1st issue, October 2012

NEWSLETTER

A newsletter published within "The European and Our Affairs" – a project funded by the European Union

About the project

"THE EUROPEAN AND OUR AFFAIRS"



In September this year, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies – ALDA, in cooperation with Local Democracy Agency Zavidovici, started a realisation of a project, titled „The European and Our Affairs". The project is funded by the European Union, as a part of IPA 2011 - Information and Communication Programme.

The activites will be located at municipalities Zavidovici and Zepce, and the subject who will benefit from his project include the local civil society, citizen groups, local community members, local media and public at large.

Some of the project objectives would be helping to raise awareness on EU enlargement process and pre-accession assistance aimed to support the reform process at local level in Bosnia and Herzegovina; to improve public understanding of the benefits of EU integration; to promote tangible results of EU pre-accession assistance; to help reinforce the role of civil society in the public dialogue on EU accession agenda and to strenghten the local ownership over the reform and EU integration process.

The main activities of the project include an opening conference on the topic „EU integration – a dialogue for the future" in Zavidovići, two training seminars for CSO-s and local authorities on EU integration and pre-accession assistance; a training seminar for local media titled „EU Integration: prejudices and myth-buster", and a *Youth for EU* campaign including a EU quiz in secondary schools and EU Ambassadors' visits.

Through these activities, it is expected to achieve improved public awareness and knowledge of actual benefits of EU integration, increased information provision about the effects of EU funded projects, improved outreach and information dissemination on EU integration issues, increased number of cross-sectoral partnerships and issue based networking for underpinning reform process, and improved public dialogue for common understanding of EU values.

The first implemented activity of the project was the opening conference which was held on October 10th 2012 in Zavidovici Town hall.

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INTRODUCTION OF THE DIRECTORATE FOR EU INTEGRATION



INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA) INTRODUCTION



OPENING CONFERENCE „EU INTEGRATIONS – A DIALOGUE FOR THE FUTURE"



"This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication is the sole responsibility of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies - ALDA and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union."

OPENING CONFERENCE OF THE PROJECT: “EU INTEGRATION – A DIALOGUE FOR THE FUTURE”

A conference on „EU integration, a dialogue for the future“, launch event for the one year long project: “The European and Our Affairs“ took place in Zavidovici, Town Hall, on 10 October 2012.

The Conference gathered forty representatives of local governments, local/regional development agencies, NGO-s and youth groups.
ALDA, in cooperation with LDA Zavidovici, last September started the implementation of this project, funded by the European Union, as a part of IPA 2011 - Information and Communication Programme.

The project will be implemented in Zenica region, and local communities Zavidovici and Zepce aimed to help raise citizens' awareness on EU enlargement and pre-accession assistance with particular emphasis on the role of local self-governments and civil society in the reform process.

The overall project activities and objectives were presented by Stanka Parac Damjanovic, ALDA Regional Programme Coordinator and Sladjan Ilic, Delegate of LDA Zavidovici who were jointly moderating the sessions.







The conference participants were greeted by the mayors of Zavidovici and Zepce, Mr. Hakija Osmic and Mr. Mato Zovko, while the guest speakers were the representatives of the EU Integration Office Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ms. Sandra Memisevic, Project Coordinator in the Unit for EU integration strategy and Ms. Nermina Saracevic, Project Coordinator in the Unit for EU Assistance coordination. They presented the key activities of the EU Integration Office and its role in EU integration strategy planning in different public policy areas. Ms. Saracevic emphasised the need for improved co-operation and co-ordination between different tiers of government in BH with particular focus on local government units lacking both information and adequate administrative capacity for collaborative and partnership based EU project development. Lack of knowledge of advanatages of EU accession among the policy and decision makers as well as insufficient general public awareness in local communities about the benefits of EU membership still and to large extent hampers the pace of embracing of the EU standards and values.



