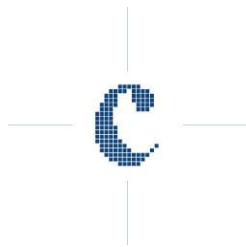


MATRA TRAINING FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION

(MTEC)

How to Operate in Brussels

20th of November – 1st of December 2006



The Netherlands Institute of International Relations,
Clingendael



Introduction

The European Union has successfully completed its biggest enlargement with ten new member states on the 1st of May 2004. Romania and Bulgaria will accede in 2007, or in 2008 at the latest and Turkey and Croatia have started accession negotiations last year. Besides this, other countries on the Balkan have got the prospect to open negotiations with the EU in the (nearby) future.

The administrations of both the new members and the pre-accession countries are facing the enormous and complex tasks of dealing and interacting with Brussels. In order to complete preparatory tasks and simultaneously represent national interests in an effective manner as a candidate or playing the game as a new member, government officials must learn how to operate in Brussels. This means, among others, dealing with the approximately 1000 Standing Committees in Brussels and a variety of supranational and intergovernmental decision-making procedures that involve in different configurations the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament.

This course will help prepare government officials from various fields of policy how to operate and lobby effectively in Brussels for their national interests. The programme will introduce topical knowledge and skills training in order to obtain this goal.

The lecturers and trainers involved in the programme (government officials, consultants and academics) are specialists in their field and well versed in the requirements for effective operating in a EU-context. They will approach the issues at hand using and sharing practical experiences.

Objectives of the course

The main objective of this training is preparing the participants for promoting their countries' interests in an effective and efficient way while operating in or in contact with Brussels, before and after the accession and developing the necessary skills and attitudes required to play an active role in the Brussels' arena.

By participating in this programme, the participants will:

1. Gain practical knowledge and insight in the decision making procedures of the European Union and the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred to the Commission (comitology);
2. Get familiar with the requirements for an effective government lobby and ways to influence the key-players and procedures;
3. Develop general and specific skills necessary to work professionally both in a national and European context such as, negotiation skills, intercultural communication, teamwork, strategic planning, presentation techniques, networking, etc.

Structure and contents of the course programme

The programme of the course can be divided into three parts. Part one is a homework assignment for the participants prior to the course. Part two combines theoretical concepts and practical examples on how to operate effectively at home and in Brussels. During the third part, the programme focuses on the further individual development of skills and attitudes.

To ensure an optimal and long lasting learning effect for the participants, a relevant and topical European dossier will be used as a case study. This dossier forms the central element, the thread, during the course.

Overview of the Course Programme

Part one: Homework assignment (approximately one month before the start of the course)

The importance of efficient planning and co-ordination at home and establishing informal interaction with key actors in a dossier at the earliest stage possible, is sometimes an underestimated factor in effective operating within the EU. Effective operating in Brussels starts at home. To make the participants aware of the importance of doing their homework properly, they will all receive the same European dossier. They will be asked to analyse this dossier and to identify the key national and international stakeholders and their respective interests. The participants are also asked to analyse their own national EU coordination system and identify the EU policy priorities of their country. This information will be used during the course in a comparative way.

Part two: European process management (predominantly the first week of the course)

In this part of the programme the participants learn how to deal with all theoretical and practical aspects of European process management. European process management refers to the ability of a national administration to realistically link national and European perceptions on a policy content level in view of effective participation in the European decision making process. The perception of an individual government official is crucial in this process; much depends on his/her expert knowledge, experience with EU-procedures and his/her sense of responsibility for all government actions needed in order to be a player in Brussels.

The course programme consists of the following topics:

1. The EU-playing-field and the essence of EU-lobbying

In order for the participants to find their way in Brussels short attention will be given to EU-institutions and procedures, the EU-playing field and EU-comitology. This will refresh the already existing knowledge of the participants on this subject. Essential however is to learn more about how to lobby in Brussels and how to influence key actors in the decision making process. Practical tips and examples will help the participants to digest the theoretical concepts given. Crucial in the lobbying process is also to know more about the exact role of the different committees in the policy making and policy implementation field and the ways to be influential.

2. National EU policymaking: a comparative approach

As mentioned before, effective operating in Brussels starts at home. The national administration should be well equipped to perform successfully in Brussels. Essential is the capacity to foresee all consequences (including implementation questions) of European developments in a specific policy field and to estimate realistically if and which national policy options can make it in the multilateral context of EU decision making. This demands, among others, highly qualified government officials, strategic and tactical planning, excellent information flows, effective co-ordination and clear instructions to the government negotiators in Brussels, in the preparation phase. The theoretical insights of this topic will be tested by practical experiences and presentations of the participants themselves in a comparative way.

