

# EU Co-operation News

Bi-weekly newsletter of the Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine  
Project on Information and PR Activities for the EU and its Programmes in Ukraine

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## EU SUPPORT TO UKRAINE'S MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

The development of free, independent and professional media promoting democratic values is key to sustaining stability and democratic development.

The EU-Ukraine Action Plan emphasises the importance of "ensuring respect for the freedom of the media and freedom of expression" with specific reference to the need to "further improve and enforce the legal and administrative framework for freedom of media taking into account relevant Council of Europe recommendations" and "ensure effective respect of freedom of media, including journalists' rights".

The project "Promotion of European standards in the Ukrainian media environment" launched this month (see below) is only the latest in a series of projects funded by the European Union to assist Ukraine in improving the conditions in which its media function. While nobody can deny that significant advances have been made in media standards in Ukraine since 2004, particularly in terms of state censorship, this project aims to address some of the outstanding issues and areas where there has been a lack of progress. These areas include public broadcasting, the privatization of state-owned print press, and raising the ethical standards of the journalism profession.



The EU has been supporting media projects in Ukraine since 2000 for a total value of almost €6 million. At the end of last year another media sector project wound up its activities. This €2 million project entitled "Development of Media Skills" aimed to strengthen journalism practice in Ukraine by overhauling the university curriculum to bring it into line with the Bologna Declaration. One aspect of the project was to equip universities including the Kyiv University School of Journalism with state-of-the-art equipment (see picture).

A third major project, entitled "Support to Independent Media", provided €1.2 million of EU funding to independent media in three pilot oblasts (Odesa, Mykolaiv and Kherson) between 2002 and 2004. The project encouraged Western-style journalistic skills, supported networking among journalists and media managers and promoted the benefits of media's independence.

Other projects in the media sector have included

- Strengthening Media Freedom, Transparency and Rule of Law during the 2004 Ukraine elections;
- Support for Professional Independent News Coverage in Ukraine and
- Media in Building Voter's Awareness on Key Election Issues.

## ANOTHER STEP TO CO-OPERATION

### EUROPEAN UNION AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE TO PROMOTE EUROPEAN STANDARD IN UKRAINIAN MEDIA

**On 8 October the Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine and the Council of Europe conducted a press conference to launch a project on Promotion of European Standards in the Ukrainian Media Environment. Co-financed by the European Union and the Council of Europe, the project is implemented by the Council of Europe, in close collaboration with the National Commission for Freedom of Speech and Development of the Information Sector.**

The project was presented by Mr Taras Petriv, Head of the National Commission for Freedom of Speech and Development of the Information Sector, Mr Dirk Schuebel, then-Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine and Mr. Ake Peterson, Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for the Coordination of Cooperation Programmes with Ukraine.

The overall aim of the project is to ensure that the Ukrainian public receive quality information about social and political processes in Ukraine. To achieve this goal, it is essential that an independent, transparent and sustainable Ukrainian media environment is promoted, meeting the needs and expectations of the public.



➔ Mr. Schuebel noted: “The launch of this project is very important at this stage in Ukraine, as the situation in the media sector has been deteriorating since 2004”.

Mr. Peterson stressed: “The fulfilment of standards that have been developed over the years within the framework of the Council of Europe has always been essential in the European aspirations of Ukraine. We welcome the efforts made by Ukraine to safeguard and promote freedom of expression and information in accordance with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.”

The project will focus on raising professional standards in the media. To this end, the project will help enhance the legislative framework for the media, will aim at advancing ethical standards in the journalism profession and will support the ongoing dialogue between the media, civil society and the state administration at the regional level. This in turn will generate recommendations for enhanced co-operation at the national level. The project will run for 20 months. It has a €1.2 million budget with a 90% contribution by the European Union.

