



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DELEGATION TO
GEORGIA AND ARMENIA

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OVERVIEW OF EC ASSISTANCE IN ABKHAZIA & SOUTH OSSETIA

The European Commission (EC) supports the peaceful resolution of the internal conflicts on the basis for meaningful negotiations and a continuing search for a political settlement. However, the EC is not directly involved in the political side of conflict resolution and prevention in Abkhazia or South Ossetia. Instead, the EC actively supports various economic rehabilitation and confidence building activities in the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetian zones of conflict as an important measure to build greater trust between the conflict-affected populations.

The EC funded projects aim improving living conditions of the population affected by the conflict whilst creating conditions for the return of internally displaced persons, as well as facilitating progress in a constructive dialogue between opposing social groups. The EC is the largest donor in the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The ongoing and planned programmes in Abkhazia and South Ossetia that are financed by the EC include humanitarian assistance, economic rehabilitation, confidence building, democratisation and human rights projects. Below is an overview of ongoing, completed and planned EC projects in Abkhazia:

ABKHAZIA - ONGOING PROJECTS

1. EC Economic Rehabilitation Programmes for Georgia/Abkhazia (3.96m Euros total, start Dec 2005 & Jan 2007)

The EC has launched a comprehensive rehabilitation programme for the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone (e.g. the districts of Gali, Ochamchira, and Tkvarcheli in the east of Abkhazia, as well as the Zugdidi district on the Georgian side of the cease fire line) in order to improve living conditions of both ethnic Georgian and Abkhaz communities.

The objective of the rehabilitation programmes of the European Union for Abkhazia is to support rehabilitation and reconstruction operations in the conflict zones that would create the right conditions for economic reconstruction and the safe and dignified repatriation of refugees and displaced persons. UNOMIG and UNDP will be the main implementation partners of these programmes. This rehabilitation programme is divided into two separate phases and aims to provide for a linkage between the need for relief and development aid.

First EC Rehabilitation programme for Georgia/Abkhazia (1.98 m Euros, 24-36 months, start Dec 2005)

The first phase of the EC Rehabilitation programme includes the following components:

- Electricity (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli, Zugdidi – UNOMIG, UNDP);
- Public health (hospital refurbishment) and basic services (i.e. water, sewage & waste management) (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli and Zugdidi – UNOMIG, UNDP);
- Local agricultural development (Gali, Ochamchira, Tkvarcheli and Zugdidi - UNDP)

A description of this first phase rehabilitation programme for Georgia/Abkhazia can be found on the EC Delegation website

Second EC Economic Rehabilitation Programmes for Georgia/Abkhazia II (1.77m Euros, 12-24m, start Jan 2007)

The EC has launched a second phase of its comprehensive rehabilitation programme for the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone, which focuses on further rehabilitation works on the Enguri Hydro-power plant and will be implemented in parallel with the first phase. EBRD as well as UNOMIG and UNDP will be the implementation partners of this programme.

The second phase programme will complement the first phase with the following components:

- Further EC support to repairs at the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) in cooperation with the EBRD; Such a rehabilitation programme would be a follow-up on the EC financed rehabilitation projects at Enguri HPP of 9.4 million Euros that were completed in spring 2006 (Enguri HPP – EBRD, 1,57m Euros)
- Civilian police activities (Zugdidi – UNOMIG, 90,000 Euros)
- Enguri Shuttle Bus (Enguri Bridge at ceasefire line – UNOMIG, 20,000 Euros), and
- Information Sharing Centre (Sukhumi – UNDP, 90,000 Euros)

A description of this second phase rehabilitation programme for Georgia/Abkhazia can be found on the Delegation website

2. EIDHR micro projects - call for Abkhazia (0.2m Euros, start June 2005)

Within the Programme European Initiative for Democracy and Human rights (EIDHR) the EC is supporting two projects of local NGOs in Abkhazia in the area of (1) promotion and protection of rights of vulnerable people and minorities, and (2) the monitoring of court cases and legal education of the judiciary in Abkhazia:

- Foundation Civic Initiative of Human Beings for the Future – “Monitoring of cases in court and legal education of representatives of the legal system in Abkhazia” (60,000 Euros, 24m)
- Association of Women of Abkhazia-“Promotion & Protection of Rights of Vulnerable Groups” (47.760Euros, 36m)

A description of these EIDHR projects can be found on the Delegation website

3. Decentralised Cooperation (0.95m Euros, start January/February 2006)

The EC rehabilitation programme will only address the needs outside the direct conflict zone. The Decentralised Cooperation initiative plans to complement rehabilitation intervention by extending the geographical location of the EC rehabilitation and confidence/capacity building activities to all regions of Abkhazia. Under Decentralised Cooperation activities similar to those of the rehabilitation programme will be introduced outside the conflict zone, e.g. in Sukhumi and west Abkhazia. The Decentralised Cooperation projects will be implemented by local NGOs, which may cooperate in partnership with international NGOs. The main project components for Abkhazia will be:

- Economic rehabilitation: community-based income generation activities in Abkhazia;
- Local NGO confidence and capacity building activities (universities, media, youth, disabled and women organisations, etc.)

The Decentralised Cooperation Programme includes the following projects, which started in Jan/Feb 2006:

- Danish Refugee council - Economic rehabilitation in Western Abkhazia, (97,000 Euros, 12m)
- Accion Contra El Hambre - Community-based income generation programme in Gudauta District - West Abkhazia (99,940 Euros, 12m)
- World Vision – Business and management skills for Abkhazia (100,000, 24m)
- Association of Women in Abkhazia – Cooperation of civil society with local authorities in the sphere of human rights and rights of women (50,000 Euros, 24m)
- Union of Business Women of Abkhazia – Tools of support of development of women business -. Creation of business-incubators (49,695 Euros, 24m)
- Article 19 – International Centre Against Censorship – Building Capacity for Good Municipal Governance in Abkhazia – with a focus on freedom of information and women's issues in Sukhum, Gudauta and Tkvarchali districts (97,000 Euros, 24m)
- Sukhum Media Club – Cooperation of civil society with local authorities in the sphere of human rights and rights of women (35,197 Euros, 24m)
- Centre for Humanitarian Programmes – Stimulating Cooperation between Civil Society and Local Government and Self-Government Structures for Effective Problem Solving on a Local Level (99,734 Euros, 24m)
- Civic Society Development Centre – Strengthening of a civil society, development of opportunities for Abkhazian NGO in the field of Human rights (45,821 Euros, 36m)
- Sukhum Youth House – Youth Initiative for the Future (89, 997 Euros, 36m)
- Association "Inva-Sodeistvie" - All different – All equal (95, 625 Euros, 24m)

An overview of these Decentralised Cooperation projects can be found on the Delegation website.

4. ECHO Humanitarian aid programme (2m Euros Nov 2006-Nov 2007)

ECHO is financing humanitarian aid/recovery programmes in Western Georgia which aim at improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable households in Abkhazia (local population and returnees) and Samegrelo (IDPs). The following projects are currently supported.

- ICRC : Economic assistance programme (food aid and food security, income generation) - Abkhazia mainly, 500,000 Euros, 11/06-10/07 (2,000 beneficiaries in Abkhazia).
- Accion contra el Hambre : Food security, income-generation programmes - Abkhazia, 290,000 Euros, 12/06-11/07 280 beneficiary households (1,100 people)
- Danish Refugee Council : Shelter rehabilitation and income-generation programmes - Abkhazia, Samegrelo, 600,000 Euros, 12/06-11/07 (1,200 beneficiaries in Abkhazia, 800 in Samegrelo)
- Première Urgence : Food security, income-generation programmes - Abkhazia, 602,140 Euros, 12/06-10/07 (550 beneficiary households/2,200 people)

5. Mine Action Abkhazia (0.5m Euros, start October 2006)

The EC supports the HALO Trust to complete the ongoing mine action programme for Georgia/Abkhazia. The HALO Trust is a humanitarian demining NGO which is implementing a comprehensive mine clearance programme in Abkhazia. Upon completion of this demining programme before the end of Abkhazia is expected to be declared mine-impact free.

