

## Annex 1: Action Fiche – Special Measure for Belarus 2013

### 1. IDENTIFICATION

<b>Title/Number</b>	Special measure: Support to Civil Society in Belarus (ENPI/2013/024-449)		
<b>Total cost</b>	EU contribution: EUR 2.7 million from the 2013 budget		
<b>Method/ Management mode</b>	Project approach – Direct Centralised Management		
<b>DAC-code, if applicable</b>	15150	<b>Sector</b>	Democratic participation and civil society

### 2. RATIONALE

#### 2.1. Sector context

The present action covers the ENPI EUR 2.7 million top-ups to increase the 2013 support to civil society provided under the thematic programmes (1) Non State Actors and Local Authorities (top up EUR 2.2 million) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights –EIDHR (top up EUR 0.5 million).

These thematic actions are part of the EU reaction to increase the support to the civil society, students and population at large after the 2010 post electoral crisis, and they were announced at the international donors conference 'Solidarity with Belarus' (Warsaw, 2011).

#### 2.2. Lessons learnt

The existing EU-funded programmes supporting civil society and promoting people-to-people contacts show that there is great interest and unmet needs in Belarus.

#### 2.3. Complementary actions

##### EU Programmes/projects

- Existing funding to support civil society under the EIDHR (local based calls, Brussels centralised calls for Objective 1 targeting countries where human rights are most at risk); and the Non State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA & LA) local based calls).
- Clearing House Project (EUR 0.2 million, managed by Office for Democratic Belarus): a new platform for interaction between donors and implementers NGOs.

- Civil Society Stability for Belarus I and II under the Instrument for Stability (EUR 1.69 million and EUR 4 million, managed by the Nordic Council of Ministers).

## **2.4. Donor coordination**

The EU Delegation in Minsk organises on a regular basis donor coordination meetings with EU Member States, as well as with all other major donors active in Belarus, in order to coordinate actions in the priority areas of assistance. Such coordination is organised in compliance with principles of the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action and is aimed to ensure maximum aid effectiveness.

In addition, the European Commission and the European External Action Service organise regular implementers and donors meetings in Brussels (about twice a year). EU Member States, IFIs and other donors such as the United States, Canada and Norway take part.

## **3. DESCRIPTION**

### **3.1. Objectives**

Overall objective: To contribute to the development of a democratic Belarus.

Specific objectives:

- To reinforce the financial allocations at local level to support civil society through the EU external aid thematic instruments EIDHR and NSA & LA.
- More in particular, the reinforcement of the EIDHR allocations will have the following specific objectives:
  - pursue common agendas for human rights and democratic reform
  - build towards consensus on disputed or controversial areas of policy
  - enhance political representation and participation
  - enhance the inclusiveness and pluralism of civil society
  - support activities aimed at promoting the issues covered by EU guidelines on Human Rights
- More in particular, the reinforcement of the NSA&LA allocations will have the following specific objectives:
  - Strengthening the capacity of non-state actors and local authorities to participate in defining and implementing sustainable development strategies, including their political, economic, social and environmental aspects;

- Strengthening the capacity of non-state actors and local authorities to promote the Belarusian national and cultural identity and citizen's participation in the cultural policy dialogue;
- Strengthening the capacity of non-state actors and local authorities to develop and implement actions to mitigate socio-economic consequences of the Chernobyl accident;
- Promotion of changes in government policy and practice towards non-state actors and local authorities in favour of their effective involvement in policy- and decision-making processes;
- Strengthening the capacity of citizens to engage in discussion and launch actions at local level, to defend their rights and participate in decision-making;
- Fostering quality partnerships and promote networking and alliances between actors from the EU and Belarus.

### **3.2. Expected results and main activities**

The expected results and activities will be aligned to those of the programmes reinforced (EIDHR 2013, NSA & LA 2013).

Specific outcomes could cover a very wide range of topics, such as (non-exhaustive list):

- Regular reporting from local civil society organisations on the country's international situation on human rights, an independent detailed diagnosis of challenges to human rights and democracy;
- Improved capacity of Civil Society Organisations to participate in sustainable development strategies and programmes and policy dialogue;
- Regular dialogues between Civil Society Organisations, the general public, and government agencies;
- New Civil Society Organisations formed, membership development and activities by persons with disabilities.
- Setting up and strengthening social partner organisations (trade unions, etc.).

### **3.3. Risks and assumptions**

The risks and assumptions will be aligned to those of the programmes reinforced (EIDHR 2013, NSA & LA 2013) , and are related to the difficulties for the Civil Society organisations to work in a difficult political environment.

### **3.4. Crosscutting Issues**

Gender equality principles will be implemented at all stages of the action.

### **3.5. Stakeholders**

Local and international Non State Actors and NGOs active in Belarus.

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

### **4.1. Method of implementation**

Direct centralised management.

The funds made available with the present action intend to reinforce the EIDHR and NSA & LA financial envelopes allocated to local country-based call(s) for proposals expected to be launched in the course of 2013 by the EU Delegation to Belarus.

### **4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures**

#### **1) Contracts**

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Regulation. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in Article 21(7) ENPI.

Considering that the present action intends to top up EIDHR and NSA & LA funded calls for proposals, participation may be restricted to correspond to the eligibility conditions (nationality of applicants and/or partners) defined in the financing decisions funding these thematic calls for proposals and that will be adopted in 2013.

#### **2) Specific rules for grants**

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions. They are established in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI 'Grants' of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget. When derogations to these principles are applied, they shall be justified, in particular in the following cases:

- Financing in full (derogation to the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is up to 95% of the total accepted costs of the Action. Up to full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission

Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget.

- Derogation to the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget.

#### **4.3. Budget and calendar**

##### Indicative budget breakdown

The indicative budget available to implement the action is detailed in the Appendix.

- EUR 2.2 million for reinforcing 2013 NSA & LA envelope allocated to Belarus (EUR 1.4 million);
- EUR 0.5 million for reinforcing 2013 EIDHR envelope allocated to Belarus (EUR 0.5 million).

##### Calendar

Publication of call for proposals : May 2013

Evaluation: Mid –end July 2013

Deadline for full applications: September 2013

Evaluation & Contracting: October-November 2013

##### Duration

Indicative maximum duration is 36 months from the date of signature of the contracts.

#### **4.4. Performance monitoring**

Monitoring will be aligned to the one performed on the programmes reinforced (EIDHR 2013 and NSA & LA 2013), and will be performed on a regular basis by the EU Delegation and by external monitors. This activity will be funded from other budgetary source.

#### **4.5. Evaluation and audit**

Evaluation and audit will be aligned to the one performed on the programmes reinforced (EIDHR 2013, NSA & LA 2013) as specified in the corresponding financing decisions. This activity will be funded from other budgetary source.

#### **4.6. Communication and visibility**

Communication and visibility actions will be conform to the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions and will be aligned to the ones performed on

the programmes reinforced (EIDHR, NSA & LA) as specified in the corresponding financing decisions. They should also be fully in line with the developments in the overall EU/Belarus relations, given the particular politically sensitive context.