



EU-FUNDED PROJECT NEWS

EU TO FUND PROJECT TO MAKE BELARUSIAN ECONOMY GREENER

On 27 October, the head of the European Union's Delegation to Belarus, Ambassador Maira Mora announced at a conference in Minsk about the preparations for the implementation of a joint EU-Belarus project to make the country's economy greener. The project will cost up to EUR 15 million, according to the diplomat.

The Belarusian authorities have displayed a high degree of interest in receiving assistance for implementing environmental projects, said Ambassador Mora. She noted that the EU was providing funding for a series of regional projects aimed at securing sustainable development, reducing pollution risks, raising the quality of life and fighting global warming. The European Union appreciates the Belarusian government's attention to environmental issues, Ms. Mora said.

The EU diplomat sounded an alarm over the country's waste management, noting that large amounts of waste end up in dumpsites without being reused or recycled. In addition, she said, Belarus must make more progress on tackling air and river pollution and contaminated areas and protecting biodiversity.

For more information: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/>



BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES MAY APPLY FOR FUNDS UNDER THE JEAN MONNET PROGRAMME

On 26 October, the European Commission published the new Call for Proposals within the first key activity of the Jean Monnet Programme. The actions supported under this key activity aim to stimulate excellence in teaching, research, reflection and debate in European integration studies in higher education institutions within and outside the European Union.

Universities from all countries in the world, including Belarus, are eligible and encouraged to apply for Jean Monnet projects. The deadline for submission of proposals within the first key activity is 15 February 2012.

The applicants may be higher education institutions and/or associations of professors and researchers specialising in European integration. To support their work the Jean Monnet programme funds: Jean Monnet Chairs; Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence; European Modules; Associations of professors and researchers; Information and research activities; Jean Monnet multilateral research groups.

For example, one of the funding opportunities for the universities are European Modules. They are short teaching programmes (or courses) in the field of European integration studies at higher education institutions. Each Module has a minimum duration of 40 teaching hours. Modules may concentrate on one particular discipline in European integration studies or be multidisciplinary in approach and therefore call upon the services of several teachers.

For more information: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/jean_monnet/jean_monnet_en.php





EU PROJECT ON WASTE GOVERNANCE HOLDS TRAINING OF TRAINERS ON COMMUNICATION

On 14 October, the EU-funded regional project "Waste Governance – ENPI East" organised a training for trainers (ToT) for representatives of NGO, communal services organizations, schools and initiative groups from Puhovichy rayon and Minsk. The training was focused on development of waste communication campaign at local and regional level.

The purpose of the workshop developed with the assistance of international experts, was to familiarise participants with principles and working mechanisms for communication with the public information and awareness in the integrated waste management. The topics included introduction to communication principles in waste management, marketing and marketing communications, evolution of behavioural changes in waste management through communication, planning and organising a public awareness campaign on proper waste management, etc.

EU-funded regional project "Waste Governance – ENPI East" aims at assisting and supporting the partner countries in their efforts to reduce the risks arising from inappropriate management of waste that thereby creates environmental pollution hazards to the community and to natural resources. The project is implemented through technical co-operation with, and amongst, partner states in the region.

For more information: <http://www.wastegovernance.org/>
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EU-BELARUS TECHNICAL LEVEL DIALOGUE ON ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

On 6 October, representatives of the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission visited Belarus to meet with experts of the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus. They conducted the first Economic and Financial Dialogue between the EU and Belarus.

The aim of the technical level dialogue was to exchange information on recent macroeconomic developments and policy challenges and the structural economic reform strategy both in Belarus and the EU.

Visiting officials made presentations on trends in the EU economy and policy response to the crisis in the euro area public debt markets.

Belarus' officials presented overviews of the macroeconomic situation in Belarus, recent monetary and fiscal policies, the privatisation and economic liberalisation agenda and spoke about the current and prospective impact of the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia on EU-Belarus trade and economic relations.