3. Working visits

During the programme the participants will meet experts from various Dutch Ministries to discuss e.g. the selected dossier, and they will meet representatives of the Dutch Parliament to discuss their role in EU decision-making. In Brussels the participants will be able to work on their network and arrange meetings with European officials, to visit their permanent representatives or missions at the EU and also visit the European Institutions.

Part three: Skills Development Programme (predominantly the second week of the course)

The skills development programme forms an integral part of the above-named content-related parts of the programme. In the skills development programme special attention is given to:

- Strategic Planning;
- Presentation/Debating techniques;
- EU negotiations;
- Lobby-techniques;
- EU Networking;
- Intercultural communication.

Social Programme

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

- Boat trip through the canals of Amsterdam during the weekend;
- Dinner party at Scheveningen Seaside;
- Sightseeing tour in The Hague;
- Social drinks.

Working methods

In the course programme the following working methods will be used:

- Individual study to prepare different parts of the course on basis of the books and readers;
- Individual and Group assignments;
- Lectures with ample room for questions and discussion;
- Working visits to Brussels and The Hague;
- Simulations;
- Presentations;
- Panel discussions.

By ways of self-study, individual and group assignments, the participants will be enabled to expand their individual knowledge and skills. Learning by doing is the educational philosophy of the Clingendael Institute.

Teaching Staff

The teaching staff will consist of:

- Academic Staff from the Clingendael Institute;
- Academic lecturers from Dutch Universities;
- Skills trainers and consultants with working experience the target countries;
- Representatives from Dutch Ministries, European officials and others.

Learning materials

Books: Rinus van Schendelen, *Machiavelli in Brussels: The art of EU-lobbying*, Amsterdam University (2004)

Several readers, the contents of which will also be put on cd-rom.

Organisation, co-ordination and evaluation

The co-ordinator from the Clingendael Institute, Mr. Rob Boudewijn, will be responsible for the overall organisation and implementation of the programme.

The course will be evaluated both verbally as well as in writing.

During the final session of the course, all participants who have completed the entire course, including the homework assignment, will receive an official course certificate.

Participants

The target group consists of 100 government officials, from: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, all working with European dossiers. The participants will all have working experience in the Brussels arena. It is important to note that this course is the last edition in which the new Member States can participate!

Dates

The course will be held at NH Hotel Beatrixkwartier in The Hague, from 20 November – 1 December 2006.

Fees and Accommodation

The Dutch government pays for all costs (travel to and within the Netherlands, board and lodging, health insurance, the course itself and the 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 an amount of money.

The participants will be accommodated at the NH Hotel Beatrixkwartier in The Hague.

Application

Applications should be made through the Netherlands Embassy in the applicant's country. Application forms should be downloaded from the website 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 before the **6th of October 2006**, 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 100. 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:

- Mr. Rob Boudewijn, team leader;
- Mr. Peter van Grinsven;
- Mrs. Mendeltje van Keulen;
- Mrs. Suzanne Nollen.

Description of The Netherlands Institute of 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. The Institute manages an annual budget of around ten million euros, a little fewer than half of which is in the form of subsidies from the Netherlands Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence. Its main activities are carried out in four thematic programmes and in the unit External Affairs. The Clingendael European Studies Programme (CESP) develops, unites and disseminates topical expertise on European Union policy issues. Its research focuses on the political and administrative context of the European Union, the borders of the EU. Current internal and external EU policy developments, and the position of The Netherlands in the enlarging Union. The training programmes are specifically geared to the needs of its clients, in particular government officials working on European Affairs. Through its wide national and international networks both in academia and in policymaking, CESP bring together expertise to guarantee the quality of its research and training programmes. CESP also stimulates public and academic debate on European Union issues by organising conferences and seminars, as well as through its publications and contributions in the media.

Information and course organisation

Netherlands Institute of International Relations, *Clingendael*

Mr. Rob Boudewijn

P.O. Box 93080

2509 AB The Hague

The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 374 66 17 or +31 70 324 53 84

E-mail: rboudewijn@clingendael.nl

More information on the courses developed under MTEC programme:

- The Royal Netherlands Embassy in your country can supply more copies of this leaflet and information about other courses
- For further information you can either contact the Royal Netherlands Embassy or EVD/CROSS:

EVD/CROSS

P.O. Box 20105

2500 EC The Hague

The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 778 81 39

Website: www.cross-agency.nl

E-mail: crossonline@info.evd.nl

Contact person: Mr. Diederik ter Haar