

YOUNG LEADERS DIALOGUE WITH AMERICA PROGRAM

Sponsored by the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State
Administered by the Institute of International Education

THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Ms. Gaja BRECELJ
TITLE: Project Manager in Umanotera, The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development
EMAIL: gaja@umanotera.org

NATIONALITY: Slovenian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Slovene (Native), English, French, Spanish, and Serbo-Croatian

WORK HISTORY

- 2005 – present: Project Manager in Umanotera;
- 2004-2006: Teacher of French in language schools;
- 2003-2005: Book-keeper in IPAK Images, Slovenian photo agency;
- 2001-2004: Secretarial tasks, translation, organisation and telephone exchange in Leclerc Ljubljana and Dance theatre Ljubljana;
- 1999-2001: Teaching French in a Primary school, Teaching French (individual lessons) – preparation for linguistic certificate D.E.L.F., Teaching Slovene and mathematics – preparation for certificate from primary school.

EDUCATION

- 1998-2005: Faculty of Arts, BA Sociology of culture;
- 1998-2004: Faculty of Arts, BA French language and literature.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Ms. Breclj is a young project manager who has devoted her life to preserving the environment and promoting sustainable development. She is currently engaged in several different projects, including public information campaigns relative to the recent Copenhagen climate change conference. She is a rising young star who will continue to develop and share good practices and knowledge on climate change awareness and sustainable development.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Ms. Linda DE PUTANE
TITLE: Senior Investment Advisor at the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA), Investment Promotion Division
EMAIL: mepinka@gmail.com

NATIONALITY: Latvian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Latvian (Native), English, Spanish, Russian

WORK HISTORY

- 2007 – present: Senior Investment Advisor at LIAA; Key sector of competence: renewable energies (biogas, biofuel, wind and solar);
- December 2006 – November 2007: Desk Officer at the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia, European Affairs and International Cooperation Department, European Affairs Division;
- November 2006 - present: Translator at Magdelēnas nami Ltd.;
- November 2006: Voluntary position with the press centre at the NATO summit in Riga;
- July-August 2004: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, Press and Public Relations Department.

EDUCATION

- 2005-2006: Master of Science in International Relations, Royal Holloway, University of London; United Kingdom;
- 2003-2004: Universidad de Barcelona, Spain (part of the BA curriculum at Royal Holloway, University of London);
- 2001-2005: Bachelor of Arts in European Studies, Royal Holloway, University of London; United Kingdom.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Ms. de Putane is an experienced and active specialist in International Relations, whose work includes a strong environmental component. As a Senior Investment Advisor for Latvia's Investment and Development Agency, she is currently responsible for Renewable Energy Investment programs in Latvia. Her key sector of competence there is renewable energies (biogas, biofuel, wind and solar energy). Ms. de Putane has previous experience in working for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the NATO Summit.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Ms. Stefania GEORGIANA SIMION
TITLE: Environmental Litigation Programs Coordinator at an independent center for development of environmental resources in Cluj Napoca
EMAIL: stefania@ngo.ro

NATIONALITY: Romanian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: English, French

WORK HISTORY

- June 2005 – present: Environmental Litigation Programs Coordinator at an independent center for development of environmental resources;
- January 2005 – January 2009: Environmental Litigation Coordinator at the Alburnus Maior Association in Rosia Montana.

EDUCATION

- 2005-present: Babes Bolyai University – Cluj Napoca, Law Faculty;
- February – March 2008: Diploma in project management at the Regional centre for professional and entrepreneurial attestation, “FormAtest”;
- 1999-2004: Babes Bolyai University – Cluj Napoca, European Science Faculty.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Ms. Simion is a valuable candidate due to her experience in environmental grassroots campaigns since 2001. She has been working primarily on issues such as mining, local communities’ right to a safe environment, and climate change effects. One example of her activity is her involvement in the Rosia Montana case, opposing the uprooting of an age-old community and the opening of Europe’s largest open-cast gold mine, a project that would dramatically affect the environment in a large area in western Romanian mountains. Details of Ms. Simion’s activity are available in English at <http://rosiamontana.org/en/> and www.centruldemediu.ro. In her capacity as environmental litigation coordinator at the Independent Center for the Development of Environmental Resources, Ms. Simion is involved in awareness campaigns on the environmental impact of various industrial and commercial activities, as well as in activism for the promotion of new legislation on environmental protection and a more effective and transparent enforcement of existing law.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Martin GILLÁR
TITLE: Public Relations Manager of Greenways Program, an NGO working to create practical options for un-motorized transportation in the Czech Republic
EMAIL: martin.gillar@nap.cz

NATIONALITY: Czech
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Czech (Native), English, Slovak, German, Slovene

WORK HISTORY

- July 2009 – present: Public Relations Manager of Greenways Program;
- 2007 – 2008: Copy Editor for literary newspapers in Brno, Czech Republic;
- 2006 – 2008: Editor-in-chief of student magazine of Faculty of Arts.

