

The European Neighbourhood Policy

In 2003 the European Union launched the concept of the «Wider Europe». The Commission proposed to develop a zone of political stability and rule of law together with the neighbouring countries. The policy based on the concept of the Wider Europe is called the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

The final objective of the ENP is the creation of the neighbourhood that facilitates market liberalisation and free movement of persons, goods, services and capital across the border.

The implementation of the ENP is based on three - phased approach: 1) 2004 - 2006 – implementation of the neighbourhood programmes; 2) 2007 - 2013 – implementation of the cross-border cooperation programmes under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument; 3) after 2013 – signing the Partnership Agreements with the neighbouring countries.

Belarus participated in the first phase of the ENP implementation through the implementation of joint projects under the neighbourhood programmes «Baltic Sea Region», «Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus» and «Poland-Ukraine-Belarus».

The neighbourhood programmes

The overall objective is to promote sustainable economic and social development in the border regions.

The projects under the neighbourhood programmes were focused on: development of the border regions; supporting the entrepreneurship; integration of labour markets; joint activities in the field of education, scientific researches, culture; communications and healthcare; fostering the environmental protection; improvement of the transport, communication and information networks.

Lessons learnt

Belarus didn't use all the opportunities of the neighbourhood programmes for the decision of the economic challenges at the local level!

The main reasons of this, in particular, are:

- low activity of the local authorities in the neighbourhood programmes;
- lack of sufficient information and communication technology resources at the local level;
- lack of sufficient organizational and administrative capacity at the oblast and district level in terms of necessary structures and experts daily involved in preparing of the project proposals;
- existing language barriers because the main bulk of programme information have been contained in documents in English.

The lessons learnt from the gained experience should be applied in the process of the Belarusian participation in the cross-border programmes within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument in 2008-2013 being the legal successors of the EU neighbourhood programmes.

The cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with the neighbouring countries is continuing!

Joint decision of common challenges
of the neighbouring countries

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The European Union is made up of 27 member states who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

www.europa.eu

The European Commission (EC) is the EU's executive body.



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The European Union's TACIS Programme for Belarus

Belarusian Participation in the Neighbourhood Programmes



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Neighbourhood programmes in Belarus

For implementation of joint projects by national and local executive and administrative bodies, scientific and research institutions, educational institutions, funds, schools, associations, NGOs and other non-profit Belarusian organizations with partners from neighbouring countries



Baltic Sea Region

(15 projects with Belarusian partners)

Priorities: 1. – Promotion of spatial development and actions for specific territories and sectors; 2. – Promotion of territorial structures supporting sustainable BSR development and integration of the Baltic Sea Region; 3. – Transnational and bilateral institution and capacity building in the Baltic Sea Region.

Belarusian partners: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Belarusian Chamber of Commerce, Central Research Institute for Complex Use of Water Resources, The Institute for Regional and Urban Planning, Belarusian Branch of the International Academy of Ecology, Belarusian National Polytechnic Academy, NGOs of young intellectuals «Third sector» and «Modem» (Grodno), Zhodino City Executive Committee, Braslav District Council of Deputies, Grodno Oblast Executive Committee.

Foreign partners: Danish Forest and Landscape Research Institute, Finnish Environment Institute, Municipality of Rostock (Germany), Academy of Spatial Research and Planning (Sweden), Ministry of Interior (Finland), District Municipality Council of Livani (Latvia), Parliament of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Stockholm County Municipality (Sweden), the Government of Berlin (Germany), Lithuanian and St. Petersburg offices of the Nordic Council of Ministers.



Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus

(14 projects with Belarusian partners)

Priorities: 1. – Enhancing regional competitiveness and improving access to cross-border markets; 2. – Developing and strengthening of cooperation at a people-to-people level and between institutions in border regions.

Belarusian partners: Ministry for Emergencies, National Academy of Sciences, Grodno, Vitebsk and Minsk Oblast Executive Committees, Vitebsk, Minsk, Grodno, Verhnedvinsk, Rossony, Beshenkovichy, Miory, Scharkovschina, Gorodok and Glubokoje City Executive Committees, Glubokoje Executive Council of Deputies, Vitebsk Scientific and Research Centre of Regional Development, Grodno State University, Municipal Enterprise «Grodnovodokanal», Grodno Oblast Clinic Hospital, NGO «Belarusian Children's Hospice», NGO «Interaction».

