



EU CO-OPERATION WITH BELARUS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The EU is supporting Belarus in its efforts to combat the trafficking of human beings. While Belarus as one of the leaders in implementation of migration programmes, especially with regard to combating trafficking in human beings, Belarus remains a source and transit country for trafficking. Women, men, and children are trafficked from Belarus and neighbouring countries to Russia, the EU and other countries for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour.



According to a 2009 US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, authorities registered 591 trafficking victims of whom 458 were trafficked for sexual exploitation (including 96 minors) and 133 for forced labour; 366 were female (including 42 minors) and 225 were male (including 61 minors).

Against this background, the EU is supporting the €1.3 million project "Preventing, Fighting and Addressing the Social Consequences of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Belarus" which is co-funded by UNDP and UNICEF. The project aims to enhance national capacities in fighting trafficking in human beings with preventive measures and better protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking.

The EU has funded two earlier projects to combat trafficking. Both projects were implemented by UNDP. These projects were: "Support to the civil society through preventing, fighting and addressing the social consequences of human being trafficking" which was completed earlier this year with a total value of €1.2 million and "Combating women trafficking" which was implemented in 2005 with a budget of €900,000.

EU-UNDP-UNICEF PROJECT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

On 24-26 February the EU-funded and UNDP-UNICEF-implemented project "Preventing, Fighting and Addressing the Social Consequences of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Belarus" held 3 training seminars in different regions of Belarus on prevention of human trafficking and exploitation.



The international training on "Trafficking in Human Beings, Gender Education and Prevention of Asocial Behaviour of Adolescents" gathered 24 social teachers and deputy directors of secondary schools, boarding schools and orphanages from Minsk, Brest, Grodno, Vitebsk, Lida, Baranovichy, and Pinsk. The training was conducted by the international experts in the field of gender education and human trafficking prevention, and trainers of the EU Youth in Action Programme.

On 24 February the project with the support of the Academy of Postgraduate Education organised two simultaneous trainings attended by 31 education specialists from all regions of Belarus. The first training on "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Child Abuse" aimed to form basic knowledge and skills in planning and conducting prevention programs at educational establishments. The second training on "Prevention of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation" was focused on the issue of sexual exploitation and methods of its prevention.

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EU-FUNDED PROJECT NEWS

EU-UNDP PROJECT RECEIVES EU COMMUNICATIONS PRIZE

On 25 February in the framework of the EuropeAid annual conference in Brussels the three best EU-funded projects in the sphere of communications, PR and press were selected. The EU-funded and UNDP-implemented project "Support to environment and sustainable development in Belarus" was named among these three best projects of the European Union.



The project received the third prize in this category during the award ceremony "EuropeAid Communication Awards – Project of the year". The ceremony was attended by Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs.

The project on environment and sustainable development in Belarus is implemented for 27 months with €1.5 million funding from the EU. The overall objective is to promote environmental protection and sustainable development at central and local levels, by supporting: institutional capacity, active involvement of communities in local decision-making and public awareness initiatives.

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

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EU-UNDP PROJECT ANNOUNCES CONTEST OF IDEAS ON IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS

On 2 March the EU-funded and UNDP-implemented project "Combat the Negative Effects of Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus" announced the contest of the project ideas. The contest - closing on 31 March - will select for funding the most interesting and economically viable project initiatives. Implementation of those project ideas will improve the living conditions of inhabitants from Buda-Koshelevo, Vetka, Zhitkovichi and Khoiniki districts of Gomel Region.

The ideas should be aimed at solving socio-economical and environmental problems, as well as addressing the problems related to employment issues, economic development and income generation of local inhabitants of the project districts. Experience of project implementation in the Chernobyl-affected area shows that many residents of contaminated districts actively and enthusiastically participated in solving problems of their districts, but quite often they are short of financial support, resources, knowledge and opportunities.

The joint EU/UNDP project "Combat the Negative Effects of Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus" will give an opportunity and resources to the winners of the Contest of Project Ideas. The financial assistance for project initiatives' implementation will be available in the amount of 1 to 50 thousand dollars.

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EU SUPPORTS BELARUS TO INTRODUCE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

On 12 March a Department Head at the Environmental Protection Ministry Aleksandr Rachevsky stated that the Belarusian government is considering introducing the Strategic Environmental Assessment system aimed at incorporating environmental considerations into policies, plans and programmes. The system is a "very important instrument" that applies to projects in the European Union, Mr. Rachevsky said.

