New EU "Twinning" project begins with the Ministry of Communications to improve fair and effective competition

On 27 November 2018, a new EU-funded Twinning project was launched bringing together the Ministry of Communications with three EU Member States (Italy, Germany and Latvia) to ensure the continued development of a competitive regulatory climate.

This €1.5 million Twinning project, funded by the European Union, called “Strengthening the regulatory capacity of Israel in the field of telecommunications, focusses on service provision over networks owned and operated by others”, partners the Israeli Ministry of Communications with the Italian Authority for Communications (AGCOM), the German Federal Network Agency (BnetzA) and the Latvian Public Utilities Commission (SPRK).

The opening conference was held on 27 November, 2018, in Tel-Aviv in the presence of the Israeli Minister of Communications Ayoob Kara, EU Ambassador to Israel Emanuele Giaufret and diplomatic representatives of the EU Member States partners of the project: Italy, Germany and Latvia, as well as, for the participating regulatory communications authorities: Mr. Cardani, president of AGCOM; Mr. Irklis, president of SPRK and Mrs. Groebel, representative of BnetzA.

The speakers stressed the high level of cooperation between Europe and Israel, and specifically their common experience in ensure fair competition on the telecommunications market for the benefit of the consumer. The EU has undergone many developments in the telecommunications sector which has increasingly reduced prices and improved quality of services.

EU Ambassador to Israel, Emanuele Giaufret said: “All of our Twinning projects demonstrate the importance of EU-Israel cooperation, which benefits ultimately to people, citizens and consumers, by developing our shared interests and learning from each other to overcome challenges. Europe and
Israel have so many connections and commonalities that it is no surprise that many of EU and IL standards are harmonized covering more than half of Israeli standards. This just shows how interlinked we are.

The Twinning project will strengthen the regulatory capacity of the Ministry of Communications to ensure fair and effective competition in the Israeli retail and wholesale markets and other forms of network access. This includes updating the regulatory framework to be based on the experience of EU Member States (MS) in the implementation of EU legislation. Noting the complexity of the field, the experts will engage with all stakeholders including industry and consumer associations.

The project will be implemented over 21 months, with each EU expert being based in Israel on a rotating basis.

**Background**

"Twinning" is an EU programme which provides the legal and financial framework for institutional cooperation between public administrations of EU Member States and those of partner countries. Since 2007, Israel has already benefitted from about 14 Twinning projects in areas such as education, agriculture, consumer protection, energy, environment and justice, as well as about 120+ TAIEX activities delivering European expertise on specific topics.
Press contacts:

EU Delegation: Sharon Offenberger +972 544282213 sharon.offenberger@eeas.europa.eu

Ministry of Communications: Gil Geffen gilgeffen@gmail.com

www.eeas.europa.eu

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