Beat: News

Eastern Partnership

Renewed agenda for recovery

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USPA NEWS - Eastern Partnership: a renewed agenda for recovery, resilience and reform underpinned by an Economic and Investment plan

Today the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy outlined a proposal on how to take forward priorities for cooperation with our Eastern partners in the years to come. This agenda is based on the five long-term objectives, with resilience at its core, as defined for the future of the Eastern Partnership in March 2020. It will be underpinned by a €2.3 billion Economic and Investment plan in grants, blending and guarantees, with a potential to mobilise up to €17 billion in public and private investments. This proposal will contribute to the discussions on the future Eastern Partnership policy including at the Eastern Partnership summit planned for December 2021.

The comprehensive agenda aims at increasing trade, growth and jobs, investing in connectivity, strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law, supporting the green and digital transitions, and promoting fair, gender-equal and inclusive societies.

High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell said: “The Eastern Partnership remains high on the European Union's agenda. We want to shape an agenda that responds to the unprecedented challenges – and opportunities – of today, while making it fit for the future. At the heart of our work will be promoting democracy, good governance and the rule of law, which are so crucial to unlock positive, concrete results in our cooperation. This includes Belarus, where we want to continue to support the people through our Eastern Partnership framework.”

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi said:“We are putting forward an ambitious Economic and Investment Plan that will help stimulate jobs and growth and bring prosperity to the Eastern Partnership region. The Plan includes country flagships for all Eastern Partners, including support for a future democratic Belarus. This new agenda will support socioeconomic recovery after COVID-19 pandemic, strengthen economic relations and build trade routes between the EU and partner countries.”

The comprehensive agenda focusing on recovery, resilience and reform, includes selection of the top ten targets for 2025 with clear commitments in all the priority areas of cooperation. They encompass areas like the additional support to 500,000 SMEs, build or upgrade 3.000 km of priority roads and railways in line with EU standards address hybrid and cyber threats, fight corruption, reduce energy consumption by at least 20% in 250,000 households, improve access to safe water services and air quality, increased access to high-speed internet in 80% of households, assistance to vaccinate health workers, additional support to civil society and independent media, mobility opportunities for 70,000 students, researchers and young people.

The new agenda, also proposes a revision of the EaP multilateral architecture to adjust the framework to the new priorities and make it fully fit for purpose.

The regional economic and investment plan will support post – COVID socio-economic recovery and long-term resilience, taking into account the ‘build back better' agenda. The plan outlines priority investments and defines a set of flagship initiatives, which have been jointly identified with the partner countries, in view of their priorities, needs and ambitions.

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