EDUCATION

- 2007 – 2009: Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic, Master's of Czech language and literature;
- 2002 – 2006: Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic, Bachelor's of Czech language and literature and Musicology.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Gillár is the PR and communication manager at one of the Czech Republic's best environmental NGOs, and a close partner of Post's, the Environmental Partnership Foundation in Brno. In particular, Martin works on the Greenways program, working closely with American partners such as Rails to Trails, the Appalachian Greenway, and the Hudson River Valley Greenway to create practical options for un-motorized transportation in the Czech Republic.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Ms. Agata HINC
TITLE: Project Leader, Low Emission Economy, demosEUROPA – Centre for European Strategy, an EU policy think tank based in Warsaw
EMAIL: agatahinc@demoseuropa.eu

NATIONALITY: Polish
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Polish (Native), English

WORK HISTORY

- 2007 – present: Project Leader of Low Emission Economy at demosEUROPA – Centre for European Strategy; Carbon Capture and Storage technology (CCS), European Trading Scheme (ETS) and EU Energy & Climate Package projects

EDUCATION

- 2004-2009: University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland, Bachelor's degree in the European Studies. Title of the dissertation submitted: Trade Relations between the European Union and Sub-Saharan Africa.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Ms. Hinc was nominated because she is actively engaged in the issues of climate change and clean energy, highly interested in learning more about U.S. approaches, and in a position to communicate her views to experts, policymakers, and students. Ms. Hinc is the project leader on carbon capture and storage technology, the European Emissions Trading Scheme, and the EU Energy & Climate Package at demosEUROPA - Centre for European Strategy, a highly regarded international think tank based in Warsaw which researches and develops strategy on issues within and affecting the European Union. She frequently attends domestic and international conferences; has authored numerous articles, commentaries and reports on energy and climate and on the EU neighborhood policy; and writes her own blog. Agata is now preparing her Master's thesis at Warsaw University on EU-Africa relations.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Genady KONDAREV
TITLE: Consultant for Sustainable Energy Solutions
EMAIL: genady.kondarev@gmail.com

NATIONALITY: Bulgarian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Bulgarian (Native), English, German, French

WORK HISTORY

- September 2009 – present: Consultant for Sustainable Energy Solutions
- July 2008 - July 2009: Expert on Renewable Energy Sources for SGE Renewables Ltd., in Bulgaria;
- November 2005 - July 2008: Sales and Account Manager for New Business and Inside Sales at Lufthansa German Airlines & Swiss International Air Lines, Sofia, Bulgaria;
- May 2005 – October 2005: Public Relations Assistant for La Bamba Group, Bourgas, Bulgaria;
- November 2004 – April 2005: Telemarketer and Investment Relations Representative Dynamic Marketing Service Ltd., Sofia, Bulgaria;
- April 2003 – July 2003: Assistant for the Design Group, Sofia, Bulgaria;
- July 2002 – April 2003: Assistant Casting Director for SIA Advertising, Sofia, Bulgaria.

EDUCATION

- December 2005 – June 2007: University for National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria, Master's of Finance and Master Thesis on "Renewable Energy Sources – State Policy and Funding";
- October 2000 – September 2005: Plovdiv University Paissii Hilendarski, Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Bachelor's of International Economic Relations.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Kondarov has led environmental protests and ran as a Green candidate in the EU elections in June this year. He is equally involved in social issues and was the author of a declaration in support of gay pride in Sofia, as well as working for gender balance. No previous U.S. travel.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Karli KÜTT
TITLE: Freelance Consultant and Project Manager for Estonian Physical Society; Project Manager of the international Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program
EMAIL: karli.kutt@gmail.com
NATIONALITY: Estonian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Estonian (Native), English, Russian, French

WORK HISTORY

- Nov 2009 – present: Freelance Consultant and Project Manager for Estonian Physical Society;
- Summer 2006 – 2009: Assistant of Public Relationship Manager MEEDIAEKSPRESS, Ltd.;
- Summer 2007 – 2009: Assistant of Account Manager at PULP, Ltd.

