



**ON 18 DECEMBER, THE CABINET OF  
MINISTERS ADOPTED THE DEVELOPMENT  
CO-OPERATION POLICY PLAN FOR 2008**

In 2008 bilateral projects in recipient states are expected to receive LVL 600,000. By comparison this year LVL 450,000 was allocated to these projects with growth of 14 % anticipated next year.

Individual funding is anticipated for Latvian embassies in recipient states which will utilise it for projects for which proposals will be submitted to the embassies.

Interested persons in Latvia will be able to submit their projects to the Republic of Latvia embassy in the relevant recipient state.

**GRANT PROJECT TENDER 2008**

Next year a tender process is planned for non-government organisations in which applicants for funding will be able to submit projects for activities in assistance recipient countries, within a set priority framework. Total funding comprising LVL 100,000 has been allocated.

**INFORMING THE PUBLIC ON  
DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION**

In order to continue informing the public on development co-operation and Latvia's contribution in this field, for the second year in succession, the Latvian Foreign Ministry is organising a grant project tender: *Communication Activities for the Education of the Latvian Public on Development Co-operation and Development Education*. Two priorities were set for the tender process: communication activities for development co-operation, and development education, in which tender applicants could submit projects. Total funding is LVL 43,000. *More information on the nature of the projects and projects which were successful in the tender process is available on [www.am.gov.lv](http://www.am.gov.lv)*

In 2008 it is planned to continue the informing of the public. Within the project framework it is planned to

establish a new development co-operation website; to prepare informative materials; to establish a database of experts; to undertake a public survey on development co-operation issues; to work together with the media actively, and to organise guest lectures for students as well as an essay contest for school pupils. It will be important next year to promote the participation of Latvian non-governmental organisations in international events.

**GRANT PROJECT TENDER PROCESS FOR  
DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION IN 2007**

This year the Development Co-operation Council supported 20 development co-operation projects having a total value of LVL 381,895.43. Funding allocated for the Grant project competition was LVL 264,500; however thanks to co-financing from the Canadian International Development Agency it has been possible to support more projects.

Four priorities were identified during the tender process:

- facilitation of reform in State institutions, the economy, as well as the promotion of the European and trans-Atlantic integration process,
- promotion of local government reform,
- promotion of the development of democratic and civil society,
- promotion of development in education, culture, social development, health, and environmental protection

More detailed information on the nature of the project and successfully tendered projects is available on [www.am.gov.lv](http://www.am.gov.lv)

**MEETING OF LATVIA-MOLDOVA JOINT  
COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT CO-  
OPERATION HELD IN MOLDOVA**

On 15 October in Chisinau, the second sitting was held of the Latvia-Moldova Joint Committee for Development Co-operation. Moldova is interested in promoting its regional development, development programme sustainability, attraction of investments, harmonisation of its national legislation with EU requirements, as well as the introduction of a development strategy for the State revenue service. Moldova indicated



interest in acquiring Latvia's experience in developing a mechanism for implementing, monitoring, and evaluating a national plan. The possibility of Moldova receiving consultations from Latvia on this issue was discussed.

#### **SAEIMA DISCUSSES DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION**

On 22 October, in the *Saeima* (Parliament of Latvia), the *Debates on Latvia's Role in Development Co-Operation* took place. Among the issues analysed were the Millennium Development Goals, Latvia's challenges, opportunities, and achievements in development co-operation policy, on the eve of adopting the state budget, and European Development Day. The debates were officially opened by the Chairman of the *Saeima* Foreign Affairs Committee Andris Berzins, who emphasised the need to increase funding for development co-operation. Until now this has significantly lagged behind the amounts allocated by Estonia and Lithuania.

Overall, the debates in the Red Hall of the *Saeima* demonstrated the increasing importance being allocated to development co-operation in Latvia. The debates also characterised topical tasks, such as the achievement of funding growth and facilitating the informing of the public.