Experiences of good practice in local partnership building for collaborative project development were presented by Ms. Branka Janko from Development Agency and Ms. Mira Jovic, from the Association of entrepreneurs in Zepce. They both reiterated the need for more proactive approach of the local stakeholders in public policy development and implementation so as to contribute more effectively to greater involvement of different sections of local community. Developing the administrative capacity of both civil society and public sector at this stage is more than relevant for any foreseeable progress that BH would make on the way to furthering the EU integration.

Ms. Slavica Draskovic, TACSO Resident Advisor in Bosnia and Herzegovina presented the technical assistance programme aimed to help strengthen CSO capacities with specific view to local NGO-s and their issue based networks. She also invited the representatives of local NGO-s to approach TACSO for any support they might need in implementing their activities since the range of capacity building and training seminars offered suit their needs.

During the debate, a number of participants expressed their doubts as regards the progress of BH on the way to further EU integration considering the criteria that have not been fulfilled so far. There were also remarks and comments that there are no guarantees that some new criteria for EU integration will be imposed. However, most of the participants expressed their concern that the complex government structure in the country often leaves (out) the local tier of government without adequate knowledge, competencies and skills for engaging more actively in the European integration affairs. This is why, CSO initiatives may become a valuable tool for promoting both the European and local affairs thus contributing to reduce the gap between them.

PROCESS OF EU INTEGRATION IN BIH

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the subject of a regional approach to the European Union countries of the Western Balkans through the process of stabilization and association, as well as an element of conditionality strategy from 1997. Political dialogue, trade liberalization, cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs, and the process of stabilization and association in general, are guiding the integration of BiH into the political and economic mainstream of the Union. With the autonomous trade measures and financial assistance, a key instrument of the process is the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), which was signed on 16th of June 2008. The this was a start of a contractual relationship with the European Union, confirming the status of a potential candidate for EU membership from year 2000. Based on the gradual establishment of a free trade zone for a period of up to five, and a complete integration in a period of up to six years from the date of the Agreement entry into force, it promotes a framework for reforms designed to urge: Adoption of EU legislation and European standards, preparation for integration in the EU internal market through trade liberalization, stabilization of relations in the region through political dialogue and regional cooperation, and the promotion of cooperation with the EU in the areas covered by the criteria for membership.

Access criteria is general and the EU applies them to all countries aspiring for membership without differences. They are divided into three groups and given that they have been agreed at a summit of the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993, they are also called the Copenhagen Criteria.

1. Political criteria, which requires the existence of stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, respect for the law, respect for human rights and the rights and protection of minorities.
2. Economic criteria, which requires the efficient functioning of the market economy and the country's ability to successfully cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.
3. Legal criteria, which requires the capability of fully assuming the obligations arising from its membership, or to accept the EU acquis as well as political, economic and monetary union.

Bearing in mind that effective implementation through appropriate administrative and judicial structures is more important than the formal transposition of EU legislation into the domestic legal framework, the existence of a strong, functional and efficient administrative apparatus is determined as the fourth accession criteria in Madrid in December 1995, and the institutions of BiH involved in the stabilization and association were given new obligations.



Until the moment of the SAA entry into force, it shall be an Interim Agreement on trade and trade-related matters (Interim Agreement). Although the emphasis is on the gradual liberalization of trade in industrial, agricultural and fishery products, on the general principles of its obligation to promote respect for democratic principles and fundamental human rights, and rights arising from the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Also it contains provisions on road transit through BiH and the EU, competition, public companies, intellectual property rights and cooperation in the customs field.

The transitional period for the establishment of a free trade zone with the EU to BiH according to Interim Agreement ends the 1st January 2013, when it will be in line with the pace of trade liberalization envisaged by accompanying annexes and protocols, to abolish tariffs on all industrial and most of the agricultural products, both from the EU and the BiH side.

