



TWO REGIONAL PROJECTS FOR REFUGEES IN BELARUS, MOLDOVA AND UKRAINE HELD MEETINGS IN KYIV

On April 28–29, two EU-funded and the UNHCR- implemented projects for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus “Regional Protection Support” and “Local Integration of Refugees” held their 2nd meetings in Kyiv.

The meeting of Regional Steering Committee of “Regional Protection Support” project brought together border, asylum and law-enforcement authorities from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as the Delegation of the European Union, the UN Refugee Agency and project partners, including the civil society and the International Organization for Migration. The Regional Steering Committee meeting was aimed on evaluation activities undertaken in three countries in the framework of the project within the last year. The Regional Steering Committee also reviewed and adopted the work plan for the next project year to ensure its sound impact and build on synergies with other projects implemented in the same thematic and geographic areas. The meeting included the presentation of the UNHCR Resettlement Programme and a round table discussion on implementation of UNHCR 10 Point Plan of Action for Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration.

Since the project commenced in April 2009 the contribution of the European Union into it was €1 million. Its total cost for the three countries is €2.586 million, to which the European Union contributed about 77% and UNHCR – 23%.

On the next day, April 29 at the conference of “Local Integration of Refugees” project the team leaders discussed activities on helping refugees under this two-year regional initiative (2009-2011) covering three countries Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. Its total cost for the three countries is €2.586 mln, to which the European Union finances about 77% and UNHCR – 23%.

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EU-FUNDED PROJECT NEWS

NEW SPORTS SCHOOL OPENS FOR CHILDREN OF CHERNOBYL

On April 27 in Khalch village of Vetkinsky district, Gomel oblast EU officially opened a sports school for children who live in an area polluted due to Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The school was opened with support of the EU-funded and UNDP-implemented project “Combat the Negative Effects of the Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus”.

An overall financing for opening a school under the project was more than 80 million Belarusian rubles. After a refurbishing of an old empty facility in Khalch the project financed purchasing of various sports equipment including ping-pong tables, footballs, chess-sets, boxing-gloves etc.

Head of Operations of the Delegation of the EU to Ukraine and Belarus, Laura Garagiani, Janis Ailzsalnieks, Attaché of the Delegation of the EU to Belarus, Deputy Head of the UNDP Office in Belarus Farid Kharakhanov joined the opening ceremony. “It is the great honor for me to open this school. Children are our future, and now I see their happy eyes. That why it is worth to realize such projects” told Laura Garagnani. Local authorities have also found additional financing from local budgets and sponsors to clean up the neighboring territory and create a field for an open-air stadium. Village children will study at least six subjects in the new sports school: football, boxing, chess, checkers, athletics and ping-pong.

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VITEBSK DISCOVERS EU EXPERIENCE IN COMMON HOUSING REFORMS

On April 29, a workshop on common home ownership topic took place in Vitebsk state university of technologies under the EU-funded project “Participative Housing Reforms – increasing citizens’ participation in local housing reforms’ implementation through strengthening their capacities, improving access to information and facilitating dialogue with local authorities”.

The workshop in Vitebsk was devoted to present practices and problems in common housing management in Belarus. The EU project brought Bernhard Schwarz, manager of the EU project “Initiative: housing in Eastern Europe” and Andreas Durtelmann, representative of Energy agency of Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein (IB) to Vitebsk to present the German experience of common home ownership and communal billings.

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CONFERENCE ON EU SUPPORT TO BELARUS ON TO CLIMATE CHANGE

On May 5, the Delegation of the European Union to Belarus and Belarusian State University conducted a seminar on the issue of climate change and implementation of Kyoto Protocol. The seminar "Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol: Positions of EU and Belarus" took place with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection and EU-funded project "Support to Kyoto Protocol Implementation" (SKPI).



Experts in the field of environment and climate change, international environmental law, as well as by representatives of NGOs, government agencies, teachers, students and the media joined the seminar. The experts presented the positions of the EU and Belarus with respect to global climate change and discussed various aspects of Kyoto Protocol implementation. EU project "Support to Kyoto Protocol Implementation" assists participating countries in combating climate change both by extending the use of mechanisms, such as the Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation that are attached to the Kyoto Protocol, and by supporting the formulation of appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies at each country level. The project covers Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and is implemented in 2008-2011.

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EU OPENS FIRST YOUTH CONSULTANCY CENTER

On May 13, a new youth multi-service centre for promoting youth employment and business training was officially opened with support of the EU-UNDP Project "Preventing, Fighting and Addressing the Social Consequences of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Belarus". The centre will work in the premises of communal company "Youth Social Service" in Minsk.



