



EU-FUNDED PROJECT NEWS

COMMUNITY-BASED VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES FOR CIVIC GROUPS IN REMOTE AREAS IN BELARUS

On 14–15 March 2011, there was a working group meeting timed to the project launch «Community based volunteer initiatives for civic groups in remote areas in Belarus». The EU-funded project will be implemented in Brest, Vitebsk, Mogilev and Minsk regions in partnership with the Danish Red Cross.

The project is set to strengthen capacities of cooperation between citizens, Belarus Red Cross grass-root organisations and local authorities by fostering volunteering, participatory policy development and service delivery to vulnerable people in remote areas of Brest and Mogilev regions.

45 participants attended the meeting, including project managers, volunteers from Belarusian Red Cross Society, representatives of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, partners of the Danish Red Cross and representatives of the EU Delegation to Belarus.

The participants focused on the project` goals, target groups, outputs, main components of the project, cooperation with the local authorities, small grants competition, setting up of the coordination councils as well as disseminating information about the project activities.



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NEW EU PROJECT TO CONTRIBUTE TO LIFE-LONG ACTIVE SOCIETY IN BELARUS

Within the programme of the European Commission «Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development» the project «Towards a Life-Long Active Society» (TOLLAS) was launched in January 2011.

It is a project to operate in Belarus in Minsk and Brest regions over a period of 24 months. The project is implemented by «Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V.» and its partners: the IPA «Education without borders», the Executive Committee of the Minsk Culture Department, the Brest Regional NGO «Logos» and the Brest Regional Committee for Labour and Social Protection.

The project is co-funded by the European Commission and the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to an inclusive, pluralistic and empowered society in Belarus. The specific objective is to empower representatives of the elderly generation to play an active role in local decision making and to improve the capacity of state and non-state actors to adequately represent specific needs and interests of seniors.

**More information: http://dvv-international.by/ru/our_projects/our_projects/tollas/
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BALTIC SEA REGION PROGRAMME LAUNCHES FIRST CLUSTER INITIATIVE ON ENERGY

On 8th February 2011, the first workshop on cluster initiatives was organised by the Baltic Sea Region programme.

The objective was to disseminate new concepts fostering energy efficiency at local, regional and national level in the Baltic Sea Region more widely and more successfully. All eight energy projects (Baltic Biogas Bus, Urb. Energy, Bioenergy Promotion, COOL Bricks, Public Energy Alternatives, Longlife, REMOWE, SPIN) of the programme had accepted the invitation of the Joint Technical Secretariat, and met in Berlin.

Project representatives discussed how to combine common results, and if it was possible to define joint dissemination strategies. Still, participants concluded that the common concern was how to convince policy makers to implement concepts increasing the efficient use of energy. The Baltic Sea Region programme has launched new initiatives of bringing projects together working in similar fields, and encouraging them to create joint platforms or «clusters». Cluster initiatives will be granted extra funding from the programme.

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EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION (ETF) LAUNCHES NEW PROJECT TO TARGET LIFELONG LEARNING

On 25th February 2011, a new project that aims to improve lifelong learning opportunities in Eastern Europe has been launched by the European Training Foundation (ETF).

The three-year project, entitled 'Lifelong Learning in Eastern Europe', will bring together experts from Eastern European countries, including Belarus. It will serve as a platform to build a common understanding of policy and to formulate useful policy options.

«The possibility of learning, upgrading skills throughout one's life is important from the perspective of labor market, for social reasons, but also for personal development,» said ETF expert Siria Taurelli, who will be supervising the new project.

The new initiative aims to:

- improve training, retraining and skill upgrading of workers and unemployed;
- broaden possibilities of non-academic education after the secondary school;
- make qualification that people obtain in education and training more transparent.

«We think that these seven countries can learn from each other, so the project is not about the ETF offering solutions,» said Taurelli. «We want to identify good practices that already exist in the region, but which are often not well known even within one country. And then we want to help our partners to share these practices and learn together».

The European Training Foundation is an agency of the European Union established to contribute to the development of the education and training systems of the EU partner countries.

More information at: <http://www.enpi-info.eu/eastportal/news/project/24282/ETF-launches-new-project-to-target-lifelong-learning-in-Eastern-partners>





NEW EU PROJECT INVITES BELARUSIAN NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS TO DIALOGUE FOR SOLUTION OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

On 1st March 2011, in Minsk, the International Public Association «Golos serdca» (Belarus) in cooperation with NGO «Global Initiative in psychiatry» (Lithuania) launched the two years Project «Potential development of the non-governmental organisations for solution of mental health issues in Belarus». The project is funded by the European Union.

People with mental health problems represent one of the most vulnerable social groups. Therefore NGOs play an important role for their successful integration into society. That's why it is extremely important not only to support the activities of Belarusian NGOs but to strengthen their potential and make them to open an active dialogue with a mass media. This is one of the training objectives will be conducted within the project framework.