Trade regulations are asymmetric in favor of BH, which we conclude from insight into the customs concessions for industrial and agricultural products of the two sides. The EU has lifted quantitative restrictions and customs duties and charges with the date of the Agreement entry into force,this having equivalent effect on imports of industrial products, while the BiH side remaining tariffs on imports of industrial products will be lifted on January 1st 2013. In terms of agricultural products, with the entry into force of the Interim Agreement, the EU has abolished customs duties on imports of primary agricultural products originating in Bosnia, except for: live cattle, beef (fresh, chilled, frozen), sugar and wine, which are subject to import duty free at the level of approved tariff quotas. For products covered by Chapters 7 and 8 (fruits and vegetables), for which the Common Customs Tariff provides for the application of ad valorem customs duties and a specific customs duty, it abolished the ad valorem part of the duty. For products of beef, originating from BiH customs duties are applied at the level of 20% ad valorem and 20% specific duty within the tariff quota of 1,500 t. Imports of sugar originating from Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU duty free regime is subject to the tariff quota of 12,000 tonnes. EU abolished tariffs and quantitative restrictions on imports of fish and fishery products originating in Bosnia, except for the products listed in Annex IV. Pursuant to the provisions of Annex IV, import of trout, carp, sea bass and snappers of BiH origin is subject to the EU duty free regime within the tariff quota. The most important for BiH is the export of trout which carries a tariff quota of 60 tonnes, and through tariff quota tariff is determined at 70% of MFN. Tariffs on processed agricultural products originating in Bosnia were abolished in accordance with Annex I of Protocol 1.

When it comes to BiH customs concessions, it should be noted that from the 1st January 2013 BiH terminated remaining tariffs on imports of primary agricultural products and fish products while maintaining duty-free imports of certain primary products of animal origin within tariff quotas as referred to in Annex III-E, and the remaining tariffs on imports of processed agricultural products will be abolished. Exception are certain categories of dairy products (Group 0403), certain types of biscuits and the like product, certain alcoholic beverages distilled from grape wine and certain tobacco products,

With obligations under the Interim Agreement, effective with the date of signing of the SAA started the harmonization of BiH legislation with EU legislation. According to Article 70 of the SAA, the focus of the process in the early phase will be on the core elements of the EU acquis related to the internal market and other areas related to trade, and at a later stage, all the remaining parts of the acquis.

The unified market is one of the greatest achievements of the European Union. Restrictions on trade and free competition between member states were gradually abolished, leading to an increase in living standards;

The unified market has not yet become a unified economy: some sectors (especially services of general interest) are still regulated by national laws. Freedom to provide services is useful because it stimulates economic activity;

In the process of integration, the trading relations between BiH and the EU are regulated by the Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-Related Matters between BiH and the EU, which is an integral part of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, and it came into force on July 1st 2008.

The ratification process of the SAA was completed in the parliaments of the member states and the European Parliament, and for its final entry into force it has to be published in the Official Journal of the EU. The European Union Council of Foreign Affairs has in its Conclusions of BiH in March and December 2011 clearly warned about the priorities arising from the Agreements, which are directly associated with the SAA entry into force:

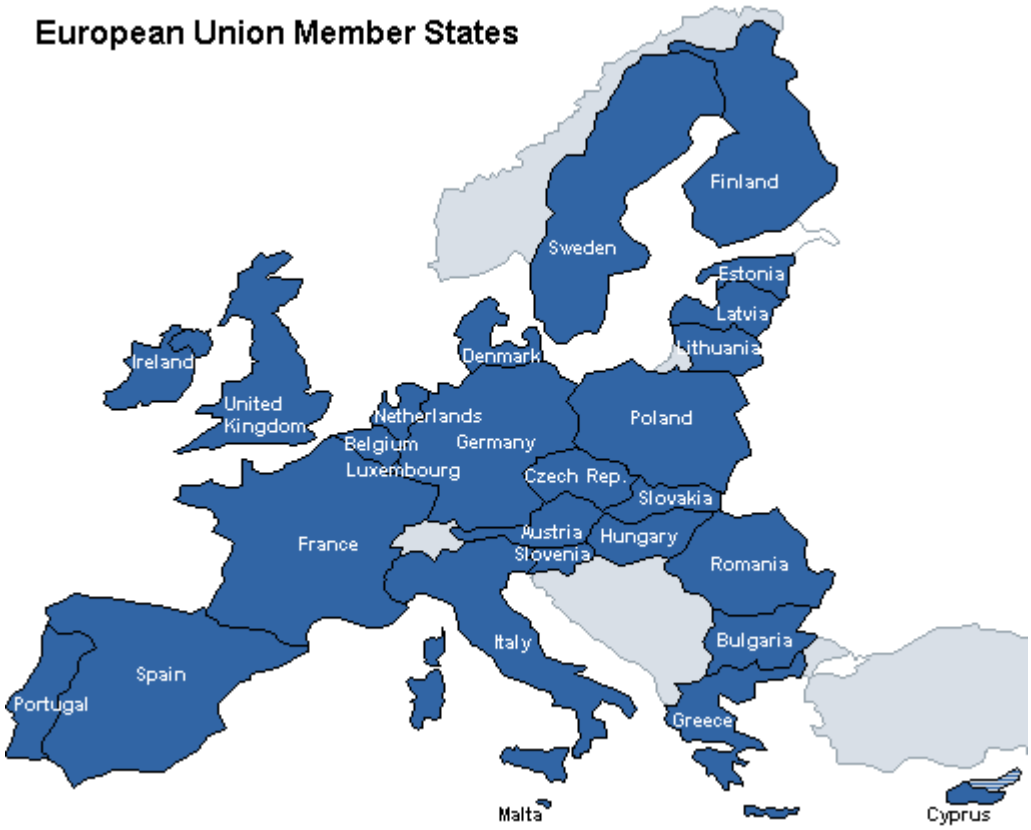
- Harmonizing the Constitution with the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
- The adoption of the Law on State aid on the state level
- The adoption of the Law on Census of Population, Households and Dwellings

Only the satisfactory progress in the implementation of obligations will be a key element to consider a credible application for membership, the message states. Practically, this means that the country must be in a position to adopt, implement and apply EU rules and legislation.

The adoption of the Law on State aid and the Law on Census of Population, Households and Dwellings gives a new but still insufficient impetus to the process of European integration in the country. The conclusions of the dialogue at the political level by EU representatives and representatives of the executive authorities and the major political parties in BiH of 27th of June 2012 confirm this. To allow BiH to submit a credible application for membership by the end of 2012 and simultaneously ensure the conditions for the entry into force of the SAA, a roadmap for applying for EU membership was set up during the dialogue. Two key questions that the roadmap addressed were necessitated political agreement in respect of a court judgment in the case of Sejdic-Finci and the amendments to the Constitution in accordance with the same, and the establishment of an effective mechanism of coordination of European affairs in the country.

Next steps in the process of European integration, with the assumption that the basic conditions for the entry into force of the SAA are fulfilled, are the filing of a credible membership application and providing the answers to the European Commission, which the Commission submits to the applicant country to assess the current situation in the areas covered by accession requirements, plans for the future in terms of harmonization of legislation in the relevant areas and general capacities of the country for further progress in the EU integration process and candidate status.

Croatian accession to the EU will give a new impetus to the process of European integration in the region. Currently the most important thing is to ensure unimpeded trade in products of plant and animal products, especially milk, meat and poultry with the Croatian side, of which the harmonisation of legislation in the field of food and veterinary safety and strengthening the capacity to implement it in the first place with official controls and laboratories, is critical.



STABILISATION AND ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT (SAA)

Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) is a new, third generation of European agreements offered exclusively to the Western Balkans countries, in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process. The Agreement is signed for an undefined period of time with a view to contributing to economic and political stabilisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. States which have become members through the EU fifth enlargement have signed Association Agreements (the so-called European agreements). The basic difference between the two mentioned agreements is in the content of the “evolution clause” in the SAA and in the emphasis on regional cooperation in Western Balkans.
By signing the Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina has confirmed its status of a potential candidate country, owing to the “evolution clause”. That is much more than what the signatory countries to the European agreement have received concerning further accession to the EU. Another difference is reflected in regional cooperation, where a signatory country commits itself to signing bilateral agreements with SAP countries and the EU candidate countries.
The Stabilisation and Association Agreement is of a “mixed” character, meaning that, besides the EU, all EU Member States are signatories to the Agreement, as the Agreement covers areas of shared EU competences between the EU and the Member States.
Stabilisation and Association Agreement contains 10 chapters:

- General Principles
- Political Dialogue
- Regional Cooperation
- Free Movement of Goods
- Movement of Workers, Establishment, Provision of Services, Movement of Capital
- Approximation of laws, law enforcement and competition rules
- Justice, Freedom and Security
- Cooperation Policies
- Financial Cooperation
- Institutional, General and Final Provisions



Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourghood Policy

Upon the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina entered into the first contractual relation with the European Union. Considering its mixed character,in order to enter into force the Agreement has to be ratified by parliaments of all EU Member States and the European Parliament. BiH Presidency ratified the SAA in November 2008. Until the completion of the ratification process, an Interim Agreement, being part of the SAA governing - mainly questions related to trade and transport between BiH and the European Union. During the technical rounds of negotiations, most of the time and effort was invested exactly in trade regulations and lists of products for which the BiH would gradually, over a five year period, eliminate customs duties until full trade liberalization with the EU. The task of BiH is to implement the Interim Agreement provisions and fulfil necessary criteria for full EU membership.
After SAA enters into force, the next step would be submission of application for the EU candidate country status and membership.

INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA) INTRODUCTION

Over time, the EU has developed a broad spectrum of external aid programmes, which resulted in a complex set of more than 30 different legal instruments. The need to facilitate coherence and improve consistency of the Union's action, and achieve better results and a higher impact with the resources available, led the Commission to propose a simplified framework for external actions over the 2007-2013 period. New (and fewer) external relations instruments have therefore been designed to cover in particular the EU co-operation, respectively with developing countries and industrialised countries, the EU neighbourhood policy, enlargement and other specific themes. Among the proposed new legal bases, an instrument for pre-accession assistance, IPA, was presented by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. The IPA Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 was adopted on 17 July 2006.

At the junction between external assistance and internal policies, IPA aims at providing targeted assistance to countries which are candidates and potential candidates for membership to the EU.



In order to achieve each country's objectives in the most efficient way, IPA consists of five different components:

1. Transition Assistance and Institution Building,
2. Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation,
3. Regional Development,
4. Human Resources Development,
5. Rural Development.

Since 2007 Bosnia and Herzegovina has received EU financial assistance under the Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (IPA). IPA funds are partially managed by the Delegation of EU on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

BIH PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2012 PUBLISHED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION



The European Commission published its Progress Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina on 10 October 2012, alongside the Progress Reports for other 'enlargement' countries. 'Time to deliver' was Commissioner Stefan Fuele's theme for Bosnia and Herzegovina when he addressed the media in Brussels.

After the official handover of the Progress Report to the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Vjekoslav Bevanda, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina/EU Special Representative Ambassador Peter Sorensen, speaking in Sarajevo at a press conference, said: "In Bosnia and Herzegovina there has been almost no progress. We have seen a high level of rhetoric about EU integration – but little action and few results delivered. This is very disappointing and means that Bosnia and Herzegovina has fallen further behind in the region. This needs to change because there are clear tasks to be done – most of which cannot be achieved without the widest political consensus.

"We know the people of this country want an EU future. The EU is ready to do our part. We now need to see all authorities, all leaders and all institutions find consensus, find agreements and make progress. In short, it's time for results - it's time for those in authority to step up and take responsibility."

The Progress Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Commission's overall Enlargement Strategy is available at www.ec.europa.eu.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DIRECTORATE FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



The Directorate for European Integration (DEI) is a permanent, independent and expert body of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The Directorate is responsible for coordination of activities of the BiH authorities and supervision of the implementation of decisions passed by the relevant institutions in BiH concerning the requirements for the European integration.
The Directorate has the role of chief coordinator of the European integration process at the state level (horizontal coordination) and between the state institutions and entities (vertical coordination). Among other things, DEI coordinates financial assistance of the European Union and the DEI Director is also the National Coordinator for IPA (the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance). The Directorate produces a variety of information, analyses, reports and strategic documents necessary for the integration process. DEI has a significant role in promoting and informing the public as to what the integration process signifies and entails.