6. Mine Ban Treaty advocacy (0.5m Euros, start October 2006)

In an overall objective to secure an anti-personnel mine-free South Caucasus, the EC also supports a project by the international NGO 'Geneva Call' which aims at engaging non-state actors in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabagh to ban such mines.

ABKHAZIA - COMPLETED PROJECTS

7. Rehabilitation projects of the Enguri Hydro-Power Plant (9.4m total, completed early 2006)

The EC has granted 9.4 million Euros to Georgia for urgent repairs at the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) for two projects to replace the stoplog at the arch dam on the Georgian side and replace one of the generators of the power station at the Abkhaz side. These rehabilitation projects were confidence building measures.

1a. Rehabilitation of the stoplog and its hoisting system at Enguri arch dam – Samegrelo (4.4m Euros, finished end 2005)

The first project supported the rehabilitation of the Arch Dam of the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) through the replacement of the stoplog and its hoisting system at the arch dam of the Enguri HPP located in Upper-Samegrelo region.

The original stoplog sank during an accident in 1994. A new stoplog was needed for the refurbishment of the valve gates of the four operational low-level outlets of the Enguri arch dam, which are in seriously deteriorating condition and leaking water from the reservoir. Project is supervised by Engurhesi and implemented by DSD Dillinger Stahlbau. The works were completed in December 2005 and the final testing was finalised in July 2006. The public inauguration was held on 20 October 2006 to mark the completion of the programme.

1b. Rehabilitation of generator No.3 of the Enguri HPP power station – Abkhazia (5m Euros, finished early 2006)

The second project supported the rehabilitation of the Enguri Hydro Power Plant (HPP) through the replacement of one of the five generators (Unit #3) of the Power station of the Enguri HPP as located in the Upper-Gali region in Abkhazia. The works included procurement of a new generator and implementation of electro-mechanical works. Once this new generator is operational it would add a maximum capacity of 260Mw to Enguri Hydropower Plant, which could provide for 10% of Georgia's entire electricity supply. The project was managed by the EBRD and implemented by Voith Siemens. The works on the new turbine Unit 3 were completed in April 2006 when the turbine was switched on. After the reopening of the Enguri HPP following temporary closure for works on the tunnel the final public ceremony was held on 20 October 2006.

An overview of the EC rehabilitation projects at Enguri HPP can be found on the Delegation website.

7. ECHO Humanitarian aid programme (2m Euros from Oct 2005-Oct 2006)

ECHO has supported humanitarian assistance programmes to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable households in Abkhazia and the rest of Western Georgia with the following projects:

- ICRC : Humanitarian relief and income-generation programme - Abkhazia, Western Georgia, 700,000 Euros, 10/05-03/06
- Accion contra el Hambre : Food security, income-generation programme - Abkhazia, Samegrelo, 290,000 Euros, 10/05-10/06
- Première Urgence : Food security programme - Abkhazia, 347,000 Euros, 10/05-10/06
- Danish Refugee Council : Shelter assistance - Abkhazia, Samegrelo, Imereti, 363,000 Euros, 04/06-11/06
- Médecins du Monde : Reproductive health in Samegrelo region, 300,000 Euros, 12/05-11/06

8. ECHO Humanitarian aid programme (4m Euros, Jul 2004- Oct 2005)

ECHO has supported humanitarian assistance programmes to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable households in Abkhazia and the rest of Western Georgia with the following projects:

- ICRC : Humanitarian relief programme - Abkhazia, Western Georgia, 1,5m Euros, 07/04-03/05
- Accion Contra el Hambre : Food for Work Programme - Abkhazia, Samegrelo, 100,000 Euros, 09/04-06/05
- Food security, income generation programme - Abkhazia, Samegrelo, 500,000 Euros, 10/04-09/05
- Première Urgence : Food security, income-generation projects - Abkhazia, 340,000 Euros, 10/04-09/05
- Danish Refugee Council : Rehabilitation of collective centres in Georgia (Tskhaltubo district), 210,000 Euros and 310,000 Euros, 08/04-09/05
- ALISEI : Rehabilitation of collective centres and schools in Georgia (Rustavi, Tbilisi), 500,000 Euros and 200,000 Euros, 08/04-10/05
- Médecins du Monde : Reproductive health in Samegrelo region, 540,000 Euros, 09/04-09/05

9. RRM Confidence building Abkhazia (2x0.3m Euros, 2x6 months, until August 2005)

Under the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) two confidence building activities were implemented. Firstly, a project with International Alert (IA) included a series of joint confidence building activities with Georgian/Abkhaz civic society leaders. The activities have focused on grass roots security, divisive history, a needs assessment, and media activities. Secondly, a project of Conciliation Resources (RC) combined components on study visits to Northern Ireland with expert visits to Tbilisi and Georgian-Abkhaz dialogue workshops in the style of the Schailing process.

The European Commission is currently the major donor in Abkhazia. Since 1997 the EC has allocated about 25 million Euros of assistance to Abkhazia. During the period 1993-2003, Georgia has received 98,2m Euros through ECHO in emergency relief aimed at overcoming the effects of the civil war and the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

SOUTH-OSSETIA – COMPLETED AND ONGOING PROJECTS

1. Economic Rehabilitation Programme in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict, Phase (7.5m Euros, ongoing since 1998 to date)

Since 1998 the EC has been funding economic rehabilitation programmes in South Ossetia with the first objective to support the efforts of the Georgian Government to settle the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. The EC rehabilitation programmes in South Ossetia, with a total EC allocation to date of 7,5 million Euros, promote the improvement of the living conditions of the local and returning population and re-start of economic activity in the region as an essential instrument in creating the necessary preconditions for settlement of the peace process.

1b -First Phase EC Rehabilitation programme (3.5 Euros, implemented 1998-2001)

The first phase of the EC Rehabilitation programme included the following projects:

- Rehabilitation of drinkable water supply network (Edisi pipe, Dsomach pipe, Tskhinvali chlorination station);
- Rehabilitation of schools in Java, Kheiti and Tamarasheni;
- Rehabilitation of the Kekhvi Dam (irrigation);
- Rehabilitation of the electricity network in Tskhinvali region;
- Rehabilitation of establishment of three cooperatives for agriculture.

1b -Second Phase EC Rehabilitation programme (1.5 Euros, implemented 2001-2002)

The first phase of the EC Rehabilitation programme included projects on the rehabilitation of transport and energy infrastructure:

- Rehabilitation of the railway link Gori – Tskhinvali;
- Rehabilitation of the railway station in Tskhinvali;
- Rehabilitation of the gas network within Tskhinvali;
- Rehabilitation of the electricity network in Tskhinvali region (Vardnilesi power station);

1c – Third Phase EC Rehabilitation Programme (2.5m Euros, 27 months, ongoing until July 2007)

The third the EC funded rehabilitation programme is managed by the OSCE and implemented by UNDP and UNHCR. This programme consists of three components:

- Rehabilitation of basic infrastructures in support to the resident communities (with involvement of UNDP in the implementation). These include the following projects:
 - Gas distribution network in Tskhinvali (70,000 Euros);
 - Water distribution network in Tskhinvali (80,000 Euros);
 - Supply and installation of electricity meters and transformers in Tskhinvali (80,000 Euros);
 - Local waste management project (EUR 87,000 Euros);
 - Water pump in Kemerti (35,000 Euro Euros);
 - Edisi-Tskhinvali water pipe (60,000 Euros);
 - Connection of Avnevi and Tamarasheni-Kekhvi to gas distribution network (180,000 Euros);
 - Completion of the Edisi-2 hydropower plant (510,000 Euros);
 - Completion of previous EC funded school renovation projects (62.900 Euros);
- Rehabilitation of basic infrastructures to complement the shelter assistance foreseen in the first part (with involvement of both UNDP and UNHCR in the implementation)
- Basic shelter assistance and repatriation kits to returnees and internally displaced persons (with involvement of UNHCR in the implementation)