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### **EU-FUNDED PROJECT NEWS**

#### **EU-FUNDED PROJECT ASSISTS UKRAINIAN BORDER GUARDS IN PROVIDING ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATION FOR AND TREATMENT OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS**

**On 8 and 9 October the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine in partnership with the European Union opened two temporary holding facilities (THF) in Mostyska (Lviv Region) and Chernivsti (Chernivtsi Region).**

The Chernivtsi THF became the last out of five THF for irregular migrants (THF) funded by the European Union and operated by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGS). Facilities in Mostyska and in Chernivtsi will be able to accommodate up to 14 and 13 irregular migrants respectively who are held in custody by the SBGS for a period up to 10 days. After this term the irregular migrant has to be transferred to a Migrant Custody Centre operated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.



The new accommodation facilities for migrants were refurbished and fitted with furniture, computing equipment, and essential staples in order to increase the standard of irregular migrants' stay in Ukraine. In an effort to help Ukraine meet standards set by European human rights institutions and protection mechanisms, International Organisation of Migration together with its partners produced guidelines on EU best practices. The handbook focuses on bringing transparency and monitoring to the system that was already in place.

These activities were one component of the EU-funded project on Capacity Building of Migration Management (Phases I & II), implemented by IOM, through which the European Union committed approximately €7.2 million.

The cooperative effort has led to innovative reforms throughout the State Border Guard Service, important steps in the SBGS' transformation by 2015 into a modern EU/Schengen-compliant law enforcement agency with border management responsibilities.

More information: [www.iom.org.ua](http://www.iom.org.ua)

#### **A NEW CONSUMER ESSENTIALS COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT IN UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES**

**On 8 October the Lviv Polytechnic National University and the joint EU-UNDP Consumer Society and Citizen Networks project presented a course book and an on-line distance learning course on Consumer Essentials for higher educational institutions.**

The course material has first been created as an optional course for university students. Its subject-matter familiarises students with main European and world practices of consumer rights protection, the history of consumer movement, and activities of consumer civil society organisations.



➔ The Lviv Polytechnic University will for a year administer the distance learning course and assist other universities planning to include the course into their curricula.

The Consumer Society and Citizen Networks project is a joint initiative of the European Union and United Nations Development Programme and receives €3 million worth of EU funding. Its goal is to promote access of citizens to information on product safety, consumer rights protection, and to results of independent testing, and encourage wide public dialogue on challenges facing the consumer society in Ukraine.

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## EU SUPPORTS A UNIQUE TOURISM PROJECT IN BUKOVYNA

The EU within its Ukraine-Romania Neighbourhood Programme has recently launched a project in Khotyn, Chernivtsi oblast. The project on Creation of Integrated Tourism Products for the Development of Cultural Tourism in Bukovyna includes a wide scope of activities the ancient Khotyn fortress. The European Union provided some €700,000 to support this 24-month project.

The project is implemented by the State Historical and Architectural Reserve Khotyn Fortress. The project intends to renovate the historical exposition and to introduce many novelties, such as historical shooting gallery.



The administration of the reserve believes that the fortress should become the object of international tourism. While Khotyn is considered one of the economically depressive districts, it is expected that tourism will foster the development of local business infrastructure and creation of several hundreds of work places which will clearly make a difference in a small town of 11,000 people.

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## EU-FUNDED PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENTS

**24-25 October 2008, Kyiv**

### **Training on cooperation with EU consumer organisations**

A training session for Ukrainian NGOs will be organised by the EU-UNDP Consumer Society and Citizen Networks project.

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**31 October 2008, Kyiv**

### **Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (the Bucharest Convention)**

A conference will be organised by the EU-funded Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea project (Ukraine, Russia, Georgia and Moldova)

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**3-7 November 2008, Vienna, Austria**

### **Working group meeting in the Secretariat of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River**

The EU-funded project on Improving Cross-Border Cooperation in Integrated Management of Water Resources in the Lower Danube Euroregion will hold meetings for representatives of the State Committee of Ukraine for Water Management, the Danube Basin for Water Resources, and the Centre for Regional Studies (Odesa).

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