



TENDER FOR MINI-PROJECTS WITHIN THE PROJECT «TOLLAS – TOWARDS A LIFE-LONG ACTIVE SOCIETY»

The Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association in the Republic of Belarus announces a tender for mini-projects, aimed at promoting social and educational activity of seniors among the organizations of Minsk and Brest region. The tender will be held on two subject matters:

Topic 1. Educational mini-projects. The main objective is to enhance the amount and accessibility of educational programs for senior people on a regional basis, as well as to disseminate innovative approaches and forms of work with them.

Topic 2. Advocacy mini-projects. The main objective is to draw public attention to the problems of seniors, possibility of their active participation in the life of the society; to change the perception of senior people in the modern world.

To receive the tender it is necessary to:

- get to know the tender conditions on the chosen topic (education, advocacy);
- fill in the application form (education, advocacy);
- send the completed application form **no later than by January 20, 2012** to the address of the Representative Office with a compulsory electronic copy to the following e-mail address – tollas@dvv-international.by.

On the final stage around 10 educational and 4 advocacy mini-projects will be chosen to receive the financial support at amount of 2,000 to 4,000 Euro.

The project "TOLLAS" is implemented in Belarus by the Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association in the Republic of Belarus in cooperation with local state and non-state partners with the support of the European Union (Non-State Actors and Local Authorities).

The Project is aimed at promoting the idea of social and educational activity of the senior generation, accessibility of educational services, improving the capacity of state and non-state actors to adequately represent specific needs and interests of seniors. The Project is being implemented in Minsk and Brest regions.

Any further information about the Tender and the Project can be received in the Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association in the Republic of Belarus:

Contact persons: Marina Malinina, Inna Kravchonok, Tel: (017) 207 98 35, (029) 171 93 97, www.dvv-international.by, e-mail: tollas@dvv-international.by

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL CENTRE ON CHEMICAL SAFETY AND WASTE ISSUES CREATED IN MINSK

On 20 December, Public informational centre on chemical safety and waste issues was opened in Minsk by the Centre for Environmental Solutions (CES) within the project "Strengthening public participation on environmental decision making and SAICM implementation in Belarus" (SAICM – Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management).

The centre will provide information on chemicals and waste to the wide range of concerned citizens, educational institutions, and journalists. Everyone interested can ask for information on chemical safety and waste management and free-of-charge consultation.

"We hope that the information centre will promote public interest in waste and chemical safety in our country, and as a result, more people will participate in solving these problems," says Eugeniy Lobanov, CES programme director.

In order to receive printed materials chemical safety and waste, or have a personal consultation, one can visit the office of the centre, located at the address: Minsk, av. Masherova, 9-317. The office of the centre works from 10 Am to 17 PM, Monday-Friday. In the near future a specially developed website will be launched.

For more information please call + 375 17 237 40 70 or send an e-mail: info@ecoidea.by



GREEN SCHOOL NETWORKS EXTEND TO HRODNO REGION

On 9-11 December the joint EU/UNDP project "Support to the development of a comprehensive framework for international environmental cooperation in the Republic of Belarus" held the first district workshop in Masty, Hrodno Region.

The participants were 25 teachers from local schools as well as the most active and successful teachers who have already joined the "Green School" programme, a project initiative developed to attract attention of Belarus schools to the issues of ecological awareness and education, and through this parent's attention and local community in whole. The programme is supported by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Natural Resources.



The aim of the workshop was to extend the "Green School" networks.

During 3 days the participants and their experienced colleagues from other schools discussed difficulties and challenges as well as shared their experience.

The teachers under the "Green School" develop among children solicitous attitude to the nature, show in practice how important is to understand their role in saving the environment. The "Green School" programme includes the following assignments: biodiversity, energy, water, waste management and local community. To get the name "Green", children and the teachers should complete the set of ecological exercises.

Contact person: Alena Sedach, e-mail: alena.sedach@undp.by

CURRENT CHALLENGES ON WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION DISCUSSED IN MINSK

On 30 November, the EU-funded project "Reduction of the Eutrophication of the Baltic Sea Today" (PRESTO) held in Minsk the project kick-off event and an environmental forum to present the current challenges on water management in the Baltic Sea drainage basin as well as the newest solutions and chosen good practices.

Funded by the INTERREG IVB Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 with a budget of EUR 4.5 million, PRESTO Project is implemented in 5 Baltic Sea Region countries, including Belarus. It aims at combating eutrophication by improving municipal wastewater treatment with technical studies and concrete investments as well as by increasing human competence.