It will help Belarus use resources more wisely, avoid environmentally damaging decisions and simplify the conduct of mandatory environmental examinations by competent authorities, he noted. To introduce the system, Belarus needs to sign the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, the so-called Espoo Convention, according to the official.

A decision whether the country should join the protocol is expected to be taken later this year as required by the National Action Plan on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection for a period of 2006 through 2010. In 2008, a joint project of the European Union and UNDP was launched to "build capacity for Strategic Assessment and environmental conventions in Belarus." The project is aimed at introducing mechanisms to facilitate the integration of Strategic Environmental Assessment into the policy-making process, install and ensure the effective operation of the assessment system and enhance the awareness of its benefits.

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EU INVITES BELARUSIAN CHILDREN TO ENTER DRAWING COMPETITION ON GENDER EQUALITY

On 16 March the EU Delegation launched for Belarus the international drawing competition of the European Commission on the theme of equality between men and women. For the fourth year in a row the EU invites eight to ten year old children in developing countries to express in a drawing their vision on the theme of gender equality. The EU Delegation is responsible for the coordination of the competition in Belarus.



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. Drawings must be sent to the following address: Delegation of the European Union to Belarus, Engels Street 34A/2, Minsk, 220030, Belarus. Drawings must be A4 format on one side with the name and last name of the author, age, class and school address indicated on the reverse side.

The competition takes place till May 14, 2010. The ten best drawings from Belarus will be sent to Brussels for the final selection of the 14 winners in the end of June this year. Each of the 14 winners will be given a prize equivalent to 1,000 Euro. Since the competition was first launched in 2007 nearly 60,000 children from all over the world took part in the competition, thereby making their contribution to the dialogue on gender equality with the involvement of national authorities and civil society.

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

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EU-FUNDED BORDER TERMINAL VISITED BY BELARUSIAN AND RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTERS

On 16 March the Prime Ministers of Belarus and Russia Sergei Sidorsky and Vladimir Putin visited in Brest the Kozlovichi-2 freight terminal at the Belarusian-Polish state border. The border terminal was opened in March 2008 and was built as part of the investment project of the EU Cross-Border Cooperation Programme.



The terminal is located near the international border crossing Kozlovichi-Kukuryki that is the biggest cargo vehicle customs clearance point on the western border of Belarus. This border checkpoint on the highway M1/E30 (Moscow-Minsk-Warsaw-Berlin-Paris) has become internationally known and inscribed into the guides and databanks of all large freight forwarders on the continent.

With EU funding the Kozlovichi-2 freight terminal has been fitted with the contemporary customs clearance equipment and linked to the high-speed data lines securing online data exchange with the customs of Russia and the EU. Kozlovichi-2 accommodates 4,000 vehicles a day (in both directions).

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EU PROJECT SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT OF BELARUSIAN, UKRAINIAN AND GEORGIAN SMALL TOWNS

On 18 March the EU-funded project "Sustainable Urban Development" of the EU programme "Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue" (CIUDAD) was officially launched in Ukrainka Town, Kyiv Region, Ukraine. The Head of the EU Delegation, Ambassador José Manuel Pinto Teixeira attended the launching of the project.



Ambassador Pinto Teixeira stated during the opening ceremony: "The executive committee of Ukrainka has demonstrated a strong commitment towards reforming municipal services. Ukrainka was recognised as a model town for other towns in Ukraine. With the new CIUDAD project, the 4 partner towns in Ukraine and also Ozurgeti (Georgia) and Novolokumli (Belarus) will certainly profit from this experiences".

The project with duration of 3 years will allow six small towns to improve their level of economic activity and revitalise the public sector. It also aims creating adequate conditions for sustainable development of other Belarusian, Ukrainian and Georgian small cities through the implementation of municipal management tool for strategic planning on the basis of citizen participation.

During three years six cities from three countries will participate in educational seminars and learn the principles of good governance through which are developing the European municipalities. The project will conduct trainings for local community organisations and develop arrangement for further partnership of public and local authorities.

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EU-FUNDED PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENTS

29 MARCH, BREST

The EU-funded project "Enhancing Border Management in the Republic of Belarus" (BOMBEL) officially opens the third phase. Ambassador José Manuel Pinto Teixeira, Head of the EU Delegation will attend the ceremony.

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