#### **PRIORITY STATES**

Whilst seeking to increase the effectiveness of assistance, Latvia will not increase the number of priority states in 2008. The following will continue to be regarded as priority states: Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, and in individual projects, the Republic of Belarus. A major element in drafting the 2008 Plan is the European Neighbour Policy which includes Latvia's priority region. In addition to the states referred to, Afghanistan must be mentioned, where a post-conflict reconstruction project is to be implemented.

In order to promote effectiveness and achieve usefulness from the assistance, Latvia's support will be

continued in several areas of significance to recipient states, for example, the professionalisation of the food and veterinary area, support to local government development etc.

#### **LATVIA PROVIDES GREATEST MATERIAL SUPPORT TO DATE IN DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION PROJECT**

In October this year, Latvia presented Moldova with two renovated cutters, equipped for border guarding duties. Moldova expressed thanks for Latvia's gift, noting that the cutters will be of great assistance in combating illegal border crossings, smuggling and other border offences.

The strengthening of the Moldova Border Guard is significant for the entire EU, as illegal goods from Moldova are a threat to the economy of European states.

#### **LATVIAN REPRESENTATIVES PARTICIPATE IN EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT DAY IN LISBON**

From 7 to 9 November, the Portuguese capital of Lisbon hosted the second "European Development Day" (EDD). A delegation from Latvia took part in the event, comprising of representatives from the state, as well as private, academic and NGO sectors. On this occasion the main theme of the EDD was the effect of climate change on developing countries, and how climate change influences is a factor in the increase in poverty, migration and development overall.

Taking part in the opening ceremony were EU President Jose Manuel Barroso, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and the European Development Commissioner Louis Michel.

As part of the EDD programme there was a 3-day exhibition dedicated to climate change and development issues. Latvia participated with its own stand, as part of the joint Nordic and Baltic states display. On the stand, Latvia presented its activities in assistance recipient states. Booklets on the main theme were also available. There was a screening of a film about Latvia's contribution to development co-operation. Visitors generally showed interest in the Latvian stand, and the film and booklets. The Latvian stand was also visited by the European Development Commissioner, who expressed his intention to visit Latvia next year.



**SAEIMA (PARLIAMENT OF LATVIA)  
REVIEWS DRAFT LAW ON INTERNATIONAL  
ASSISTANCE**

On 5 November, a sitting of the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Draft Law on International Assistance. The new law determines the planning and implementation of development co-operation policy, as well as the participation by Latvian experts in international missions. The aim of the draft law is to ensure effective and transparent planning and implementation of assistance provided by the Republic of Latvia.

On 12 December, the draft law was adopted by the *Saeima* Foreign Affairs Committee and sent for its First Reading in the Plenary Sitting.

**LATVIAN-FINANCED DEVELOPMENT CO-  
OPERATION PROJECT TO BE IMPLEMENTED  
IN AFGHANISTAN**

On 6 December, in Kabul, Afghanistan, the Latvian Foreign Ministry and the French non-governmental organisation "Technical Cooperation and Development Agency" signed an agreement on the implementation of a Latvian-financed development co-operation project in Afghanistan.

The project proposes the creation of a springwater collection and reticulation system in three villages of the Almara region in Sayed Koyan; where Latvian armed forces personnel are also stationed.

With the implementation of this project, drinking water will be supplied to approximately 4800 residents of these villages. Drinking water will also be directly provided to the local school, supplying around 1300 students. The project should take five months to implement.

**INFORMATION PREPARED BY:**

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Total cost of implementing the project is USD 58 044, of which USD 50 000 is to be allocated from the Foreign Ministry Development Co-operation Budget and the remainder to be provided from local resources; with village residents participating in implementation of the project.

This is Latvia's first development co-operation project in Afghanistan and demonstrates that Latvia can also provide assistance outside the traditional target group of development co-operation countries. Implementation of the project will take place in very complex conditions: in a country in which a military operation is taking place and where, at the moment, no Latvian non-governmental organisation has begun operations. Implementation of the project is possible thanks to development co-operation budget funding and an integrated approach in the work between diplomats and National Armed Forces personnel.

The Foreign Ministry plans to continue work on implementing development projects in Afghanistan again next year.