



## EU-FUNDED PROJECT NEWS

### EU-FUNDED PROJECT DISCUSSES BEST PRACTICES OF CIVIL INITIATIVES

On 19 June the EU-funded project “Reinforcing Actions of Capacity Building for Civil Society” (ReACT) held in Minsk its final conference. The event was organised by the Association of the Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) in partnership with the Lev Sapieha Foundation. The conference discussed best practices for capacity building and strengthening of civil society. Representatives from local authorities, Belarusian NGOs, universities, and international organisations attended the event.



During the conference 11 civic initiatives funded within the ReACT project presented results of their work. They covered a broad range of different activities from ecological initiatives to initiatives on health information and protection of student rights and social protection in the area of public services.

The 18-month ReACT project was implemented by ALDA in partnership with the Lev Sapieha Foundation from Minsk. The project has worked on strengthening the role of non-state actors and local authorities in Belarus to foster social dialogue and support joint actions in the context of poverty reduction and sustainable development. The remaining activity of the project is to produce a publication on project results and activities.

More information at: <http://www.alda-europe.eu/>

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### EU-FUNDED PROJECT HOLDS STUDY VISITS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR BELARUSIAN OFFICIALS

On 20-26 June the EU-funded project “Preventing, Fighting and Addressing the Social Consequences of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Belarus” holds a study visit to Chisinau and Tiraspol in Moldova for representatives of Belarusian state agencies and non-governmental organisations, involved in counter-trafficking activities. It is the fifth study visit organised by the project for Belarusian officials and NGO representatives, other four being held to the EU (United Kingdom, Estonia, Sweden and Germany).



During the study visit to Moldova, Belarusian specialists have a chance to learn about the activities of governmental agencies in the area of preventing and fighting human trafficking, and the work of the local NGOs on rendering social, psychological, legal and rehabilitation assistance to victims of trafficking. Special attention is paid to the issues of professional re-training of the law enforcement personnel and experience exchange in the area of investigation of cases on human trafficking.

During previous study visits to the EU, Belarusian specialists learned about the system of counter-trafficking activities, the national legislation on preventing and fighting human trafficking, state-funded programmes of rendering services to victims of trafficking and preventing sexual exploitation of children, and the operation of the national network of rehabilitation shelters for victims of trafficking.

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## EU-FUNDED TOURIST PROJECT HOLDS FINAL CONFERENCE

On 8 July the EU-funded project “Bella Dvina – Crossing the Border, Discovering the Culture, Enjoying the Nature of the Western Dvina/ Daugava River Space” held in Polotsk the international conference, entitled “Tourist region Bella Dvina as an example of successful cross-border cooperation between Belarus and Latvia”. It was the final project event which officially inaugurated the Polotsk Tourist Information Centre set up by the project. The opening ceremony was attended by the Head of the Polotsk City Executive Committee, Consul of Latvia in Vitebsk and Consul General of Belarus in Daugavpils.



Over two years, the project produced a tourism development strategy for the Vitebsk region until 2017 and a communication strategy for the Bella Dvina region until 2020; developed new cross-border and local tourist routes; opened tourist information centres and information points in the Vitebsk region; improved tourism infrastructure in the area and carried out a marketing campaign to promote the Bella Dvina region.

At the conference Belarusian and Latvian border districts signed a Declaration on cooperation in the tourism sector, confirming their intention to join the Bella Dvina cross-border cooperation network.

More information at: <http://belladvina.com/>

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## EU PROJECT ORGANISES CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS

On 8–9 July the EU-funded project “Multi-stakeholder Local Action Strength – Improvement of local sustainable strategies and local actions development and implementation in three rural communities in Belarus” held in Minsk a conference, entitled “Sustainable Development of Rural Areas: Experience of Belarus and Poland”. During two days over 120 participants from different regions of Belarus, including public, international and non-governmental organisations, local administrations, experts in sustainable development of territories, marketing, rural and environmental tourism attended the event.



The participants discussed the sustainable development of rural areas in Belarus; practices of sustainable tourism in Poland; territory marketing as an instrument for realisation of local strategies; Polish approach to sustainable development of territories; and development and promotion of local products. The conference presented projects implemented in three communities in Belarus (Beloozersk, Ananichi and Dukora).

The participants had an opportunity to present their regions, put practical questions to Belarusian and Polish experts, to interact and network, and to analyse and compare the presented Polish experience in the field of rural development.

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## EU-FUNDED PROJECT APPROVED BY BELARUSIAN GOVERNMENT

On 13 July the EU-funded “Comprehensive Policy Actions and Investments in Sustainable Solutions in Agriculture in the Baltic Sea Region” (Baltic COMPASS) has announced about the approval of the project by the Government of Belarus. The project funded through the EU Cross-Border Cooperation Baltic Sea Region Programme is the first among eight projects with Belarusian partners, selected in the second call for proposals and approved by Belarus.



**Baltic COMPASS**

Agriculture-Environment Partnership for  
a Healthy Baltic Sea and Competitive Baltic  
Sea Regions

Three projects with Belarusian partners, Baltrad, Urb.Energy and Bioenergy Promotion, were approved in the first call for proposals in the Baltic Sea Region Programme for 2007–2013. These partners are already taking part in the implementation of the projects after having passed the national approval procedure last year.

Baltic COMPASS is a €6.7 million 42-month project, which has grown out of international projects in the field of land use, agriculture, water and environment related to the protection of the Baltic Sea. Specifically, it aims to act in response to the need for a transnational approach to reduce the eutrophication of the Baltic Sea.

More information at: <http://eu.baltic.net/>

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## EU-FUNDED PROJECT CREATES NEW SOURCES OF CLEAN WATER

**On 15 July the EU-funded and UNDP-implemented project “Combat the Negative Effects of Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus” held in Koshelevo Village the opening ceremony of 27 wells, cleaned and renovated in 5 settlements of Buda-Koshelevo District, Gomel Region within the project. This initiative, as well as active participation of local community and local authorities provided more than 2,000 inhabitants of villages, 400 of them are children, with clean drinking water.**

The Chief State Sanitary Doctor of Buda-Koshelevo District Valentin Comeshkov stated during the opening ceremony: “We have tested water in wells before and after cleaning. We are glad to inform you, that results of the tests are satisfactory and it corresponds to all requirements”.

During the initiative, the project held in local schools and kindergartens public awareness events on rational use of natural resources from Chernobyl-affected areas.

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## EU-FUNDED PROJECT ASSESSES THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE NEW HYDROPOWER STATION

**On 15–16 July the EU-funded project “Building capacity for Strategic Environmental Assessment and environmental conventions implementation in Belarus” presented at a workshop in Minsk the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Nemnovskaya Hydropower Station, planned to be built in Grodno Region. The event is the first in a series of 5 thematic informational activities, planned by the project till the end of this year. They aim at raising awareness of experts within different public authorities and NGOs on the results of international EIA of the hydropower station on Neman River, as well as public opinion research on legislative improvement for participation of Belarus in international EIA.**

Nemnovskaya Hydropower Station is going to be built on Neman River 20 km downstream from Grodno. The designed capacity of the hydropower will be approximately 20 MW. The dam power plant will be located 11 km near the border with Lithuania. The workshop participants studied the latest developments in Belarusian legislation on carrying out EIA and public environmental expertise. As a result of two-day workshop, its participants developed proposals and recommendations for an environmental assessment procedure in Belarus.

**More information at: <http://www.ecorazvitie.by/>**

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## EU-FUNDED PROJECT REVIEWS THE PROGRAMME FOR WATERWAY AND MARITIME TRANSPORT

**On 20 July the EU-funded project “Building capacity for Strategic Environmental Assessment and environmental conventions implementation in Belarus” held a round table on the development of the report on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Programme for development of inland waterways and maritime transport of Belarus for 2011–2015.**

The event aimed at a discussion of the report on pilot SEA of the sectoral programme on water transport, carried out by the project experts, as well as its review based on comments and suggestions from participants of the round table. Representatives of relevant government authorities and non-governmental organisations as well as environment experts took part in the event.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a system of incorporating environmental considerations into policies, plans and programmes. While SEA is not yet officially introduced in Belarus, the authorities consider its institutionalisation. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection shall decide in 2010 about joining the SEA Protocol of the UN Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Trans-border Context. The round table participants put questions both to Programme developers and project experts who have carried out the SEA. As a result of informative discussion, the participants elaborated additional proposals to the report on the pilot SEA..

**More information at: <http://www.ecorazvitie.by/>**

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