Head of the Delegation of the EU to Ukraine and Belarus, Ambassador José Manuel Pinto Teixeira, director of the UNDP Regional Bureau in Europe and CIS Antonius Broek and his deputy Jens Wandel, representatives of Internal Ministry and Minsk city government took part in the opening ceremony.

New multi-task center is aimed to support employment and entrepreneurship in cooperation with city authorities. It is the first EU initiative in Belarus to prevent human trade by broadening possibilities for the youth. New centre will become a wide-range free consultancy on legal and accountant issues, as well as the place for professional trainings and support for the youth with opening first businesses.

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EU STIMULATES DISCUSSIONS ON ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ISSUES

On May 14, a workshop "Drafting environmental proposals for possible financing and realisation under the projects and programs of international technical assistance" was conducted in Minsk. The event became a part of EU/UNDP project "Building capacity for strategic environmental measure and realisation environment conventions in Belarus".



Ministry of natural resources and environment protection of Belarus is the beneficiary of the project. The workshop was aimed to improve practical skills of NGO social workers, the ministry officials and state servants in drafting proposals on environmental topics. Participants discussed the most important ecological and environmental problems for developing new projects under international technical assistance.

Belarusian environmentalists, scientists, public experts and journalists also took part in the workshop.

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THE NEW DAM WILL BE A RELIABLE DEFENDER OF THE ANNUAL FLOODING

On May 14, a unique anti-flood road-dam was opened in the village Zapesochye (Zhitkovichy District, Gomel Region). This ecologically friendly facility on Pripjat river was made under the joint EU/UNDP project "Combat the Negative Effects of the Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus".

To this date, Zapesoche village was the "main characters" of the annual Ministry of Emergencies reports on flood damages of Pripjat river, that harm agricultural activities, worsening the economic situation, prevent kids from getting to school, etc. Taking into account all the peculiarities of the region, the environmentally safest way of protection from floods was chosen: The road that runs near the river was elevated to a level which is higher than maximal possible level of the water during floods. Now the road serves as a reliable and environmentally safe dam.

Under the project implementation, additional funds were raised from "ROS-111" Construction Enterprise, Small Grants Programme of the Global Environmental Fund (GEF), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Belarus (SDC). At the open ceremony representatives of UNDP, EU and local regional and district authorities were presented.

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION LAUNCHES A CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR NON-STATE ACTORS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN BELARUS

On 18 May the Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine and Belarus published a call for proposals "Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development: In-country Operations in Belarus" (reference number: EuropeAid/130100/L/ACT/BY).

The global objective of this call for proposals is to support actions presented by Non-State Actors and Local Authorities which aim at promoting an inclusive and empowered society in Belarus in order to (i) benefit populations out of reach of mainstream services and resources and excluded from policy making processes; (ii) strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations and local authorities with a view to facilitating their participation in defining and implementing poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies; and (iii) facilitate interaction between state and non-state actors in different contexts.

Full information about the call for proposals, including the Guidelines for Applicants and the Application Form, is available at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1274185305725&do=publish.welcome&userlanguage=en> (search by reference; reference number 130100). The deadline for submission of concept notes to the postal address of the EU Delegation in Kiev is 5 July 2010.

An information session on this call for proposals is tentatively scheduled to take place in Minsk on 10 June 2010. Details of the exact time and location will be published on the following website: www.delblr.ec.europa.eu by the end of May 2010.





EU-FUNDED PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAY 22, BEREZINSKY BIOSPHERE RESERVE

PR-action on building nestling boxes by schoolchildren, dedicated to Biodiversity Day under the UNDP/EC project "Building capacity for Strategic Environmental Assessment and environmental conventions implementation in Belarus"

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25–30 MAY, POLOTSK

Promo tour on kayaks on Zapadnaya Dvina and Daugava rivers under the EU project "Bella Dvina"

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MAY 27, MINSK

Competitiveness Round Table organized by the Belarus EU Business Council

More information at <http://www.beubc.com/>, e-mail: secretariat@beubc.com

JUNE 4–5, NOVOPOLOTSK AND ZABORIE, VITEBSK REGION

Opening of the Info Centers in Novopolotsk and Zaborie, Rossony District, Vitebsk Region, dedicated to the World Environment Day under the UNDP/EC project "Sustainable Development at Local Level"

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