Foreign partners: Latvia – NGO «Children's Palliative Care», Daugavpils City Council, Latvian Bureau of the Euroregion «Country of lakes», Pauls Stradins Clinical University Hospital, Latgale Development Agency; Lithuania – Euroregion «Neman», Alytus District Municipality, Vilnius Regional Department of Environmental Protection.



Poland-Belarus-Ukraine

(7 projects with Belarusian partners)

Priorities: 1. – Increasing the competitiveness of the border area through modernisation and development of the cross-border infrastructure; 2. – Developing human capital and institutional cross-border cooperation including security at European Union borders.

Belarusian partners: Ministry for Emergencies, National Academy of Sciences, Brest and Grodno Oblast Executive Committees, Kamenech, Pruzhany and Svisloch District Executive Committees, the National Park «Belavezhsкая pushcha», Centre for Scientific and Technical Design Implementation (Brest), Brest State Technical University, Brest Branch of Belarusian Youth NGO of Fireman and Rescuers.

Foreign partners: Poland – Bialystok Technical University, Hajnovka Poviát Municipality, Podlyashskiy Voivodship Municipality, European Centre of Cross-border Initiatives (Lublin), Municipality of the National park «Poleskiy», European Cooperation Centre «House of Europe», Institute of Environmental Protection, Regional Department of Water Management, Podlaska Voivodship State Fire Service (Commandant's Office); Ukraine – Institute of Physics and Mechanics of the National Academy of Sciences of the Ukraine, Volyn Oblast Department of Water Resources and Water Management, Volyn Oblast Department General for Emergencies.

Examples of projects

«**Transnational river basin districts on the Eastern side of the Baltic Sea Network**» *Central Research Institute for Complex Use of Water Resources of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection of Belarus (lead partner).*

Objective: Fostering the improvement of water resources condition of the east part of the Baltic sea and integration of spatial planning issues in the action plans for river basin management.

«**Art without borders - promotion of cross-border cultural industry through the art of Marc Chagall and Mark Rothko**» – *Vitebsk City Executive Committee and Daugavpils City Council.*

Objective: Fostering cooperation of Daugavpils and Vitebsk for the creation of new contacts, experience exchange and enhancing the attractiveness of the region for tourists.

«**Biomechanical research and development of methods improving mobility apparatus for children**» – *Scientific Research Centre and Bialystok Technical University.*

Objective: Enhancing the effectiveness of children's diagnostics and rehabilitation and reduction of their orthopedic disability through the development of mobility apparatus technology.

Results

The level of stakeholder's awareness in the field of river basin management and spatial planning has been raised. A pilot database in line with the EU Framework Water Directive has been prepared on the basis of research of spatial planning correlation with river resources management on the Belarusian parts of the Neman and West Dvina river basins.

A Memorandum of agreement has been signed between Vitebsk City Executive Committee and Daugavpils City Council for the period of 2008-2013. Carried out: In Vitebsk to date – international school of art, roundtable, scientific conference, renovation of the exhibition hall; in Daugavpils – Mark Chagall's art exhibition, international art open air exhibition, restoration of the museum facade and improvement of the museum courtyard.

New methods of conservative correction of different types of flat-footedness have been developed on the basis of new biomechanical and biomedical research computer programmes. 89 children from Belarus and 67 children from Poland have been examined and treated.

71 % (4 217 202 EURO) of funds have been allocated for implementation of projects supporting national and local authorities; 11 % (642 085 EURO) – to projects supporting educational institutions; 11 % (600 000 EURO) – to projects supporting healthcare institutions; 7 % (424 500 EURO) – to projects supporting NGO's. Grodno oblast – 1 994 000 EURO (33 %), Brest oblast – 1 519 947 EURO (25 %), Minsk oblast – 1 482 727 EURO (25 %), Vitebsk oblast – 951 655 EURO (17 %)