

Aid Matters

Newsletter on Development Assistance in Serbia



Issue no. 10 July 2013

Inside the issue:

- Italian Support to Serbian Economy 2
- One Million Francs for Municipalities 2
- UNDP Outcome Board Meeting 2
- Roma Integration 3
- US & Serbia Join to Create Jobs 3
- Approved Projects in WBIF IX Round 3
- European Court of Auditors Visit 4
- Joint Training Centre "Connection" Reconstructed 4

In Brief

Since 2001, the EU has allocated 3.5 billion EUR to Serbia. The biggest bilateral donor is Germany, with 1.1 billion EUR.

EU - Serbia Negotiations and IPA



By: Ognjen Mirić

Coordinator for EU funds, Deputy Director, Serbian European Integration Office

Serbia has so far received around 200 million € annually from IPA. Opening accession negotiations with the EU does not automatically mean that there will be an increase in the funds allocated to Serbia.

The actual amount of pre-accession assistance depends on new EU budget for the period 2014-2020 that the European community has yet to adopt this year. Of course, each step forward in the process of European integration can have a positive impact on the EU's decision on the amount of funds that will be allocated Serbia.

It must be taken into account that certain EU budget lines are decreased, which can affect the overall allocation. The proposed IPA budget for the next seven years amounts to 11.9 billion €, while the final amount will depend on the negotiations between the member states, the European Commission and the European Parliament. With the general figures of the budget already agreed, it is expected that the allocations for each country will be defined in the next few months. We hope that the EC will take into consideration European integration perspective and

absorption capacities when deciding on allocations per country. The EU funds absorption rate in Serbia is about 98 percent. Funds have, so far, been used for public administration reform, such as strengthening e-government, reform of the judiciary, reform of education, infrastructure projects (such as regional landfill systems, waste water treatment).

In order to obtain more money in the future, we need to enhance project preparation activities and finish the job with decentralised management system, which means that our system must operate in accordance with the European, and that the government institutions can independently manage the funds. We hope to receive accreditation from the EC by the end of the year.

Serbia will use IPA assistance according to its own priorities, which will be defined in the document National priorities for International Assistance in the Period 2014-2017, with projections until 2020, while taking EC recommendations within European policy documents and Progress Report into account.

We expect that in the future assistance will be more linked to accession negotiation process and provided for reform projects in the areas of justice, public administration, development investment projects for construction of wastewater treatment, as well as for the socio-economic actions such as agriculture and rural development, or housing refugees.



Twitter Corner

Štefan Füle @StefanFuleEU

<https://twitter.com/StefanFuleEU>

"Encouragement for #Serbian Euro- Integration office - guarantor of continuity for the accession process: Go for it!"

<https://pic.twitter.com/yln49fwGP3>

Italian Support to Serbian Economy

By: Italian Development Cooperation Office

The Italian Development Cooperation launched the 2nd phase of the Programme "Support to Serbian Economy through supply of goods for five line Ministries", an initiative based on the "Protocollo Antonione", an agreement signed between the Government of Italy and the Government of Serbia. Under the new terms, funds amounting to 7.5 million € will be devoted to strengthening Serbian public sector's capacities to deliver services in the fields of health, education, energy, environment and agriculture.

Financial resources and technical assistance are provided to Serbian Ministries in order to endow them with equipment necessary for improving the standard of public services and upgrading them to EU level. Final beneficiary of this initiative is the Serbian population, who will be able to use quality services in the sectors supported by the Program.

The leader and the main counterpart responsible for the im-

plementation of the Programme is Serbian European Integration Office. Preliminary project ideas will be negotiated between the institutions involved in the Programme, up to an amount of approximately 7.49 million €.

During the first phase of the Program, four Ministries benefited from funds amounting to approximately 10.6 million €. The largest portion was allocated to Ministry of Health: goods supplied in the amount of around 5.5 million € were distributed to the wards of obstetrics, gynaecology, neonatal department and nephrology in numerous health centres in 37 cities in Serbia.