The Directorate is consisted of different divisions: Division for Strategy and Integration Policies, Division for Harmonisation of the BiH Legal System with acquis communautaire, EU Assistance Coordination Division, Division for Translation in the Field of European Integration, Division for General and Common Affairs and European Integration Promotion Unit, whose components are the Promotion unit and Education unit. The current head of the Directorate is Mrs. Nevenka Savić.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS – TACSO



Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations (TACSO) is an EU-funded project that first began in 2009.
After receiving a two-year extension in 2011, TACSO plans to continue with its main goals of supporting and strengthening civil society organisations (CSOs) located in the Western Balkans and Turkey.
One major aspect of European integration is the role that CSOs can play. CSOs can help push for reforms, represent a wider audience and specific areas of interest while being part of the change in their societies and the lives of its citizens. Essential to the road to the EU is establishing a strong and capable civil society that is able to fulfill its role.
Therefore, in this second phase of TACSO, capacity building measures and resources will overlap with a greater focus on policy areas, networking and partnership, dialogue between CSOs and other institutions as well as CSO visibility
The main expected outcomes of this project are:

- increased influence of CSOs in democratic decision-making processes
- strengthened capacity of CSOs to further their agenda
- improved capacity of CSOs in service delivery
- strengthened cooperation and networking among the CSOs and between external stakeholders and CSOs
- raised public awareness of the CSOs
- improved public image of the CSOs

POJMOVNIK EVROPSKIH INTEGRACIJA

EU ENLARGEMENT



Enlargement of the European Union is a term used to describe the process of admission to full membership of the new Member States and one of the most important EU policies. EU enlargement policy objectives are to increase security, stability and prosperity on the European continent. Since its inception, the European Union has gone through five rounds of enlargement. In the first four rounds of enlargement founder states: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Germany have joined, then Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in 1973, then Greece in 1981, Portugal and Spain in 1986, and Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995. In the fifth round of enlargement, which is considered the largest in the history of the EU and which is also called the "big bang", Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia (May 1 2004) Bulgaria and Romania (January 1, 2007), became the members of European Union. There are four candidate countries for EU membership: Croatia, Macedonia, Turkey and Iceland. Potential candidates are the countries of the Stabilisation and Association process: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo under Security Council resolution 1244/99.

EU MEMBER STATE

Accession of new member states in the EU is regulated by the Treaty on European Union (1992./1993.). According to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, any European State which respects the principles of liberty, democracy, human rights and freedoms, and the rule of law (Article 6 (1) of the EU Treaty) may submit a request (application) for membership in the EU. The state requirement is submitted to the EU Council, acting unanimously, after receiving the opinion of the European Commission after the European Parliament has given consent by an absolute majority of its members. Status of the member states of the European Union receives after fulfilling the membership criteria (Copenhagen 1993rd and the criterion of the Madrid 1995.), the completion of accession negotiations, the signing of the accession treaty and the completion of its ratification procedures. It is common to become EU member states at the agreed date, which is usually determined by agreement of accession. The European Union has 27 member states: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Hungary, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

YOUTH IN ACTION

Youth in Action is an EU program established in the financial perspective 2007 – 2013, which aims to encourage solidarity, tolerance, and an active role of youth in creating the future of the European Union. The program promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and the involvement of young people, regardless of their education, social status and cultural background. It is designed for young people from 15-28 years old (in some cases 13-30 years). The Youth in Action is the successor to the Youth program (2000 - 2006), and its value for the period since 2007 – 2013 is 885 million euros. Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the basis of the Framework Agreement on the general principles for the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Community programs (2004/2007), has the possibility of access to the Youth in Action.

