



**EU DELEGATION NEWSLETTER**  
**JULY-SEPTEMBER 2015**  
**EU-FUNDED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS IN AZERBAIJAN**

**AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**



Several rural community projects were successfully implemented by "Umid" Public Union within the EU funded **"Rural Sustainable Development Initiative"** program. These projects aim at improvement of potable water supply, repair of intra community roads in selected communities of Shabran, Guba and Khachmaz rayons. For example, in the Nugedi community in the Guba rayon were in poor condition and remained unrepaired for a long time. As a consequence water was not provided to

one part of the village while the other part received insufficient water. To overcome this problem, and with co-financing from the community, a new water distribution pipeline of 5350 meters was constructed, a 25 ton capacity metal tank with a metal platform was installed, one water spring and 33 water distribution collectors were constructed. Similarly, intra community roads in Uzunoba community (Khachmaz rayon) were in poor condition due to prolonged exploitation without adequate maintenance. As result of the implementation of this project, again with (partially in-kind) co-financing 6020 meter of intra community roads was rebuilt and different diameters of metal pipes were placed in several places for water crossings. In total, 1000 people living in the Uzunoba community benefited from this project.

Local Governance Assistance Public Union organised internship programs for youth in the framework of the **"Support to Rural Tourism"** project financed by the European Union. Six young people were given the chance to work as an **intern** for several months in a hotel in Shamakhi as cook (3), receptionist (1) and waiter (1). They were awarded certificates at the end of the internship program. To promote local tourism and strengthen the hospitality businesses in the İsmayilli region the project also helped establish a **Community Tourism Council (CTC)** consisting of community members. CTC will contribute to the development of tourism opportunities of the region in close cooperation with the involved rural communities.



On **27–31 July**, an expert mission on “**Monitoring Techniques for Land Management**” was organised within the framework of the EU TAIEX programme. The focus was on high-quality spatial infrastructure and efficient tools for spatial analysis with new information and communication technologies. Following the mission, the government of Azerbaijan is to study various experiences of EU countries on improving the legislation on land management and cadastre, digitisation of existing documents, and – ultimately – the establishment of an automated cadastre database.



To support the Government of Azerbaijan in the improvement of its system of agricultural subsidies, a **5-day TAIEX expert mission** took place with the participation of representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy and Industry, Ministry of Finance, Cabinet of Ministers and other state institutions responsible for the management of the State aid systems in agriculture on **7-11 September** in Baku. The aim was to provide information on the EU subsidy system to farmers under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and how the state

support system in EU Member States is designed in the different stages of agricultural development.

In July "**Power to Women**" a project partly funded by the EU and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation organised "*Be Entrepreneur*" training courses in Guba, Khachmaz, Ismailly and Gyanja regions. In each region the main notions of entrepreneurship were explained in a 2-days training. The training was held for women interested in entrepreneurship. The specific objective of the project is to improve the capacity of women in the rural areas to participate in both socio economic and political life and to play an active role in the decision making process.



## EDUCATION



**With the start of the academic year, an article on EU assistance in the education sector in Azerbaijan** by the Head of EU Delegation was published in a wide number of newspapers/sites on **7 September**. The article touched upon EU assistance to support the government to reform universities and vocational education schools and bring them closer to European standards and practices, as well as to fund civil society to increase its capacity and participation in the education sector, where it can build a dialogue between civil society, education authorities, business and social partners:

[http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/press\\_corner/all\\_news/news/2015/20150909\\_support\\_to\\_education\\_is\\_a\\_priority\\_area\\_for\\_future\\_eu\\_support\\_to\\_azerbaijan\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/press_corner/all_news/news/2015/20150909_support_to_education_is_a_priority_area_for_future_eu_support_to_azerbaijan_en.htm)

**TEMPUS project "Adaptation of the teaching activities of the Bologna process in the engineering studies for Azerbaijan"** was finalized on 23 September 2015 at a conference in Baku (duration 2011-2015, budget: 569,000.00 €). With the realization of this project Azerbaijan can introduce quality assurance methodology and instruments to its higher education institutions for the engineering studies. During the Closing Conference, the European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education issued certificates for three partner universities - Sumgait State University, Azerbaijan Technical University, Azerbaijan State University of Oil and Industry and accredited 6 Bachelor and 4 Master degree programs.



**Twinning project "Support to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan for further adherence of the higher education system to the European Higher Education Area (AZ-ad-EHEA)"** (duration 17 months, budget: €1.3 mln) started on **1 September**. It aims to enhance Azerbaijan's higher education system through its integration with the European Higher Education Area. The purpose of the project is to assist the Ministry of Education and other key institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan in adapting Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in high education in line with European standards and guidelines for quality assurance. The formal launch of the project is planned for **November**.