EDUCATION

- 2007 – present: University of Tartu, Estonia

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Kütt is a young and dynamic individual with a strong and solid academic background, a short but already promising range of professional experience, and perhaps most importantly, a dedication to serious volunteer work with schools and students in Estonia with an interest in science and technology. As someone with a wealth of experience in the GLOBE program already at such a young age, Kütt is positioned well to not only benefit himself from new perspectives in the U.S. on climate change and environmental issues, but take this knowledge back to Estonia and help integrate this into the stream of the educational system in Estonia. GLOBE has grown well in Estonia and is quite popular. Kütt's contact base within this community will help to better engage youth on a hugely important topic for the United States, all of Europe and the world. The U.S. Embassy is a strong supporter of GLOBE in Estonia, as well as the work Kütt and others who strive to promote science and technology education here.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Ms. Marlene LÖHR
TITLE: Head of Executive Council of the Green Party of the federal state, Schleswig-Holstein
EMAIL: marlenel@gmx.de
NATIONALITY: German
LANGUAGE ABILITY: English, French, Danish

WORK HISTORY

- 2009 – present: Head of Executive Council of the Green Party of the federal state, Schleswig-Holstein;
- 2009 – present: Research Assistant on the Project of German Antidiscrimination Office on antidiscrimination law in EU, University of Flensburg, Germany;
- 2008 – present: Elected member of the City Council of Flensburg, Germany;
- 2007 – 2009: Assessor in the Executive Council of the Green Party of the federal state, Schleswig-Holstein;

EDUCATION

- 2008 - today University of Flensburg / Syddansk Universitet, Flensburg, Germany and Sønderborg;
- Denmark Masterprogram European Studies 08/2009-12/2009 Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen, Exchange semester;
- 2006 - 2008 Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Kiel, Germany, Studies in Political Science, Economics and Ethnology;
- 2005 - 2006 University of Flensburg, Flensburg, Germany, Studies in Bachelor program 'Vermittlungswissenschaften'.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Ms. Loehr is Germany's youngest head of a state party, having just been elected to lead the Alliance 90/The Greens party in Schleswig-Holstein, along with her 45-year old colleague Erika von Kalben. As far as her political beliefs are concerned, she especially wants to incorporate the interests and perspectives of young people into politics and to demonstrate that youth is not an argument against taking responsibility. A graduate student majoring in European Studies at the University of Flensburg, she is also the youngest elected council member of Flensburg and has been active in the state board of her party for the past three years, among other things, helping to organize four successful election campaigns. Ms. Loehr is currently spending a semester abroad at the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark until the end of the year. Post expects Ms. Loehr to return to Germany with a better understanding of green technologies and their impact on the U.S. economy and of public opinion and policies at the federal, state and local level that drive U.S. efforts to mitigate environmental damage and climate change. She would, in sum, be an excellent multiplier to reach out to the younger generation of Germans as well as to all party members in the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Akos MALATINSZKY
TITLE: Assistant Professor at the Department of Nature Conservation and Landscape Ecology at Szent István University in Gödöllő, Hungary
EMAIL: N/A

NATIONALITY: Hungarian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: English, German, Italian

WORK HISTORY

- 2007 – present: Assistant Professor at the Department of Nature Conservation and Landscape Ecology at Szent István University in Gödöllő, Hungary;
- 2007 – present: Member of the National Environmental Council, Hungary;
- 2006 – present: Vice-chairperson of Pangea Cultural and Environmental Society;
- 2000-2001: Independent expert of the Environmental Committee of the Hungarian Parliament;
- 2000-date: Chairperson of NGO GATE Green Club (organizing actions, conferences, festivals, forums on sustainability topics, editing Eco-map of Gödöllő, writing applications etc.);
- 1999 and 2000: Lead the Ecological Workshop in European Youth Summer Academy;
- 1998-2002: Member of Presidency of Waste Management Alliance.