CHRONOLOGY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN BIH AND THE EU

Key dates in Bosnia and Herzegovina's path towards the EU:

• 1997: The EU Council of Ministers establishes political and economic conditionality for development of bilateral relations. Bosnia and Herzegovina is granted autonomous trade preferences.
• 1998: Establishment of the EU/BiH Consultative Task Force (CTF), ensuring technical and expert assistance in the field of administration, regulatory framework and policies.
• May 1999: Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) startes. The SAP offers a clear EU accession perspective for Bosnia and Herzegovina and other five West Balkans countries.
• June 1999: Agreement reached on the Stability Pact, a political document whose strategic goal is stabilisation of the South-East Europe by bringing the countries in the region closer to the Euro-Atlantic integration and through strengthening of regional cooperation. A Summits of Heads of State and Governments, including those from Canada, Japan and the USA held in Sarajevo in July 1999, where establishment of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe was endorsed and made official.
• March 2000: Publication of the EU Road Map. The document defined 18 essential steps to be undertaken by BiH in order to start the work on the Feasibility Study for the opening of negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement.
• 2000: Introduction of duty-free access of products from BiH to the EU market (Autonomous Trade Measure – ATM).
• December 2000: The Council of Europe adopts Regulation 2666/2000, on Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS), a technical assistance program designed for the SAP countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).
• March 2003: Work on the Feasibility Study starts. European Commission hands over to the Council of Ministers of BiH a questionnaire consisting of 346 questions, covering the area of BiH economic and political set-up and other fields relevant for conclusion of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.
• November 2003: European Commission adopts the assessment of the Feasibility Study. Feasibility Study identifies 16 priority areas where substantive progress in reforms would constitute the basis for European Commission to propose to the Council of the EU to open negotiations with BiH on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.
• March 2004: Council of the European Union adopts the first European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina.
• November 2005: Negotiations on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement have officially start in Sarajevo on November 25.
• January 2006: First Plenary round of SAP negotiations between EU and BiH and the first plenary meeting of the Reform Process Monitoring (RPM), which replaced the Consultative Task Force; Council of the European Union adopts the second European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina.
• January 2007: Introduction of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), designed for all pre-accession activities and financed by the European Commission.
• February 2008: Council of the European Union adopts the third European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina.
• November 2007: Technical negotiations on the Stabilisation and Association Agreement finalised, with initialling and signing dependent on fulfilment of political conditions.
• December 2007: Stabilisation and Association Agreement initialled on December 4.
• February 2008: Framework Agreement on Rules of Cooperation in the Implementation of Financial Assistance from the European Commission to BiH within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) signed on 20 February .
• June 2008: Stabilisation and Association Agreement signed on 16 June.
• July 2008: Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade Matters enters into force on 1 July.
• November 2008: The first meeting of the Interim Committee for Stabilisation and Association held, as the highest body within the Stabilisation and Association Process, with primary task (together with 6 Interim Sub-Committees) to monitor the fulfilment of obligations set out in the Interim Agreement;
• June 2011: First meeting of the Structured Dialogue on Justice between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union held.

The European and Our Affairs

ALDA
c/o Council of Europe, F-67075 Strasbourg, France
Phone: +33 3 90 21 45 93 Fax: +33 3 90 21 55 17
Email: alda@aldaintranet.org
Webpage: www.alda-europe.eu

LDA Zavidovići, Omladinska 10,
72220 Zavidovici, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Phone/Fax: +387 32 877 008
E-mail: LDAZavidovici@aldaintranet.org
Webpage: www.lda-zavidovici.org

USEFUL LINKS

European Union:
www.europa.eu

European Commission:
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Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina and EU Special Representative:
www.europa.ba

Council of the EU:
www.consilium.europa.eu

European Parliament:
www.europarl.europa.eu

Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations (TACSO):
www.tacso.org

European Council:
www.european-council.europa.eu

Directorate for European Integration BiH:
www.dei.gov.ba

This project is funded by the European Union
This project is implemented by ALDA and LDA Zavidovici

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