

EC delegation visits Belarus

The European Commission's (EC) delegation, headed by the Deputy Director General of the European Commission's Directorate-General for External Relations Hugues Mingarelli, arrived to Minsk on November 4.

According to Poland's Ambassador to Belarus Henryk Litwin the delegation came "with a detailed map of what the EU expects from Belarus and detailed proposals."

As part of the visit Mingarelli met with Deputy Prime Minister Andrey Kabyakou, after what several sectors, in which the cooperation will be developed, were announced. These include besides energy, transportation, environmental protection, and customs affairs also three new areas: product quality and standardization, financial management, and food security.

According to Kabyakou, "Belarus is interested in full-scale and pragmatic cooperation with the EU with an emphasis on the economic dimension". Though, the spokesman of the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Andrei Popov declined that the roadmap issues were discussed with European partners.

On October 13 the EU decided to lift up the sanctions against Belarus for half a year due to release of all political prisoners and limited improvements in the electoral process.

Sources: BelaPAN, Interfax, Trend News

Poland reduces visa costs

Poland decided to reduce the visa cost for Belarusians visiting the country from 35 to 20 euro.

According to the Foreign Office, the reduction takes into account the financial status of Belarusians citizens who have had difficulties visiting Poland since Warsaw signed up the Schengen Zone late last year. The decision came into force on November 1, 2008.

Source: PAP