EDUCATION

- 2002-2007: Doctoral School on Environmental Sciences at Szent István University (SZIE), Gödöllő, Hungary, PhD in Environmental Sciences;
- 1997-2002: SZIE (previous Gödöllő University of Agricultural Sciences), Institute of Environmental and Landscape Management, Master's of Environmental Management in Agriculture;
- 1997-2002: SZIE, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences: Certificate in English-Hungarian Specialist Translation.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Dr. Malatinszky, the President of GATE Green Club at Saint Stephanus University, Godollo, Hungary is an energetic leader of his community. He also works as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Nature Conservation and Landscape Ecology at the university. His involvement with several NGOs (Göncöl Association, Pangea, GATE Green Club Waste Management Alliance) demonstrate his leadership skills. He is an enthusiastic organizer offering innovative environmental programs and teaching methods on a volunteer basis to students and adults of all age groups. During the summer, elementary school students can participate in his Hedgehog Camp. The camp gives these children an experience for a lifetime. Dr. Malatinszky is the major organizer of Green Tornado, the project that represents Hungary in Copenhagen at the Climate Change Conference in December. Green Tornado is a four day environmental festival which is one of the major special events of GATE Green Club.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Lorenz MASTALIR
TITLE: Voluntary Activist with Greenpeace Austria
EMAIL: riley8@gmx.at

NATIONALITY: Austrian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: German (Native), English, Spanish, French

WORK HISTORY

- Present: Voluntary Activist with Greenpeace Austria

EDUCATION

- Present: University of Vienna, pursuing a Bachelor's in Biology

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Mastalir has been actively involved with the NGO Greenpeace since high school days. He participates in a wide range of Greenpeace activities, including climate protection and rain forest protection campaigns, bio fuel initiatives, and emission control projects. Lorenz is also involved in many Greenpeace fundraising efforts and membership drives. He regularly writes comments for the Greenpeace newsletter and other online platforms. Lorenz studies biology at the University of Vienna, a field that matches his volunteer activism for the protection of the environment. He would greatly benefit from the Young Leaders Dialogue with America Program by gaining experience and widening his horizon. Networking with other young participants from Europe and making new contacts in the U.S. will be an additional benefit for Lorenz as being a member of an international NGO. Environment activists, and especially members of Greenpeace, have been highly critical of the U.S. climate change policy over the past years. This program provides the chance to provide firsthand experience on changes in the U.S. environment policy under the Obama Administration for a member of the key target group in the Embassy's environmental dialogue outreach.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Stephan MEYER
TITLE: Christian Democratic Union Party (CDU) Member of Saxony State Parliament and CDU Spokesperson for Environmental Issues
EMAIL: Stephan.Meyer@slt.sachsen.de

NATIONALITY: German
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Polish, Czech, English, French

WORK HISTORY

- 2009 - present: CDU Member of Saxony State Parliament;
- 2007: European Energy Manager at Chamber of Commerce Zittau.

EDUCATION

- 2006-2009: Received stipend from the Free State of Saxony for PhD;
- 2005: Participant in the Leonardo daVinci Program in Helsinki, Finland;
- 2001-2006: Degree in Economics at the University of Applied Sciences Zittau, at University Hagen and at the International Institute of Higher Learning in Zittau.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Meyer represents the future for the governing center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party in Saxony; however, he lacks the traditional exchange and educational experiences with U.S. and American institutions that most of his colleagues in western Germany enjoy. Meyer is an influential young politician who is moving up in the party; he commands a wide following among politically active young people who come to him to seek out his advice on environmental issues. He is the CDU's leading expert and authority on these issues, despite his youth. In the fall of 2009, he was elected member of the Saxon State Parliament and immediately took over responsibility for environmental issues within the CDU. He is the party's official spokesperson for climate/environmental issues. His election did not come unexpectedly as he has been politically engaged in various CDU related organizations and working groups focussing on environmental issues for many years now. At the age of 28, Meyer has already worked as an engineer in Finland, specializing on economic and cost issues (with NOKIA) and in Poland (with an energy supplier). He has also been a guest lecturer at the Kazakh-German University in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Considering his involvement in political and non-political areas - he lives in a remote area in Saxony close to the Polish and Czech border and is a strong supporter of German-Polish Friendship initiatives - we are certain that Meyer will move up very quickly to influential state and possibly national offices within the CDU. Meyer would profit enormously from direct exposure to the U.S. which will make him a better advocate for our common agenda.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Kalle PALLING
TITLE: Representative for the 11th Riigikogu, Chairman of the Estonian Reform Party Youth, and Member of Parliament's Environmental Committee
EMAIL: Kalle.Palling@riigikogu.ee
NATIONALITY: Estonian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Unspecified

WORK HISTORY

- 2007 – present: Representative for the 11th Riigikogu;
- Since November 2009, Representative on the Estonian Energy Member of the Council;
- 2006-2007: Secretary General of the Estonian Reform Party Youth;
- Since August of 2006, Member of the Board of Virto OÜ;
- Since May of 2006, Member of the Board of Peostudio OÜ;
- Since 2005, OÜ Piperon, Member of the Board.