Eutrophication is the main environmental problem of the Baltic Sea and of many inland water bodies. It is caused by overload of nutrients. One of the fastest and most cost-efficient methods to reduce the nutrient load is to improve the municipal wastewater treatment processes in the Baltic Sea watershed.

Belarusian and European experts discussed during the event the current situation and challenges on wastewater treatment (WWT) in Belarus, research and education on WWT, experiences and challenges on modernisation process of WWT, water resources quality management, trends and challenges in the Baltic Sea Region etc.

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



TEMPUS INFORMATION DAY HELD IN MINSK

On 29 November, the National Tempus Office in Belarus held at the National Institute for Higher Education the TEMPUS Information Day to present the TEMPUS projects implemented in Belarus, as well as the analysis and features of the Fifth Call for Proposals under TEMPUS IV. 55 representatives from more than 25 organisations, including national universities, high schools and the Ministry of Education attended the event.

The participants discussed the preparation of competitive TEMPUS proposals and the experience of Belarus participation in the TEMPUS projects. Two presentations have been devoted the EU-funded Erasmus Mundus Programme, including the experience of Brest State University in an Erasmus Mundus project.

The representatives of the German Network of Universities have proposed to Belarusian universities cooperation in the sphere of ecological technologies under the TEMPUS programme.

The participants also discussed the current situation around the planned joining of Belarus to the Bologna Process, the common European Higher Education Area.

For more information: <http://tempus.unibel.by/>

More information: Katherina Miniukovich, e-mail: kate@unibel.by



POLATSK ATTENDS THE COVENANT OF MAYORS EVENT

On 29 November, Aliaksandr Pazniak, Head of the City of Polatsk attended the annual signature ceremony of the Covenant of Mayors in Brussels. Polatsk is the first Belarusian city to have been invited to participate in this landmark event.

Signing ceremony of the Covenant of Mayors takes place each year. Covenant signatories, supporters and other stakeholders from Europe and beyond get together to declare their commitment to meet the 20% CO2 reduction objective by 2020 on the European level. This year, the Covenant of Mayors Ceremony had over 1,000 participants registered for the event, including mayors of large European cities such as London, Munich, Bucharest, Rome, and high-level politicians headed by the European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek.



Polatsk signed the Covenant of Mayors in September 2011 within the EU-funded project SURE and is the first Belarusian participant of this European initiative. "I am sure that this dialogue will give us all an impetus to achieve energy saving goals both in Europe and in Polatsk in particular," said Mr. Pazniak.

Contact person: Marina Borisova, e-mail: marina.and.borisova@gmail.com



TRAINING SESSION ON RECOGNITION/DETECTION OF SMUGGLING

From 21 to 23 November 2011, the EU funded "Eastern Partnership - IBM Flagship Initiative Training Project" (EaP IBM FIT) organised a training session for border guard and customs representatives of the Eastern Partnership countries in Minsk, to introduce EU good practices and exchange valuable experience on detection of different forms of smuggling.

The event was organized by the implementing agency the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and conducted by experts from the Lithuanian Customs Department supported by a national trainer from the State Border Committee of Belarus.

The 28 representatives from the Eastern Partnership countries (namely from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) received up-to-date information on the structure of the tobacco market in the regions throughout the world. Special attention was paid to an overview of different technical and other measures, methods and principles in customs control procedures and experience was shared on the establishment, special training and tactics of customs mobile groups in EU countries, as well as on risk management. The training and exchange of experience was based on the interactive work carried out by groups comprised of experts and training participants. Experts from the European Union shared their rich work experience and promoted further development of the inter-institutional cooperation between beneficiary countries and other stakeholders under this thematic area.

The event is an integral part of 26 regional training activities under the two-year EaP IBM FIT project, which covers several different thematic areas, such as support to the implementation of Integrated Border Management strategies and action plans, risk analysis and management, document security and integrity, protection of intellectual property rights and the fight against corruption. More information can be found at: www.eap-fit.eu.

Contact person: Mr. Viktor Makai, Project Manager, e-mail: Viktor.Makai@icmpd.org, website: www.icmpd.org



ROUND TABLE ON CHILD PROTECTION IN MINSK

On 16-17 November, the EU-funded project "State and Civil Society Partnership in Belarus for Improved Child Protection" conducted national round table on comprehensive approach to preventing and combating child abuse.

The project promotes cooperation between different state authorities for effective multi-sectoral response to crimes against children, and facilitates engagement of civil society to improve all-embracing system of child protection.

