



Key events of the EU-Ukraine cooperation. August, 2014

€12 MLN TO BOOST EASTERN PARTNERSHIP TERRITORIAL CO-OPERATION



EU earmarked €12,5 mln to boost territorial co-operation within the Eastern Partnership initiative.

The cooperation will be built upon the experience of the EU's cohesion policy, in which the European Union encourages its member states to work together and learn from each other through joint programmes, projects and networks. Such a policy, inter alia, paves the way for addressing common challenges member states are facing, boosts mobility and facilitates people-to-people contacts, improving living conditions of people on both sides of a border.

In this regard, the Eastern Partnership Territorial Co-operation programme (EaPTC) is expected to become one of

the building blocks which will provide the basis for strong cross-border and territorial co-operation of the countries involved. Moreover, since three out of six programme's participating counties – Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – have signed their association agreements with the EU, the programme's launch conference, which took place on July 4th in Tbilisi, laid a solid basis for a new level of co-operation between EaP members.

"The EaP conference on territorial co-operation takes place in the new political context," **Mariam Rakviashvili**, *Georgia's Deputy State Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration*, says. She expects this programme will play a positive role in further development of territorial co-operation of the countries involved.

In order to bear fruit, however, the programme should build on the experience of previous EU's regional initiatives, Rakviashvili says.

Although it is for the first time that the EU-backed programme does not envisage the engagement of the EU member state, it will, nevertheless, follow the best European practices. "The programme's nature and principles are quite similar to those the EU is committed to in its regional policies," **Oleksiy Sekarev**, *EaPTC programme Team Leader*, says.

And Ukraine is well-experienced in participating in different programmes of regional and territorial co-operation, **Oksana Reiter**, *a representative of the EU Directorate of Ukraine's Foreign Ministry*, assures. "We are co-operating within the regional initiatives with Poland, Belarus, the countries of Black Sea basin, just to name a few," she says. Also Ukraine is actively participating in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Reiter adds.

Moreover, cross-border co-operation is one of the integral parts of the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine. Therefore by participating in this programme, Ukraine contributes to the implementation of recently signed deal, Reiter says.

Background

The launching conference on Eastern Partnership Territorial Co-operation programme was held on 4th July in Tbilisi. For the first time the representatives of central and regional authorities, civil society organizations and independent experts from six Eastern Partnership countries gathered together to give start to the territorial co-operation grant programme. The event provided an opportunity to have a comprehensive look at the programme's objectives and perspectives, as well as discuss possible challenges the participants may face.

The main objective of the EaPTC is to create favorable environment for territorial co-operation programmes along the borders of Armenia-Georgia, Azerbaijan-Georgia, Belarus-Ukraine and Moldova-Ukraine with due regard to specifics of each border area. The programme is also aimed at enhancing the capacity of local and regional state and non-state actors to jointly develop and implement cross-border projects.



From Ukrainian side, the following regions are taking part in the programme: Volyn, Rivne, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Vinnytsia and Odesa.

From now on border regions may enjoy an opportunity to get EU funds for joint projects. The budget of the EaPTC is €12,5 million; it is split among four programmes as follows: Armenia-Georgia €1,35 million, Azerbaijan-Georgia €1,35 million, Belarus-Ukraine €3,3 million, Moldova-Ukraine €3,3 million.

More information: <http://www.eaptc.eu/>

For more details, please, contact: Tetiana Derevyankina, EaPTC Programme Communication Expert, Tatiana.derevyankina@eaptc.eu

HOW DOES THE EUROPEAN LIFE LOOK LIKE?



We are often talking about the “European lives standards”. But we know little about the actual life of Europeans. We know a lot about Europe as a dream, but not so much about Europe as a reality.

What is a real European’s life? How do Europeans care about children and educate them? How are men and women communicating with each other? Are they really equality? How do they organize their peaceful life and defense? How do they arrange their life environment?

Let’s have a look at some of the examples to understand the reality of daily life in Europe.

Europe – is the continent of equal rights with equality between men and women being one of the main. Different EU countries have different situation, but there is a general trend: the movement toward equal opportunity, equal responsibilities and equal salary for men and women. The greatest success in this was achieved by Scandinavian countries.

For example: in Swiss men take an active part in baby carrying. Any of the parents can take the parental leave of 480 days and it can be used by month, by week, by day or even by an hour – upon the decision of parents. Each parent has their own 90 days from the total 480. Each of them is obliged to take 90 days of parental leave and these days cannot be transferred to another parent. This equal sharing of responsibilities gives women more time for work and social life. The number of women in senior positions at the companies has increasing: from 29% companies being headed by women in 2006 (public or private companies) to 36% in 2012. This trend is even more significant in politics: almost 50% of Swedish parliamentarians are female; 24 from 13 of government ministers are women. Compare this with negligible number of women among Ukrainian politicians.

To achieve these results the public policy is needed. In Sweden, for example, there is a minister for gender equality. He or she is responsible for compliance with the principles of equality in all spheres of life, from education to employment. The country has also the state Ombudsman agency covering gender equality issues, which employs about 90 workers.

Swedish experience proves that equality between women and men is an important right, but society has to fight for it.

Read the full article in Ukrainian at <http://euukrainecoop.net/2014/07/21/life-of-europeans/>

FIVE ADVANTAGES OF ASSOCIATION WITH THE EU



implemented reforms, while Ukraine imitated them.