A successful example of the results achieved by the Program is offered by Niš Clinical Centre, where devices for digital mammography and ultrasound screening have contributed to the early detection of breast cancer. The screening undergone so far has reached the number of 156,000 clinical cases. Ministry of Health stresses that this is one of the best results achieved in Serbia in the field of breast cancer diagnosis and prevention.

One Million Francs for Municipalities



By: GIZ project "Municipal Economic Development in Eastern Serbia"

Through the project "Municipal Economic Development in Eastern Serbia" GIZ has provided 4.2 million € to support municipalities in promoting local economic development. The project is expected to last until the end of 2016.

"In cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), we have created a fund of one million Swiss francs for the municipalities of Eastern Serbia which manage to improve property tax col-



lection and expand its coverage," Alexander Grunauer, project team leader said.

General criteria that will be used to determine the success of property tax collection have been agreed with Ministry of Finance and Economy, and the first five municipalities that achieve the best results will receive grants to fund what they need most,

"The most successful municipality will receive 400,000 francs, the second 300,000, third 150,000 francs, fourth 100,000, and fifth 50,000 francs", Grunauer explained.

GIZ project "Municipal Economic Development in Eastern Serbia" also will approve funding for municipalities to temporarily hire people to make a precise list of property.

In Brief

The Protocol on development cooperation between the Governments of Serbia and Germany for 2013, was signed on 25th June. Within financial cooperation, Serbia will have on its disposal 199.5 million € in the form of soft loan, and 9 million € of technical assistance.

UNDP Outcome Board Meeting

During the bi-annual UNDP Outcome Board meeting on 7th June, the Core Resources Allocation Framework for 2013 was presented and signed. The Framework identifies planned activities within 16 projects, key partners, sources of funding and 2013 budget, in line with outcomes: Promoting Transparent

and Accountable Governance; Strengthening Environmental and Energy Management; and Fostering Empowered and Inclusive Society. UNDP Serbia Resource Planning Framework 2013 Budget is around 4.2 million €.

Roma Integration



By: Miloš Marojević,

Head of Group for implementation of EU funded projects, Office for Human and Minority Rights

The topics addressed at the seminar on “Social inclusion of Roma in Serbia” held on 18th June show the complexity of issues that need to be solved in order to achieve Roma integration. At the seminar, Government representatives presented progress and efforts in the following areas: Education, Employment, Housing, Social and Health care, Civil Registration and Access to personal documentation, Freedom of Movement and Re-admission. It was acknowledged that the Roma remain one of the most vulnerable groups and that their further integration is a priority goal for the Government.

Given the scope of the challenge and despite significant efforts undertaken – as well as means invested by the Government, Official Development Assistance (ODA) plays a key role in Roma integration. In the next four years the EU will provide assistance of the tune of 20 million €, with additional aid by bilateral donors, namely Sweden and Switzerland.

The Office for Human and Minority Rights (OHMR), along with line ministries, offices, Civil Society and the donor community, is involved through two major projects: Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)-funded technical assistance in the implementation of Strategy for promotion of the status of Roma, implemented by the OSCE (ongoing); and EU-funded “Technical assistance in implementation of the project idea of the Government of Serbia in the sector of Social Development (Measure 5) with regard to the implementation of the Strategy for promotion of the status of Roma, which will also be implemented by OSCE. The OHMR is also the beneficiary of the project “Implementation of anti-discrimination policies“ and is an active participant in the regional IPA - Best practices for Roma integration in the Western Balkans (BPRI) project.

Behind these complex names there are desired project results and activities with the potential for achieving the goal of integrating Roma in Serbia through a comprehensive approach to numerous challenges this vulnerable group faces. In the meantime, an important first step has already been taken and the Government adopted the Action plan for implementation of the Strategy for promotion of the status of Roma 2013-2015 on June 10th.

US & Serbia Join to Create Jobs

By:  USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The USAID and National Agency for Regional Development (NARD) launched the first US-Serbian government-to-government aid project in June.

The Private Sector Development Project will strengthen private sector companies in 12 economically depressed South and Southwest Serbian municipalities. USAID is directly partnering with the Government of Serbia to implement this project, a sign of the strong relationship between the two governments.

