



Key events of the EU-Ukraine cooperation. May, 2015

HOW UKRAINIANS CELEBRATED EUROPE DAYS 2015 – PHOTO REPORT

Every May, for over a decade now, Ukraine has participated in celebrating Europe Days. Ukrainian cities from east to west and north to south joined in the celebrations with a range of social events.



Citizens had the opportunity to take part in any activities they desired: from quests and flash-mobs to intellectual discussions and training sessions on applying for EU grants. Overall, this year's Europe Days events were less about entertainment than they were about networking and information-sharing. The main theme running through all of the Europe Days discussions was the idea that Ukrainians themselves must take the initiative to spur the development of the state. At the same time, the European Union continues to support Ukrainian reforms.

Europe Days have been officially celebrated in Ukraine since 2003. According to the decree of the then Ukrainian president, Europe Days are celebrated on the third Sunday of May. In practice though, the celebrations usually span several days in May.

Take a look at [these images to see how Ukrainians celebrated Europe Days 2015](#).





EU AID TO UKRAINIAN SMES: EU SURE AT A GLANCE

During EU-Ukraine summit on April 27th EU announced a new package of aid for Ukrainian small and medium business. The initiative EU SURE (EU Support to Ukraine to Re-launch the Economy) will be implemented in 2016 – 2020 and has €95 million in its budget.

Key points about the initiative are explained below.

EU SURE: EU Support to Ukraine to Re-launch the Economy

Duration: 2016 – 2020

Budget: €95 million (EU total funding, including a loan guarantee facility worth €40 million)

Implementers: International Technical Assistance, EBRD, EIB

Target groups: MEDT, SMEs and business support organizations.



- EU SURE (€95 million) is part of the €110 package of EU Special Measures for Ukraine 2015 approved in April 2015. This is complemented by a Technical Cooperation Facility worth €15 million to provide advice on legal approximation with the EU, capacity building and infrastructural support in priority areas covered by the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

- EU SURE will support the development of the SMEs across the Ukrainian regions and to contribute to the re-launch of the Ukrainian economy to create growth and employment. This also includes the conflict affected areas and neighbouring regions actively participating in the re-integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

- At national level EU SURE will provide technical assistance and policy advice to complete the ongoing SMEs deregulation and the national and regional economic development strategies, and to create a web info portal for SMEs; it will also include a contribution to the participation of Ukraine in EU programmes related to private sector development (Horizon 2020).

- At regional level EU SURE will provide business advice and entrepreneurial skills for SMEs, through a network of Business Support Centers (BSC) run in cooperation with EBRD. The BSC will help improve the competitiveness of the SME sector by connecting local small businesses to a network of local consultants and international industry experts. Business advice will be tailored according to the size of the company and the complexity of the challenges. BSC will also advise SMEs on how to access to financing and how to adapt to and benefit from the establishment of the DCFTA between the EU and Ukraine.

- EU SURE will cover at least 15 regions across Ukraine. Targeted economic sectors will depend on the economic profile of the region and activities should aim but not be limited to the following key sectors: agriculture, innovation, improvement of provision of public services and infrastructures, energy efficiency and green economy.

Read the full text at <http://euukrainecoop.com/2015/05/09/eusure/>



EU ALLOCATES OVER €3 MILLION FOR TERRITORIAL COOPERATION BETWEEN UKRAINE AND MOLDOVA

In early May, the cities of Chernivtsy, Vinnytsia and Odesa held “Information Days” in support of the EU territorial cooperation programme between Ukraine and Moldova. This was just one series of events implemented as part of a wider [Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation \(EaPTC\)](#) programme.



of environment, employment, health, culture, and education.

There is now *an open call for proposals* within the Ukraine-Moldova programme with a deadline of July 14. Potential applicants are invited to submit applications for grants in support of projects that involve cooperation between the two countries. The project’s intent is to improve the living conditions of local communities in the border regions through joint projects to support economic and social development, and problem solving in the areas

The Information Days events aim at explaining to potential applicants the conditions of participation in the programme, selection criteria, and how to compile an effective application. Over 300 potential grantees took part in the three Information Days in Ukraine. In late April, similar events took place in Moldova.

Alina Zhyhareva from Odesa represents the NGO “Agricola”.

–“We are engaged in eco-tourism,” says Shyfareva. “We already have several partners in Moldova with which we work on other projects, but we plan to look for new partners as well. Ukraine and Moldova indeed have a lot of common problems and possible areas for cooperation, including green tourism. Our application will be focused on that topic.”

Liudmyla Syritska took part in the Information Day event in Vinnytsia. She is from the village of Serebria in the Mohyliv-Podolsk district of Vinnitsa oblast.

