



International Project
co-financed by the European
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Fostering mutual understanding
and co-operation of the EU with Belarus,
Moldova, Russia and Ukraine 2008 - 2012

RECOMMENDATION ON EU – BELARUS, MOLDOVA, RUSSIA AND UKRAINE CROSS – BORDER COOPERATION IMPROVEMENTS

On 26 – 27 November 2010 was held in Chisinau, Moldova the “*International Expert Meeting (EM) on developing cross-border cooperation / neighbourhood programmes between the EU and Eastern European Partnership countries and Russia*” in the frame of the BRIDGE Project (2008 – 2012), which is being co-financed by the European Commission, EuropeAid. The Coordinator of the BRIDGE Project is ISCOMET-Institute for Ethnic and Regional Studies from Maribor, Slovenia. Experts from EU and four partner countries took part at the Conference.

After thorough considerations of the Conference’s topics the participants adopted the following recommendations:

1. EU organs and agencies are invited to consider the following proposals and suggestions:

- to further elaborate the cross-border cooperation in the future ENP and Eastern Partnership (EP) programmes as an important tool for the achievement of the aims of these policies and especially for creating an area of stability, peace, sustainable development and overwhelming social and economic progress on the EU external borders;
- to increase – in accordance with the above mentioned assessment - the share of the financial means subscribed to cross-border and territorial cooperation in the next financing period, probably 2014 – 2020;
- to continue with the endeavours for diminishing the negative consequences of the Schengen border regime management and of the existing visa system, which is a serious obstacle for the people to people programmes and for the development of cross-border cooperation in particular;
- to avoid the fragmentation of the EU CBC policy and the influence of historical reminiscences on the managing and execution of the programmes;
- to consider by the European Commission the initiation and promotion of joint meetings of the monitoring committees of the on-going ENPI CBC programmes (2007-2013), for the purpose of improving the overall programmes management and of avoiding mistakes and excluding potential problems;



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- to ensure the equal position of regional and local communities from the ENP and EP partner countries respectively in the managing and decision making in the Euroregions along the EU external border;
- to explore in accordance with para. 16 of the preamble of Regulation EC No. 1082/2006 the ways and means for including the territorial entities from Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine in the revision of the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation - EGTC and to include the proposals in the report of the European Commission to the European Parliament and the European Council, which is foreseen for August 2011.

2. The EU organs and agencies and the governments of the EU and ENP partner countries are invited to consider the following proposals and suggestions:

- to improve a system of the EU spatial planning in order to include the border regions of Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine;
- to include in the instruments of cross-border cooperation elements which will develop the ethnic identity of national minorities living on both sides of the border and thus mitigating their problems, eliminating the historical reminiscences and creating an atmosphere of friendship among neighbouring nations;
- to include in the EU Tempus, Erasmus Mundus, Jean Monnet, Marie Curie, Leonardo da Vinci and research programs priorities that are important for education and training of people and for researching issues related to the development of ENP and EP respectively and CBC in particular;
- to create and support the joint business info networks and institutions of innovation economy, which would serve for exchange of information, realisation of common business ideas and transfer of knowledge;
- to support the creation of cross-border networks and associations of local and regional authorities and NGOs as well of the EU and EP countries and Russia;
- to foster harmonization of legislation of the EU member and eastern partners states concerning the realisation of ENPI CBC;
- to adopt adequate measures and invest efforts for enforcing peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the potential of existing EU-rules on mediation in disputes, which is a pre-condition for successful development of cross-border cooperation.



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3. The governments of Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine are invited to consider the following proposals and suggestions:

- to ensure an equilibrated regional development through specific regional approaches in order to avoid the increase of social and economic differences, caused also by greater capability of more developed regions to use the EU funds;
- to build up an adequate legal framework – in the context of decentralisation - which will provide regional / local authorities with competencies regarding CBC;
- to consider and accelerate procedures for accession to the 3rd Protocol to the Madrid Convention of 2009 on establishment of European Cooperation Groupings (ECGs);
- to consider the accession of Russia and Belarus into the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region of 2009.

The participants requested the BRIDGE Coordinator, Prof.Dr.Silvo Devetak and the BRIDGE Vice Coordinator, Ass.Prof.Dr. Olesea Sirbu, who was the organiser of the EM in Chisinau, to distribute this Recommendation to the EU agencies, adequate governmental bodies of the EU member states and of BRIDGE partner countries and to the managing structures of EU supported programmes on fostering effective cross-border and territorial cooperation between EU and Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. This Recommendation was adopted in both working languages of the EM – English and Russian.

Done in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova on 27 November 2010