The Polish economy has become effective and movable, oriented at the large European market.

In spite of pessimistic predictions, now Poland is a powerful industry player and not the raw material appendage. One third of Polish exports is the mechanical engineering (33%), another third part is auto-, aircraft- and shipbuilding products (29%).

The story is with the others countries of the former Soviet bloc. Slovakia became one of the largest car manufacturers in the EU. 5 million of Slovaks are producing about one million cars per year. When French automotive companies were closing factories in France, due to the crisis, they did not close French branch in Slovakia: they continued being profitable. Romanian Dacia, which in Soviet times was a mini car, became a part of French "Reno", and nowadays it is the most successful brands among the economy class cars.

The city Szekesfehervar in Hungary, which was famous by producing bus "Icarus", changed its economical orientation to others markets. A lot of multinational companies are now located in the city.

All these processes of modernization started long before the abovementioned countries joined the EU. This process started 1990th, when the countries signed the Association Agreement with European communities. It was the so-called "European agreement", which was less bulky and less ambitious than the current Ukrainian. But even these agreements did their part.

Read the full text in Ukrainian at <http://euukrainecoop.net/2014/07/21/association/>

WHEN WILL UKRAINIAN PRODUCTS FILL THE EU COUNTERS?

Ukrainian economy requires reforms in technical regulation area, which will ensure the competitive products production by domestic manufacturers and therefore it will substantially increase the export potential of Ukraine and reliably protect the domestic market from low-quality products. These issues were discussed at the conference "Strategy of Ukrainian Technical Regulation System Development" on July 23rd in Kyiv organized by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine.

*'The EU has temporarily removed customs duties on Ukrainian exports, but Ukrainian business is not in a hurry to enter the EU market', – Prime-minister of Ukraine **Arsenii Yatseniuk** noted recently after the EU proposed temporary tariff cuts for Ukrainian exports in April.*

However elimination of taxes is not enough for Ukrainian products to fill the EU counters. *"When product is crossing the border it has to go through two types of barriers, – the import taxes, or the so called tariff barriers, and the technical barriers", – **Stefanos Ioakeimidis**, the Team Leader of the EU-funded project "Complementary measures to the Sector Policy Support Programme "Promoting Mutual Trade by Removing Technical Barriers to Trade between Ukraine and the European Union" explains. – "While tariffs depend mostly on political decision, technical barriers are much more complicated as they concern specifications, control measures, accreditation of those who perform the control etc. which require numerous efforts and long-time".*



At the conference *Pavlo Sheremeta, Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine*, mentioned that for the time being there are three most important objectives to speed up Ukraine towards European integration. This is firstly, the need to provide Ukrainian products with a free access to world markets. Secondly – professional work on the harmonization of national standards and their regulations with the international (especially with European) ones. Thirdly – a decisive struggle against corruption that hampers the work and discredits the state.



These tasks were partly solved by the two new important legal acts – *“Law on Metrology and Metrological Activity”* and *“Law on Standardisation”* adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament on 5 June 2014. Both aim at creating an effective and transparent system of metrology and standardisation, while reducing corruption-inducing conflict of interests. Now Ukraine entered the new stage of the reform and is facing new challenges.

“Removal of technical barriers to trade is to be achieved through the alignment of the Ukrainian technical regulation system to the European system known as “New Approach” and more recently as “New Legislative Framework”. This policy support program foresees 4 areas of intervention: regulatory approximation in two areas, which is horizontal

legislation for the functioning of technical regulation system as a whole and sectoral legislation for specific product categories. Another area of intervention is the adoption of the EU standards, and finally – the upgrading of infrastructure, which concerns equipment for testing laboratories, development of the information exchange systems in the area of market surveillance and management information system for standards”, – Stefanos Ioakeimidis stated at the conference. – *“We have nearly completed horizontal legislation and hope that under this achievement progress will be even more spectacular in the future”.*

“It is well known that for many producers conforming to the EU technical requirements may represent some difficulties. This is especially topical for those who for many years have proposed their business activity at the so called traditional markets represented mainly by CIS countries. We can also read in media about the potential loss at the traditional market.” – Borys Philipov, coordinator of the “Private sector development” department at the EU Delegation notes. But Mr. Philipov believes that despite the difficult work ahead, the implementation of the Association agreement will not only facilitate Ukraine’s external trade, but will also promote the real economic modernization and new opportunities for Ukraine.

“Excessive administrative procedures prevent Ukrainian producers from updating their assortment and increase the quality of products. But it is difficult to change business approach without the support of nongovernmental organisation, business and communities,” – Leonid Vitkin, Head of the technical regulation department at the Ministry of the economic development and trade of Ukraine, concluded.



Background Information

To remove technical barriers to EU-Ukraine trade, the EU launched a Sector Policy Support Programme worth €45 million. The Programme comprises direct budget support and a technical assistance. The Ministry for Economic Development and Trade is implementing this programme with the support of a Technical Assistance Project, which is also funded by the EU. It started in 2009 and will be continued until December 2014.

Useful links:

For more information on EU-Ukraine relations, consult the following resources
<http://euukrainecoop.com/useful-links/>

Calendar of past and future events: <http://euukrainecoop.com/calendar/>