– “We live right on the border. We have already partnered with Moldova and signed a treaty with the government of the neighboring village across the border,” she says. “We want to develop a joint project that will strengthen our cooperation.”



Liudmyla Syritska, participant from Vinnitsa oblast.

The territorial cooperation programme between Moldova and Ukraine has **a budget of €3.3 million**. Grants vary from **€60,000 to €300,000**. Ten percent of the project cost must be covered by the participants themselves; however, recipients can apply to other sources for grants to cover the remaining sum.

Read the full text at <http://euukrainecoop.com/2015/05/28/ukraine-moldova/>



E-GOVERNANCE IN UKRAINE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Since the Euromaidan protests and the 2014 change of government, Ukrainian officials and politicians have frequently declared the establishment of effective electronic governance as among their top priorities. This motivation for this intention is clear given the global development of electronic technologies and the e-governance success stories of other countries, including Estonia.



Electronic governance significantly improves the efficiency of administration processes, saving time and taxpayers' money. The development of e-governance in Ukraine is also one of the main goals of the EU and Council of Europe joint programme, **Strengthening Information Society in Ukraine**.

On May 19-20 the programme, together with state and private partners, held a conference entitled "Information Society Days – 2015" at the premises of Ukraine's National Academy for Public Administration.

Speaking at the event, **Karmen Turk**, an Estonian expert with the Council of Europe, described her country's achievements in the field of e-governance. According to Turk, Estonia was the first

country to establish an online presence for every government department. As a result, 99% of bank transactions in the country are carried out electronically, 95% of Estonians declare their incomes by filling out electronic forms, and 30% use the e-vote system for casting their ballots during elections. It takes an Estonian just 15 minutes to establish a company online, while Digital ID enables entrepreneurs to take care of their company's business electronically. Additionally, the state is not allowed to ask citizens more than once for the same information. This means that Estonians do not repeatedly fill out similar forms for different state institutions. Since the early 1990s, when e-governance was introduced, the Estonian government has reduced the administration costs portion of its budget by approximately 90%. Also contributing to these achievements is the fact that almost 85% of Estonians are active internet users.

E-governance in Ukraine is only in its infancy. According to **Oleh Yakymchuk**, a representative of Google who spoke at the conference, the country has all the necessary technical equipment to establish a functional system of electronic governance. The main challenge he sees is the insufficient digital literacy of citizens and civil servants. To address this problem, Google is prepared to hold training sessions for civil servants, universities, and representatives of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Background

The joint programme between the EU and the Council of Europe, **Strengthening Information Society in Ukraine**, aims at improving the freedom, diversity and pluralism of the media and strengthening personal data protection. The programme also promotes a comprehensive and sustainable approach to Internet management based on human rights. In addition, the programme facilitates the fulfillment of Ukraine's obligations and commitments to the Council of Europe under the Association Agreement with the EU and the EU-Ukraine Action Plan on visa liberalisation. The EU contributes €2.73 million to the programme's budget.

More information available at: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/41>

Read the full text at <http://euukrainecoop.com/2015/06/02/e-gov/>



SEMINAR HELD FOR MANUFACTURERS OF MEDICAL REHABILITATION EQUIPMENT

On May 19, a seminar was held in Kyiv to help educate manufacturers of medical rehabilitation equipment on EU regulations.



The seminar was organised as part of the EU's project, "Complementary Measures to the Sector Policy Support Programme, 'Promoting mutual trade by removing technical barriers to trade between Ukraine and the European Union.'"

"In keeping with the terms of the Association Agreement, Ukraine has adapted its technical regulations to the relevant EU regulations," says EU project's coordinator **Stefanos Ioakeimidis**. *"This also applies to the medical sphere, the standards of which must be harmonised with those applicable in the EU. Today's seminar is the EU's first contact with medical equipment manufacturers. There are many issues that need to be explained and that producers must take into account as they prepare to work within the new*

regulations."

The seminar attracted a wide range of participants. Experts working on the EU project and representatives of public institutions talked about diverse issues, including current Ukrainian legislation on the technical regulation of medical equipment, EU directives, and the nuances of conformity assessment procedures for medical equipment and classification of products.

"It was interesting to learn more about the EU norms and regulations. If we follow them, we will be able to access the European market and sell our rehabilitation equipment not only in Ukraine, but also to international partners," said **Andriy Gudzenko**, a seminar participant and the director of comprehensive rehabilitation of disabled.

The article is published in partnership with the EU project on elimination of technical barriers to trade: no-trade-barriers.com

Read the full text at <http://euukrainecoop.com/2015/05/28/med-equipment/>

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/>