The trainings are planned for March and April 2011 and would be conducted by the Lithuanian experts. Experience will be shared on issues of education and employment of the people with mental health problems, contacts and collaboration with the authorities. The participants would obtain skills in public speeches and presentations. Part of the training would be dedicated to small grants competition, which would give the NGOs an opportunity not only to start with the activities but also focus on cooperation with local authorities.

All the training materials would be put together, published and distributed for free.

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STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS HIGHLIGHTED IN POLAND-BELARUS-UKRAINE

Investment in border crossing points and creation of a Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) branch office in Lviv, Ukraine are highlighted as two main issues within the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) Programme 2007-2013.



«There are two symmetric projects, related to the development of the border crossing Polowce-Peschatka on the Polish-Belarusian border», said Polish Regional Development minister Elżbieta Bieńkowska.

One of the Project Managers Ewa Stachowicz from the Podlaskie Voivodeship Governor's Office, who is currently undertaking a road border crossing project on the Polish-Belarusian border, commented: «Completion of the project will allow the development and modernization of infrastructure, by joint actions of the authorities of Podlaskie Voivodeship and Brest Oblast. Completion of the project will contribute to intensification of cross-border cooperation».

After the opening the Joint Technical Secretariat in the Ukrainian city of Lviv, the similar Branch Office of the JTS soon will be opened in Brest in Belarus.

There is a considerable increase in participation of Ukrainian and Belarusian partners. «While analyzing the results of the first Call, it is important to notice that out of the 57 institutions involved, 30 are Belarusian or Ukrainian partners, some acting as the Lead Partner in the project», said Elżbieta Bieńkowska.

Programme objectives will be realised through non-commercial projects implemented within the following priorities and measures:

Priority 1: Increasing competitiveness of the border area.

Priority 2: Improving the quality of life.

Priority 3: Networking and people-to-people cooperation

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«SHOW EUROPE-SHOW BELARUS» STARTS IN THE BELARUSIAN CAPITAL

The project was launched on 3rd March 2011 in the hotel «Europa» in Minsk. The press conference dedicated to the start of the project attracted more than 40 journalists from the leading Belarusian media.

«Show Europe – Show Belarus» is a joint cultural campaign of Belarus and the five European countries: Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden. Seventy musicians, painters and photographers will participate in the project. They will present their works to the public in eleven towns and cities: Babruisk, Dresden, Lisbon, Minsk, Niasvizh, Pinsk, Polatsk, Stockholm, Tartu, Valozhyn and Vilnius.

It was also attended by the representative of the Delegation of the European Union in Belarus. The organization had backed «Show Europe – Show Belarus» earlier.

During the initial stage of the project 35 Belarusian participants – 25 musicians, 5 photographers and 5 artists – will be selected. The deadline for submission of applications is was 20 March 2011.

More information at: <http://showeurope.by/node/1>



THE EUROPEAN UNION INVITES CHILDREN TO TAKE PART IN THE DRAWING COMPETITION ON THE THEME OF EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

On 8th March 2011, the European Union launched a drawing competition on the theme of equality between men and women with prizes for the winners of up to 1,000. Children aged 8 to 10 from all over the world, including Belarus, are invited to participate.

Their drawings should reflect on how girls and boys, women and men, can together make the world a better place. The competition takes place from March 8 to May 20, 2011. Ten best drawings from Belarus will be sent to Brussels for the final selection of winners at the end of June this year.

All submissions should be on A4 paper only, on one side and with the last name of the author, age, class and school address indicated on the reverse side.

Drawings must be sent to the following address: Delegation of the European Union to Belarus, Engels Street 34A/2, Minsk, 220030, Belarus;

In single year 2010 more than 49,000 children between the ages of 8-10 years from 61 different countries took part in competition, thereby making their contribution to the dialogue on gender equality with the involvement of national authorities and civil society.

The EU Delegation to Belarus is responsible for the coordination of the competition in Belarus.

The detailed requirements for participation could be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/press_corner/all_news/news/2011/2010_03_10_en.htm

Additional information and winning drawings from past competitions can be found on the website of the competition:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/gender/drawing-competition-2010_en.htm





STOLIN CENTRE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT TAKES A TURN

In January 2011 Stolin, Brest region, hosted a two-day seminar on «Territorial development: French and Belarusian experience». The seminar was organised within the EU-funded project «Rural communities and local municipalities: partnership for sustainable rural development».

During the seminar, the project partners - Association FERT (France), International Fund for Rural Territories Development (Minsk) and Stolin Centre for Rural Development exchanged their experience on the issue of territorial development. The seminar was attended by the local authorities of the Stolin district, representatives of the local fund «Vozrozhdenie-Agro» (Slavograd, Mogilev region) and mass media.

The French partners elaborated on the basic principles of territorial development as well as experience applied in this field in Albania, Lithuania and Poland. Their Belarusian counterparts shared their own experience of working in this field in Belarus.

As a result, the participants evolved the strategy of the project implementation, noting the importance of a complex approach for the territorial development of the Stolin region.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

15 APRIL, MINSK

Information Day on EU Energy Projects in Belarus

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