

## Invitation

# State, Society and Churches in Belarus

## European Dialogue

**19<sup>th</sup> till 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2010**

*The Protestant Academy Berlin, the Network for Reporting on Eastern Europe n-ost and the Cultural and Educational Centre ECUMENA from Minsk invite representatives from four countries to a European Dialogue in Belarus. The eight day Dialogue in Minsk and its surroundings raises awareness for a country, which in many parts of (Western-)Europe is rarely noticed and whose existence is blocked out by most of the media. What is the situation of this country, which was once one of the richest areas in Eastern Europe? How do young people experience the Belorussian reality? How do journalists and civil society actors conduct themselves in a setting with limited freedom and how does this influence everyday life? How does a country deal with a history that caused every fourth Belorussian to not survive the Second World War and the German occupation? How is the relationship between the state supporting Orthodox Church and the smaller Christian laymen groups, who perceive themselves as oppositional? How do the Belorussian government and the opposition understand the political role which Belarus should take in Europe in the future?*

### **Aim of the Dialogue:**

At the centre of the European Dialogue are encounters with numerous representatives from civil society, politics, church, state and private-owned media. The aim is to build up lively and sustainable European networks between different European actors, who engage in various ways for democratic development and the strengthening of European bonds. Representatives of NGOs and Churches shall develop and realize future-oriented projects through the encounter with Belorussian partners. By means of encounters with important politicians from the government and the opposition, representatives of Churches, civil society actors and representatives of international organisations journalists will have the possibility to overcome often stereotypical coverage and to report more differentiated in their media. The European Dialogue will take place in English.

**Participants:** 25 participants from Germany, Poland, Spain and Belarus, who belong to the following target group, who are up to 40 years in age, who have an interest in intensifying contacts to Belarus and who have a good knowledge of English:

- journalists
- staff and volunteers of civil society organisations
- church representatives and church laypersons

The decision on the composition of the group will be taken on basis of the short application form as well as the quality of the project and coverage suggestions. The selected participants will be informed by the end of January, will then receive further information and can apply for a visa.

**The application deadline is Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2010.**

**Venue:** The European Dialogue will take place in Minsk and its surroundings. The accommodation in Minsk will be in the "Johannes Rau International Centre for Education and Encounter" (IBB).

**Time frame:** Departure on Friday, the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2010, from Berlin by sleeper train at 5.15 p.m., departure from Warsaw at 9 p.m. – arrival on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2010 at 10.46 a.m. in Minsk. Return journey on Saturday, the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2010, from Minsk at 3.29 p.m., arrival in Warsaw at 1.01 a.m., in Berlin at 9.00 a.m. Participants can also make individual travel arrangements to Minsk. Beginning in Minsk on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2010 at 12 a.m., termination in Minsk on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2010 at 2 p.m.

**Prices and conditions of participation:**

- Participants from Germany and Spain: 480 Euro
- Students from Germany and Spain up to 26 years (presentation of student card): 380 Euro
- Participants from Poland: 270 Euro
- Students from Poland up to 26 years (presentation of student card): 220 Euro
- Participants from Belarus: 30 Euro

Included in the participation fee are the travel from Berlin (for German and Spanish participants), respectively Warsaw (for the Polish participants), transportation in Minsk and surroundings, accommodation, board, translations to English and entrance fees. **In case of individual travel arrangements the participation fee is reduced by 120 Euro for Germans and Spanish and by 70 Euro for Polish.** Following acceptance we'll send you an invoice on the participation fee.

**Visa:** The participants organise their visa for Belarus individually. Travel agencies specialized in Eastern Europe can assist in the application process. The price is approximately 50 to 70 Euros for Germans and Spanish, 25 Euros for Polish. Handling time about 4 weeks, faster handling with extra fee. Necessary are a passport valid for more than three month after the travel and a valid travel insurance.

**Head of the Program:**

Ulrike Kind, Program Director Youth Education/European Dialogue, Protestant Academy Berlin

Christian Mihr, Senior Editor, n-ost Network for Reporting on Eastern Europe, Berlin

Natalia Vasilevich, Director of the Cultural and Educational centre ECUMENA, Minsk

**Contact:**

Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin

Charlottenstr. 53/54, 10117 Berlin

[belarus@eaberlin.de](mailto:belarus@eaberlin.de), Fax: + 49-(0)30-20355-550

Conference office Belinda Elter: + 49-(0)30-20355411

Program Director Ulrike Kind: + 49-(0)30-20355501

Senior Editor Christian Mihr (n-ost): + 49-(0)30 2593283-13

Supporters and  
cooperation partners:

