

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

Armenia – Georgia Territorial Cooperation in Action

June 3, 2016, Dilijan, Armenia – for more than half a year, 10 cross border projects have been working together in the framework of the EU-funded Armenia – Georgia Territorial Cooperation Programme. The first results and achievements of grant projects activities are in focus of today's meeting of the Armenia – Georgia Joint Decision Making Committee (JDMC).

The Armenia – Georgia grant projects teams have started their activities in October 2015 to strengthen cross border contacts between local authorities, communities and civil society organisations to find joint solutions to common social and economic development challenges in Lori, Shirak, Tavush marzes of Armenia together with Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe – Javakheti regions of Georgia. The 10 cross border partnerships involving 33 organisations from Armenia and Georgia were created addressing different regional development issues: attracting investments to regions of Kvemo Kartli, Georgia and Tavush, Armenia; energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies; improvement of solid waste management; development of innovative cross-border touristic routes; natural resources conservation of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Georgia and Shirak, Armenia. Specific focus is made on youth issues: civic education, youth employment and strengthening relations among teenagers from Gyumri, Armenia and Bolnisi, Georgia, and others. The EU contribution to the Armenia – Georgia territorial cooperation is 1.35 million EUR.

“Joint projects across Armenian – Georgian border are an important contribution to economic and social development and public engagement at local level” – stressed Mr. Vache Terteryan, First Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration of the Republic of Armenia, Chairman of the inaugural JDMC meeting. “One of the most important achievements of the grant projects implementation is mutual understanding and close cooperation between the organizations - participants of the Programme projects aimed at creating an atmosphere of peace, shared joint success, a reliable partnership and friendship» - summarised Mr. Tengiz Shergelashvili, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia. “The Territorial Cooperation Programme Armenia – Georgia promotes friendly relations between the people of the neighboring regions in such areas as agriculture, tourism development, business, environment, education, culture and sports” – stated Mr. Alexei Sekarev, Team Leader of the EaPTC Support Programme. “All decisions within the Armenia – Georgia Programme regarding the project areas and eligible organisations were taken jointly by the partner countries. Today we are talking about the first achievements” - underlined Mr. Erk Roeloffs, the Team Leader of the EaPTC Managing Authority, GIZ.

The Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia, Ambassador Switalski delivered welcome remarks to the JDMC meeting. The JDMC plays a key role in the programme implementation by bringing together decision makers from Armenia and Georgia: representatives of the central government institutions, regional and local authorities, and civil society organisations. The JDMC meeting in Dilijan is organised by EaPTC Managing Authority and EaPTC Support Programme.

Background: The overall objective of the Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation (EaPTC) is to strengthen territorial cooperation between local authorities, communities and civil society organisations along the borders Armenia – Georgia, Azerbaijan – Georgia, Belarus – Ukraine and Moldova – Ukraine to jointly develop and implement cross-border projects. The overall EU contribution to EaPTC is 12.5 million EUR.

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) is an European Union initiative directed at six countries of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The initiative aims at closer relations between the EU and the Eastern partners, deepening their political co-operation and economic integration.

For more information about the Armenia – Georgia programme please contact the EaPTC Support Programme at office@eaptc.eu and /or visit <http://eaptc.eu/en/program/view-armenia-georgia.html>

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