EDUCATION

- University of Tartu, Türi College, Master studies in environmental science

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Palling is an up-and-coming Member of Parliament from the ruling Reform Party. Moreover, he is Chairman of the Reform Party's youth group and he is a Member of Parliament's Environmental Committee. In this later role, he often takes the floor during parliamentary debate to raise environmental issues. Given his youth and his strong position in government, Palling is likely to be a leader on environmental and other issues for some time.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Martin PITORAK
TITLE: Senior State Counselor for International Relations in the Energy
Department of the Ministry of the Economy
EMAIL: pitorak@economy.gov.sk
NATIONALITY: Slovakian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Unspecified

WORK HISTORY

- March 2006 – present: Senior State Counselor for the coordination of the EU agenda and energy technologies for International Relations in the Energy Department of the Ministry of the Economy

EDUCATION

- 2001 – 2006: Masters Degree at Comenius University in Bratislava

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

POL-ECON recommended Mr. Pitorak as an emerging young leading in Slovak energy policy. He works the technology portfolio at the Ministry of Energy and has given presentations on Slovak environmental and energy policy at several conferences. Energy issues are near the top of our MSP in Slovakia, and Mr. Pitorak will benefit from a program focusing on U.S. climate-change and environmental policies.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Ms. Yanina TANEVA
TITLE: Founder and Managing Director of IDEASFACTORY Association,
an NGO for environment and social change through
contemporary art
EMAIL: Yanina.taneva@gmail.com
NATIONALITY: Bulgarian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Bulgarian (Native), German, Italian, Russian, English

WORK HISTORY

- October 2009 – present: Founder and Managing Director of IDEASFACTORY Association, an NGO for environment and social change through contemporary art;
- May 2006 – present: Cofounder, Public Communications Representative and Online Campaigner of Let Us Save Irakli Civil Campaign, an NGO working with creative communications and campaigning for awareness about environmental problems in Bulgaria and especially North Black Sea Irakli coastline;
- October 2008 – June 2009: Public Relations and Brand Manager for Magazine1
- April 2007 – October 2008: Art for Social Change Manager at The Red House, a Gulliver Clearing House Foundation center for culture and debate;
- August 2007 – October 2007: Public Relations representative for Yann Arthus Bertrand`s exhibition Earth From Above in Sofia.

EDUCATION

- 2009: Masters of the Arts in Cultural Anthropology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ochridsky” - Faculty of Philosophy and Culture Studies;
- 2001 – 2005: Bachelors of the Arts in Journalism and Mass Communications at Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Ms. Taneva is a very creative and energetic woman who could succeed in many fields, but has chosen environmental work. She has several important awards in her pocket, shows leadership, and has never been to the U.S.

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THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

NAME: Mr. Irmantas VALŪNAS
TITLE: Chief Desk Officer of Water division of the Environmental Quality Department at the Ministry of the Environment
EMAIL: valunas@am.lt

NATIONALITY: Lithuanian
LANGUAGE ABILITY: Lithuanian (Native), English, Russian

WORK HISTORY

- March 2006 – present: Chief Desk Officer of Water division of the Environmental Quality Department at the Ministry of the Environment;
- January 2005 – February 2006: Laboratory Assistant and Senior Engineer at Kaunas University of Technology for their Faculty of Chemical Technology.

EDUCATION

- September 2005 – present: Pursuing PhD in Technology sciences and environmental engineering, specifically special wastewater treatment methods at Kaunas University of Technology;
- September 2003 – June 2005: Masters Degree in Environmental Engineering from Kaunas University of Technology.

EMBASSY JUSTIFICATION

Mr. Valunas' main functions at the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania include his participation in policy making related to the protection of water resources in the country. That is initiating and drafting laws, decrees and other legislation, coordination of action plans, analysis of foreign countries' experience, and collaboration with national and European institutions in the field of water resources protection and wastewater management according to worked out arrangements. U.S. experience in environmental protection and an integrated approach is required because Lithuania faces huge environment protection problems.