

Presentation of the DESPRO project to the Members of Parliament of Ukraine

DESPRO is the Swiss-Ukrainian Project for Decentralization Support in Ukraine financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by the Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development (Skat).

Main objectives of the project :

**Development of the decentralized approaches in public services provision, in particular, improvement of the public utility and social services (water supply) due to the higher level of involvement of the local communities and associations of citizens;*

**Promotion of integration of the decentralized services provision to the community model into the system of local authority;*

**Taking into account the experience and best practices obtained in the pilot regions at the development of the "national action plan" on decentralization*

DESPRO works on the national level, in Autonomous Republic Crimea and in Vinnytsia region.



Swiss-Ukrainian Project for Decentralization Support in Ukraine DESPRO was presented to the MPs of Ukraine at a sitting of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on State Construction and Local Self-governance.

The meeting of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on State Construction and Local Self-governance was carried out on October 14, 2009. Representatives of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Swiss-Ukrainian Project for Decentralization Support in Ukraine DESPRO, UNDP and others were invited to participate in co-operation.

The director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation Manuel Etter emphasized the individuality of approach to support the decentralization process in Ukraine in his speech: *"When we talk about support for the decentralization of public authorities in Ukraine, we do not thoughtlessly copy the Swiss model, but adjust it to Ukrainian realities, i.e. geography, history and mentality of its citizens, etc."*

Presentation of the Project for Decentralization Support in Ukraine DESPRO was carried out during the meeting. In addition to the basic goals and objectives of the project, Oksana Garnets, the Project Leader, informed the meeting parties about the establishment of sustainable dialogue and cooperation between the two regions - the Vinnytsia Oblast and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Cooperation in the form of a study visits allows participants to build positive working relationships, examine the progress and results of the local projects implementation, and assess the status, opportunities and prospects for the provision of water services on individual cases.

Study visit of the Vinnytsia region communities to the Autonomous Republic Crimea



Vinnytsia region community visited their Crimean partners on October 14-17, 2009. This trip was a "response" to the study visit of DESPRO partners from ARC to Vinnytsia region, which was held July 7 - 9, 2009.

During the visit the delegation of the Vinnytsia region was familiarized with the progress and results of the projects implementation in the framework of DESPRO competition in Bakhchisarai, Lenin and Nizhnegorsky rayons of the ARC. Crimeans willingly shared with partners their experience in effective cooperation between communities, authorities, local businesses structures in matters of improving the quality of services at the community level.

The study visit program included "field" trips to the communities and villages, meetings with the leadership of village and settlement councils, representatives of the rayon working groups, review of the results of the technical part of projects, presentations, discussions, etc.

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Certainly, such arrangements between DESPRO partner regions promote better implementation of the projects, create opportunities for further exchange of experience between communities at the rayon level, establish sustainable system of accumulation and exchange of knowledge and experience.

The warm hospitality of the receiving Crimean side did not leave indifferent any of the visitors from the Vinnytsia region. Study visit participants stressed the importance of communication between communities in the future, because they plan to continue further implementation of the projects in improvement of the social and household living conditions, betterment of the services quality.



Veronic Ullman's visit to Ukraine



Veronic Ullmann, the new Director of the Department for Cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe and CIS of the Foreign Ministry of Switzerland, visited the Vinnytsia region in the framework of the working visit to Ukraine on October 8, 2009.

Ms. Ullmann was familiarized with the projects implemented in the country by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, including the DESPRO project. She also met with the Vinnytsia region top officials and visited v.Suvorivske of the Tulchynskiy rayon where she had an opportunity to examine the implementation of local community projects within the DESPRO framework.

III International Investment Forum "The Future of Crimea"

III International Investment Forum "The Future of Crimea" was held on October 19 - 21, 2009 in Sudak.

This is the largest investment activity event in Crimea with more than 500 representatives of business and policy, investment experts, scientists from Ukraine, CIS countries and abroad.

Oksana Garnets, DESPRO Project Leader, took part in the work of the forum as well. Participants discussed the problems of development of Crimea, mechanisms and instruments of the investment activity in the region, directions of the post-crisis development of the financial market, the prospects for expansion of the regional cooperation, etc.



DESPRO plans activities for the next three years



The first project activity planning stage ended in late July, and the final session of the project activity planning was carried out on October 2 of the current year. DESPRO partners of different levels and project donors participate in both planning events.

The basic principles and activity areas of the Decentralization Support Project in Ukraine for the next three years were defined in the result of discussions, group discussions on modeling approaches to address the strategic objectives.

The project will continue its activities to support local initiatives in services provision to the population in a decentralized fashion, as well as cooperation with communities and authorities at various levels, supporting the territorial and administrative reform in Ukraine.

Among the major changes should be mentioned the geographical expansion of the project, increase in the number of local projects and areas of the decentralized public services provision to the population. This means that since 2010 the project will unfold in the Sumy region in addition to the Vinnytsia region and AR Crimea, as well as support not only water supply projects, but disposal of solid household waste in some rayons. Another important DESPRO component will be the system of accumulation and further promotion in the country of the good practices and experience gained by the partners of different levels in the process of the local development projects implementation.