

EaPies

Welcome to March edition of EaP Newsletter! You'll find valuable news related to each EaP countries and their sources below when more information is needed.

We continue as each month, we post a word or a phrase to increase your knowledge from the EaP region. This month's word is 'Europe'. See How Europe is shaped and sounded in EaP region!

Armenia (Հայաստան - Hayastan): Եվրոպա - Yevropa

Azerbaijan (Azərbaycan): Avropa

Belarus (Беларусь - Bielarus): Еўропа - Jeŭropa

Georgia (საქართველო - Sakartvelo): ევროპის - Evropis

Ukraine (Україна - Ukrayina): Європа - Yevropa

Moldova: Europa

Armenia

Euronest(European Union (EU) + Eastern Partnership Countries) parliamentary assembly in session in Yerevan

The Fourth Plenary Session of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly took place in Yerevan between 17th and 18th March in Armenia's National Assembly.

Euronest (European Union (EU) + Eastern Partnership Countries) is a parliamentary forum to promote political association and further economic integration between the European Union and the Eastern European Partners. The Euronest Parliamentary Assembly consists of the European Parliament delegation and delegations from the Eastern European Partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

The government of Armenia had been in negotiation with the European Union for almost three years to sign the Association Agreement, however, in September 2013, President Sargsyan unexpectedly decided that the country would instead join the Russian-led Customs Union following a trip to Moscow.

On January 2, 2015, Armenia became an official member-state of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which includes the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Belarus with Kyrgyzstan expected to join in May.

On March 17, Armenia's President Serzh Sargsyan addressed the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly. He stressed the importance of Armenia's relationship with the European Union in a variety of sectors and said that although Armenia has joined the EEU, he felt it was possible to accommodate both foreign policy tracks.

Click [here](#) for more information!

Victoria Horiachko

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan becomes EQAR member



The Project's News

Coming soon: Eastern Partnership Youth Convention

In cooperation with AEGEE-Kraków, our project is organizing an Eastern Partnership Youth Convention between May 20th and 24th. The aim is bringing together young people from EaP and EU countries in order to exchange thoughts about current developments in that region and the relations between the EU and its Eastern neighbours. Further information coming soon!

EaP Locals' News

AEGEE-Grodno and AEGEE-Minsk organise together a Summer University

This one is a Travel Summer University (TSU) that has as thematic categories History and Locale culture. Its aim is to discover Belarus through adventure outdoor activities and historical, culture workshops. Participants will increase knowledge about history, local culture of Eastern Europe, Belarusian dances, learn how to cook traditional drinks and food.

It includes as well visits to 4 different Belarusian cities: Minsk, Naroch, Lidia and Grodno.

Support for youth volunteering

In April, AEGEE-Chişinău will host the second

Azerbaijan has been elected a member of the General Assembly of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) at the organization's meeting in Riga, Latvia. EQAR president Andreas Orphanides hailed Azerbaijan's rapid development and educational reforms conducted in the country. He also touched upon the first European Games to be held in Baku, describing it as a "manifestation of Azerbaijan's increasing influence".

Click [here](#) for more information!

Cracking Art Group and Semeni Int'l Art exhibition open at Heydar Aliyev Center

Artworks by Europe's famous Cracking Art Group and Semeni International Art Exhibition have opened at the Heydar Aliyev Center. Vice-president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva attended the opening of the exhibition. Cracking Art Group was established by six European painters Renzo Nucara, Marco Veronese, Kicco, French Alex Angi, Belgian Carlo Rizzetti and William Sweetlove in 1993. This movement is aimed at changing people's imagination about the modern art and creating novelties in art by implementing innovative methods in social and environmental directions.

[Check](#) the news for more information!

Orkhan Babayev

Belarus

High-ranking EU official meets with Belarusian civil society activists

Helga Schmid, deputy secretary general at the European External Action Service, met with representatives of Belarus' civil society in Minsk on Tuesday.

The meeting lasted only about 20 minutes, as Ms. Schmid's [talks](#) with Belarusian Foreign Minister Uladzimir Makey and then Alyaksandr Lukashenka had taken longer than planned, Valyantsin Stefanovich, deputy chairman of the Vyasna Human Rights Center, told [BelaPAN](#).

Ms. Schmid was accompanied by Gunnar Wiegand, director for Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Regional Cooperation and the OSCE at the European External Action Service, and Maira Mora, head of the European Union's Delegation to Belarus.

The meeting also featured representatives of the Belarusian Helsinki Committee, the Vyasna Human Rights Center, the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies, International Consortium EuroBelarus, a prisoner rights group called Platform Innovation, the Belarusian Association of Journalists, and the Assembly of Pro-Democratic Non-Governmental Organizations.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Schmid said that she had met with a number of Belarusian government officials. The subjects under discussion reportedly included the crisis in Ukraine, relations between the EU and Belarus and the human rights situation in Belarus.

More info needed, click [here](#)!

Ferran H. Casamitjana

Georgia

edition of its amazing event "Projects for YOUth". The aim is to support young people who are interested in volunteering. AEGEE-Chişinău will inform pupils and students about different NGOs and volunteering opportunities both on the local and on the international level in order to enhance youth participation.

Summer University - Unlock Your Full Potential

Aegee- Tbilisi organizes a travelling summer university from the 11th until the 25th of July. You will meet in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia and from there you will travel to Kazbegi, a small town of north-eastern Georgia. Afterwards you will visit Mestia, a highland small town in the northwest, and Batumi, a seaside city on the coast of the Black Sea. The trip will end in Uplistsikhe, one of the oldest urban settlements in Georgia.

During your adventure you will see breath-taking sights and the wild nature, you will experience an exotic culture, you will eat delicious food and many more great things!

Check [here](#) for more info about the SU!

TSU by AEGEE-Kharkiv, AEGEE-Dnipropetrovsk, AEGEE-Kyiv, AEGEE-Ivano-Frankivsk, AEGEE-Lviv: Across the Universe

Just like legendary The Beatles sing «Come together!», 5 Ukrainian antennas inviting you to experience the journey of your life «Across the Universe»!

United in this historical and life changing moment for our country, organisers are going to show their participants all the differences and similarities of different parts of Ukraine in art, language, music, history and culture. Traveling across all Ukraine, seeing

Evaluating EU Policies in South Caucasus

The European Commission has launched a consultation to review its European Neighbourhood Policy, including its policy towards the Eastern Partnership countries. The aim is to review the principles on which the policy is based as well as its scope and how its instruments should be used.

The article focuses on the three South Caucasus countries Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The main accomplishment has been the conclusion of the Association Agreement including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas.

Although the EU wants the Caucasus to be stable and democratic, it's influence is quite little since a much more substantial engagement on security challenges and a clear determination for these countries is missing.

Therefore the EU could support reforming the security sector of those countries for instance the police or border guards or the judicial system. Moreover the link between the societies of the EU and the South Caucasus should be increased by a broader societal integration.

Click [here](#) for more information!

EU: Moscow's Treaty with Tskhinvali 'Goes Against Efforts to Strengthen Stability'

On the 18th of March Russia and Georgia's breakaway region South Ossetia signed a treaty on alliance and integration (more about the treaty: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=28143>). On the same day the 31st round of the Geneva International Discussions took place, which involve delegates from Georgia, Russia, the United States, Tskhinvali and Sokhumi and which are chaired by envoys of the EU, UN and OSCE. The talks were launched after the war in 2008 and involve the discussion of security and humanitarian issues.

EU foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, stated that "like previous agreements signed between the Russian Federation and the two Georgian breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, this 'treaty' clearly violates Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, principles of international law and the international commitments taken by the Russian Federation and has no legal standing". Tbilisi condemned the treaty as an actual annexation of the occupied region of South Ossetia.

[Click](#) for more information!

Theresa Leppert

East and West of the country, participants will feel the real spirit they always were curious about!

Dates: 3-19 July

Check [here](#) for more info about the TSU!

Ukraine

U.S. paratroopers to train 900 Ukrainian soldiers starting April 20

Interior Minister Arsen Avakov has announced American paratroopers will train some 900 Ukrainian servicemen in a series of training sessions that will kick off on April 20. The training will take place at Yavoriv military base in Lviv Oblast in western Ukraine.

Ukrainian troops will be trained by the 173rd Airborne brigade, a military unit that is part of U.S. European troops and is based in Italy. Also known as Sky Soldiers, the brigade has taken part in many operations in Afghanistan and Iraq in recent years, according to its

official website.

Cabinet and the National Guard have “finished all preparatory work” for the three waves of trainings each lasting eight weeks. Some 300 Ukrainian soldiers will be taking part in each of the waves, and they will be followed by joint war games. Azov, Kulchytsky, Jaguar, and Omega Battalions will be taking part in these exercises, as well as “other units from Kyiv, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhya, Odesa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Vinnytsia.”

The U.S. pledged \$200 million worth of non-lethal aid for Ukraine, which will be used to provide radios, anti-mortar radars, night vision devices, military ambulances and medical supplies. The first batch of American four-wheel-drive military vehicles called Humvees arrived to Ukraine last week. U.S. President Barack Obama has resisted increasing calls from both parties in Congress to provide lethal aid for Ukraine, though.

Click for [info-1](#) and [info-2!](#)

Etibar Aliyev

Moldova

Gagauzia: Elections cause for new concerns

Moldova's autonomous region Gagauzia has voted for a new governor: Irina Vlah, pro-Russian candidate, won with 51 percent of the vote.

Gagauzia, which is populated mostly by ethnic Turk Christians, is known to maintain close relations with Russia. In a referendum last year, an overwhelming majority of Gagauz people chose to strengthen ties with Moscow. This outcome caused conflicts with the pro-European government in Chişinău. Many people fear, Gagauzia could follow the example of Transnistria and break away from Moldova.

Surprisingly, new governor Irina Vlah said right after the election: “We see our future in the Republic of Moldova.”. But this statement should not give too much hope for political stability. Vlah demands more financial support from Chişinău, which is unlikely to happen regarding the fact that Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe. “Her proposal sounds more like blackmail than genuine political dialogue”, says journalist Robin Schwartz. One can expect that Moscow will keep on supporting Gagauzia. If Russia strengthens the separatist ideas in the autonomous region, will Gagauzia be the next Transnistria or even the next Crimea?

Click for [info-1](#) and [info-2!](#)

Esther Hillmer

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