## SOCIAL PROTECTION



A new **Twinning project on “Development of social service provision in Azerbaijan”** (duration 24 months and budget of €1.3 million) started on 1 June 2015. The overall objective is to support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan in social inclusion provision for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. The kick-off meeting of the project was held on 29 July 2015.

From June 29 to July 14, experts from the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia (MoW) and the German Association for Social Security Policy and Research worked with their colleagues from the State Social Protection Fund on the elaboration of the Laws on the Funded Part of Labour Pensions and Private Pension Funds. The mission was carried out within the framework of the EU funded **Twinning project “Support to the State Social Protection Fund on the introduction of funded element within the insurance – pension system, establishment of non – state pension funds and development of legal framework for regulating their activity” (Latvia/Germany) (duration 18 months, budget 750 thousand EUR).**



The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population has developed a State Programme to strengthen the social protection of the aged for 2016-2020. To support the implementation of the State Program, between **27 and 31 July**, **TAIEX** organised an **expert mission** on Protection of Social Rights of Elderly People. Within this framework, General Inspector on social affairs from the French Ministry of Health and Social Affairs promoted the European framework in

social gerontology and social care of elderlies and presented the French system of social gerontology. The different tools used to evaluate elderly persons with a loss of autonomy and to determine their eligibility to financial (or other) benefits were broadly covered.

## CAPACITY BUILDING



The International Conference on Capacity Development during Public Administration Reforms was held on **July 9-10** within the **EU-funded** project “**Support to the Civil Service Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in implementation of the Institution Reform Plan within the comprehensive Institutional Building Programme**” implemented by UNDP.

The Conference dealt with four important topics vital for effective capacity building of civil servants:

- Regional platforms as a tool of the capacity development of civil servants
- Cultural change in civil service as a result of Public Administration Reforms
- Return on investment of capacity development of civil servants
- Establishment of the civil service training centers in the framework of PAR

The fifth Steering Committee (SC) meeting took place at the premises of the Ministry of Emergency Situation on **2 September 2015** of the **EU-funded Twinning Project "Support to the State Agency on Control over Safety in Construction (SACSC) of Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of transition to the EU construction standards"** (budget **0.9 million EUR, Germany/Latvia, duration 18 months**) aiming at ensuring the transition to the EU construction standards and at improving the safety and technical quality of constructions in the Republic of Azerbaijan.





Between **14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> August** a total of six Candidate Nomination/Registration Procedure seminars were conducted in cooperation with the **Central Election Commission**, with moderation of an international expert. 260 participants from all 125 Constituency Election Commissions (CoECs) attended the workshops that were held in Baku (2), Shirvan (2), Ganja (1), and Sheki (1). In addition, between **September 2-11**, 8 workshops on Dispute Resolution were conducted in Baku (3 events), Shirvan (2 events), Ganja (2 events), and Sheki (1 event). International expert moderated the discussions on the examination of complaints.

An EU TAIEX expert mission on “**Development of a Financial Programming Model**” was organised on 24–28 August. Bulgarian experts reviewed the data used in the existing macroeconomic forecasting model of the Ministry of Finance and made recommendations to improve analytical mechanisms and forecasting of the macroeconomic and financial variables. A further study visit to Bulgaria is planned with a view to further improve the model.

## OTHERS

### EUROVILLAGE

The third Eurovillage cultural festival – a large-scale one day open air public event showcasing the rich cultural diversity of Europe through food (including cooking demonstrations), music, dance, arts, pictures, and general information about EU and its Member States – took place in the scenic Old City of Baku on 19 September.

It became an extraordinary success in terms of outreach (around 20.000 visitors, roughly 3 times the number of people attending the 2014 edition of Eurovillage) and singularly positive feedback (direct as reported in a wide range of Azerbaijani, Russian and English language printed and online media and indirect via social and online media). The festival which was coordinated by the EU Delegation in close association with MS embassies beat even the most optimistic expectations.



Activity stands for the public to **'experience' Europe** were (a) European Song Karaoke Stand; (b) Cooking Demonstration; (c) Face Painting; (d) Photo booth; (e) 'EU Passport' for collecting stamps from EU MS booths and Activity Stands. Main stage hosted various performers and competitions such as magic show, pizza spinning show, quizzes by well-known local athletes, EU and music quizzes, ceremony of football signature for winners by Croatian football manager of Azerbaijan national football team, national dances, evening concert of Croatian band Clapa More and main guest of the event **Scottish band Peatbog Faeries** while the EU MS offered country-specific activities at their respective stands. Activities on the EU stand were a popcorn machine, an interactive questions board, a puzzle board, a voting station and the photo contest gallery. At the new feature of the event - **cooking demonstration**, the Embassies of Spain, Greece, France, Sweden and UK prepared their national food. The winners of the **photo contest "From Europe With Love"** were awarded at EV. The grand pris was 2 tickets to Paris, France.

A lot of **public photos and shares by users** can be found on an automatically generated Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Eurovillage-Icherisheher/163171597197190>

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