The national round table in Minsk attracted over 60 participants, including representatives of line ministries, commissioners on underage persons, medical specialists, academia, social workers, managers of child shelters, and NGOs. Experts and practitioners analysed current child protection mechanisms in Belarus and looked at the ways to prevent and combat violence against children with shared responsibilities of multiple stakeholders.

Results of the round table will be used in the Policy and Implementation Guidelines for Multi-Agency Collaboration to be developed by the project for the roll-out nationwide.

This EU-funded project is managed by the British Council in partnership with INGO "Ponimanie" based in Minsk.

More information: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ukraine-projects-belarus-child-protection.htm>





NEW STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMME FOR BELARUSIANS OPENED

From 15 November, young Belarusians can apply for scholarships to study for a BA or MA degree at European universities due to the Open Europe Scholarship Scheme (OESS), financed by the European Union and managed by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The purpose of OESS is to contribute to a democratic and prosperous development in Belarus by giving young Belarusians access to higher education without ideological bias and according to internationally accepted academic standards.

Through OESS, Belarusians may apply for scholarships for studies at Universities across Europe. The scholarship programme is open for all young Belarusians that meet the academic, linguistic and personal requirements.

By providing quality higher education for a generation of young Belarusians the EU and the NCM hope to establish the foundation for a future democratic development of the Belarusian society. Consequently, it is the hope that the scholarship holders upon graduation will return to Belarus and take part in the democratic development of their society.

The deadline for applications is 16 December.

For more information on the eligibility, selection criteria, and application procedures: <http://oess.eu/ru>



HANDOVER OF THREE APARTMENTS FOR REFUGEES RENOVATED WITH EU ASSISTANCE

On 14 November, Ambassador Maira Mora, Head of the EU Delegation to Belarus, attended the official handover of three apartments for refugees, which were renovated in the framework of a EUR 2.585-million assistance project funded by the European Union and implemented by UNHCR. The costs of the renovation of the flats amounted to 59.000 Euro.

This regional project started in 2009 and is being implemented in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. Activities will finish this December. It will have a 2-year follow-up phase, starting in January 2012, with an overall budget of EUR 1.4 million.

Project activities in Belarus include, among others, the establishment of consultancy services for refugees on employment issues, assistance to state institutions which support refugees on social matters as well as vocational and language training courses.

Ambassador Mora said: "For the budgetary period 2007-2013 the EU has allocated EUR 175 million for projects in many different areas in the format of bilateral assistance alone, not to mention regional projects in which Belarus participates. I think that this figure impressively demonstrates the European Union's strong commitment to support the people of Belarus".





EU COMPLETES 7 MILLION EURO BORDER MANAGEMENT PROJECT BETWEEN BELARUS AND POLAND

On 9 November, Ambassador Maira Mora, Head of the EU Delegation to Belarus, visited Rudovka-Lesnaya, a border crossing point on the Belarus-Poland border, to attend the closing ceremony of "Bombel-3", a border management project to which the European Union had contributed more than EUR 7 million.

The basic goal of this two-year assistance project was to construct a modern data communication network based on fibre optic cables at Belarus' entire border with Poland, to be used by the Belarusian Border Guards and Customs Services. Such infrastructure supports the use of modern biometrics control, electronic customs declaration software, access to international databases at border crossing points. It makes generally border control procedures more efficient and faster. All activities were finalised as scheduled this September.

Ambassador Mora thanked the State Border Committee of the Republic of Belarus, as well as the three contracted companies, for the productive cooperation in the framework of the project. "By helping to increase the capacity of the Belarusian State Border Committee, we help to decrease transit time, support tourism and business in Belarus, facilitate licit trade across borders, and promote people-to-people contacts," the Ambassador noted.

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



EU FUNDS DESTRUCTION OF ANTI PERSONNEL LANDMINES IN BELARUS

On 20 October, Spanish company EXPAL Systems started the construction of a site for destruction of Belarus' stockpiles of approximately 3.4 million anti-personnel landmines (PFM-1 series). The project budget of EUR 3.9 million is entirely financed by the European Union.

In the framework of this EU-funded project, a destruction facility at an ammunition base near Rechitsa in southeast Belarus fully in line with NATO standard AASTP-1 will be established; monitoring equipment enabling the project team to supervise and report on the destruction process in real time will be provided; stockpiled PFM-1 and PFM-1 S series munitions will be completely destroyed. All activities are scheduled to finish in May 2013.



By acceding to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (also known as "Ottawa Treaty") in September 2003, Belarus committed itself to destroy its stockpile of anti-personnel mines within four years. It is in the interest of the European Union that the country fulfils its obligation.

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