2. Support to the Joint Control Commission for South Ossetia (140,000 Euros, ongoing-Jul2007)

The EC is since 2001 assisting the Georgian and South Ossetian sides with financial support to the Joint Control Commission (JCC) related-activities through an EU grant to OSCE. The JCC is a quadripartite body, including the Georgian and Ossetian sides (the parties in the conflict), Russia and North-Ossetia, that addresses issues related to Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

3. RRM Confidence building South Ossetia (155,000 Euros, 6 months, Feb-Jul 2005)

Under the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) a third confidence building activity has been implemented concerning South Ossetia. This project with the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) has promoted confidence building between Georgia and South Ossetia through a dialogue to develop a basis for transforming the recent crisis into a political dialogue leading eventually to political agreement between the two sides.

4. Support to the South Ossetia Needs Assessment Study (50,000 Euros, Nov 2005-March2006)

The EC has co-financed the OSCE-led needs assessment study for South Ossetia with contribution of 50,000 Euros. This joint-donor needs assessment study has started in October 2005. Its aim was to provide the JCC and the donor community with an appraisal of infrastructural and economic development needs for potential further project assistance in the Georgian/Ossetian conflict zone.

SOUTH-OSSETIA – PLANNED PROJECTS

5. Further rehabilitation/confidence building actions (2m Euros, autumn 2006)

The EC has allocated 2 million Euros for further rehabilitation activities under an OSCE-led multi-donor programme in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone, following the donor conference in Brussels and the needs assessment study. The EC is likely to focus on energy and water projects under this new rehabilitation programme.

The European Commission is currently the major donor in South Ossetia. The EC assistance programmes to South Ossetia amount almost 8 million Euros.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)

1. Decentralised Cooperation 2005 (500,000 Euros, call for proposals June-August 2006, start early 2007)

The EC plans to launch a new Decentralised Cooperation programme to support NGO activities that address the needs of persons who are internally displaced as a result of the regional conflicts in Georgia. This programme will have the following priorities for cooperation on IDP issues: (1) Capacity building of NGOs representing IDPs or working on IDP issues; (2) Promotion of a social and policy dialogue on IDP issues between civil society and the government (including local authorities); (3) Promotion of the rights of IDPs and their integration into the society in Georgia through the support to initiatives responding to the social and economic needs of the IDP population. A call for proposals was held June-August 2006. Contracts were signed in December 2006 and projects started by early 2007.

- Union "Sachino": IDPs Rights Protection and Promotion in Imereti Region (90,000 Euros)
- Conciliation Resources (CR): Building IDP Capacity for Political Participation (100,000 Euros)

- Association of the Disabled in Tsalenjikha (ADT): Economic Support for IDPs in Samegrelo (99,508 Euros)
- International Institute for Education Policy, Planning and Management: IDP Integration through Education (96,786 Euros)
- Regional Centre of Human Rights Protection: Protection of the Rights of the IDPs in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (78,484 Euros)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC): Strengthening State-Civic Dialogue on Housing Solutions for Collectively Accommodated IDPs (99,939 Euros)

Project status: January 2007

For a monthly update on the EC project assistance to Abkhazia and South Ossetia please consult the website of the European Commission Delegation to Georgia and Armenia: www.delgeo.ec.europa.eu. For further information please feel free to contact: Maria van Ruiten, Project Manager for Post-Conflict Rehabilitation (Abkhazia & South Ossetia), at the European Commission Delegation to Georgia and Armenia in Tbilisi, telephone: (+995-32) 94-37-63, email: maria.van-ruiten@ec.europa.eu