The EU side underlined the importance for Belarus of adopting bold macroeconomic adjustment policies (especially in the fiscal, monetary, exchange rate areas) to overcome the country's vulnerable balance of payments position and bring inflation under control and to press ahead with economic liberalisation and structural reforms to complete the transition towards a fully-fledged market economy. On the macroeconomic side, special concern was expressed about the recent acceleration in inflation and the need to reunify and normalise the foreign exchange market. Regarding the structural reform agenda, EU representatives underlined the need to continue to make progress with privatisation and enterprise restructuring, price liberalisation, and financial sector reform, including the reduction of the weight of bank lending under government programmes. The combination of these measures should help the Belarusian economy overcome the current crisis while improving its efficiency and competitive position on world markets.

For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/





POLOTSK JOINS THE COVENANT OF MAYORS

On 27 September, in the German city of Friedrichshafen, Mayor of Polotsk Aliaksandr Pazniak has signed the accession form of the Covenant of Mayors. Polotsk is the first city in Belarus to support the European Union 20% CO2 reduction objective to be reached by 2020. The Covenant of Mayors is a European cooperation movement involving local and regional authorities. Signatories of the Covenant of Mayors voluntarily commit to increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources on their territories.

Polotsk together with Friedrichshafen (Germany), Salé (Morocco) and Murcia (Spain) are partners in the project "SURE: Sustainable Urban Energy in the ENPI region – towards the Covenant of Mayors" funded under the "Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue" (CIUDAD) programme.

At the event of accession to the Covenant of Mayors, technical staff of Polotsk and Salé provided an overview of the current state of energy use and sourcing in their cities, and of the important savings that can be achieved under the SEAPs (Sustainable Energy Action Plans) they are developing. In this, they can count on full support from their local governments, technical expertise and know-how from European partners Friedrichshafen and Murcia, both leaders in the field of energy efficiency, and of course financial assistance from the European Union under the CIUDAD programme.

In August, Polotsk hosted a working meeting of Spanish and Belarusian experts within the SURE project on development of the SEAP with the support of the Polotsk municipality, the City of Murcia, the City of Friedrichshafen and the Energy Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

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INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF LIVE VIDEO PERFORMERS IN MINSK

On 22–25 September, Minsk hosted the tenth edition of the Live Performers Meeting (LPM), the most important international meeting of live video performers, visual artists and VJs, focused on live video performances. The event was supported by the European Union Culture Programme, Ministry of Culture of Belarus and the Italian Embassy in Minsk.

LPM is a place for dialogue, comparison and exchange of information and ideas among artists coming from all over the world and aims to promote and support the intercultural dialogue and the transnational mobility of artist experts in live video field. LPM encourage the research, the experimentation, the encounter among different forms of artistic expression, the interaction-fusion among the manifolds techniques, digital and analogical technologies, software and hardware.

In the gallery in Minsk heterogeneously were presented different fields of artistic research; hundreds performance and artworks investigating specific themes were performed and exhibited each day without the constrain of one only daily topic. The organisers offered an insightful and surprising programme, highlighting diverse artistic practices every day while fostering the sharing of knowledge by means of workshops, presentations and panel discussions.

For more information: <http://www.liveperformersmeeting.net/>
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LEGAL FUEL WOOD IN BELARUS

Fuel wood usage is very important for Belarus, especially when the price of imported natural gas is very high. The EU-funded Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) Programme has analysed the situation concerning the rights of local communities and small business to the legal use of forest resources in Belarus.

Out of an annual logging volume of around 14 million cubic meters per year, approximately 6 million are used as fuel wood. Half of this amount is used to heat private houses both in villages and towns during winter.

Compared to other countries of the Programme (Азербайджан, Армения, Беларусь, Грузия, Молдова, Россия, Украина), where fuel wood usage and complex logging permissions are the driving force for numerous cases of small scale illegal logging, in Belarus this problem is resolved. There is plenty of fuel wood, and it is quite easy to get private citizen permissions for legal logging of fuel wood. All State forest enterprises have obligations to deliver fuel wood for local people at a rather low price – around €10 per cubic meter.

The FLEG Programme supports governments of participating countries, including Belarus, civil society and the private sector in the development of sound and sustainable forest management practices, including the prevention of illegal forestry activities.

For more information: <http://www.enpi-fleg.org/>

