination Team*

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