

Project news

'Agenda for Belarus' a project supported of EU during 'Agenda 50'

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The 6 small projects, which should support development of local agenda, have now received a lot of trouble receiving their funds in their bank accounts.

In Belarus should all foreign currency goes through bank of the State in the middle of Minsk, this is to secure that the state knows what is conveyed by different currencies and to whom.

Then the money gets sent in this case in Euro to every project's own Euro account. This must be created specifically, and it should be a State approved association with various approvals to create humanitarian work, which can be applicant and recipient.

Even though the money is in the account, the project is described and 'put' in the right document templates, these must be approved of the local project - registration authorities, and now it becomes interesting if these will be approved. It is rarely about content and objective, but more about the correct font and size is used, and all information is placed correctly on the paper. Otherwise, the application will be returned, and the time will go until this is addressed with new signatures and various stamps.

While we all work on reorganizing the budget and visualizing and describing models and methods to support the small projects. Remember that all the projects are subject to the EU's strict visibility requirements. We have also already learned from EC Minsk that they will be more than zealous in their approvals of the activities, when these are to be considered as valid and thus eligible.

All the partners in the project, TUS from Poland, CET and ORPD from Belarus and EuroBelarus from Lithuania and us in TEH have been through a very frustrating project year. Our project was approved at the time under one of EU's Human Rights programs (EIDHR), and from 20 years work in the country we know that if our project, which is also a civil society to be successful, we must move with caution in relation to public authorities. We have done so because we want cooperation.

We experience in this year that EC Minsk, and thus also the EU wants a different direction from the previous one; namely support for state initiatives and business development. We find that the blind eye has partially turned away from maintaining the restrictions for the country's violations of human rights and civil society.

However, the project also felt more or less pressured to let all the small projects register, and not just work as civil society's initiative groups. These do not require State approval and can function over a certain period of time.

So, all our small projects are more or less GO NGOs, e.g. state-approved associations. We will see if the small project owners can create new activities to improve the lives of citizens with disabilities, even though these do not lie in the state's top down management and desires?

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