USAID and NARD will support small- and medium-sized south-



Ambassador Michael D. Kirby, Minister of Regional Development and Local Self-Government Verica Kalanović, NARD Director Ivica Eždenci, and USAID Mission Director Susan K. Fritz at the signing of the agreement

ern Serbia businesses by assisting their entry into new markets, improving management practices, strengthening manufacturing and trade associations, and building links with the Government of Serbia. Training and grants will also be offered to businesses owned by women and youth.

The Project will be managed by NARD through its network of Regional Development Agencies. It builds upon the success of recently concluded USAID Economic Security Project, which helped 137 small- and medium-sized south and southwest Serbian firms to increase sales

through expanded markets and increased competitiveness.

Approved Projects in WBIF IX Round

During the Western Balkan Investment Framework–WBIF Steering Committee that took place in Athens, Greece, on 13th June, 15 new grants for new projects in the region were approved, with total value over 15.9 €

Draft project proposals for WBIF Round X should be submitted to SEIO by 31 July. The final project applications will be sent to the EC by September 19.

million.

Two projects submitted by the Republic of Serbia were approved for financing: 400kV Overhead line from sub-stations Bajina Bašta

to Kraljevo, and Judiciary facility.

European Court of Auditors Visit

European Court of Auditors (ECA) delegation visited Serbia June 17-28. ECA is the EU Institution responsible for the external audit of the EU budget.

The Court's audit on assistance to Serbia from the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) is a performance audit, focusing on effectiveness. The objective is to provide a general assessment of how effectively the European Commission is managing EU IPA. Although the EC is audited, and not Serbia, it was very important for the auditors to meet the Serbian authorities and beneficiaries and obtain an understanding of the project context and their feedback on key issues, notably how relevant the project was to their needs, whether implementation procedures were efficient, what results were achieved by the projects and their sustainability.

ECA delegation had a series of meetings with representatives of

The Out-of-Office Reply

Hi, ^{I hope the fact you got this response immediately after sending your e-mail didn't TOTALLY FREAK YOU OUT or get your hopes up.} (Not that physically being in my office would guarantee that I respond to you any sooner)

I will be out of the office and "unable" to answer your emails from _____ to _____. ^{Mysterious dates} ^{My poor assistant.} ^{I'll still see your e-mail on my phone but I'll just ignore it.}

For urgent matters please contact _____ ^{Only in case of the Apocalypse}

For all other inquiries, I will reply to you "as soon as I return". ^{Several days after I get back.}

Best Wishes, ^{Good luck!}

Smith ^{Whee! I'm going on vacation!!}

In late August, check out upcoming events at www.evropa.gov.rs

around 50 institutions: ministries, agencies, regional and local authorities concerned with projects' implementation and with the ones involved in EU funds management.

Did You Know?

ECA carries out two main types of audit: (a) financial - to determine whether the EU's financial statements are reliable and EU income and expenditure transactions comply with the relevant legal and regulatory frameworks, and (b) performance - to address economy, efficiency and effectiveness of funding from the EU budget.

Joint Training Centre "Connection" Reconstructed

The official opening ceremony of the reconstructed joint training centre "Connection" was held in Vladičin Han on 13 June 2013.

The centre was reconstructed within the scope of the project "Centre for exchange of information on cross-border economic cooperation-CONNECTION". This 450,000 € project was jointly implemented by Municipality of Vladičin Han, Center for the Development of Jablanica and Pčinja Districts and Bulgarian Chamber of Com-



merce and Industry Sofia.

Prior to this reconstruction, the centre was unavailable to persons with disabilities because of the lack of facilities which could meet their needs. The centre for exchange of information on cross-border economic cooperation is now available to the entrepreneurs, persons with disabilities-future entrepreneurs, and other social-economic partners according to EU standards.

About Aid Matters Newsletter



If you wish to contribute, subscribe or unsubscribe, please send an e-mail to Maja Milenković, majamilenkovic@seio.gov.rs

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The newsletter aims at improving communication between stakeholders and exchange of information relevant to development assistance activities in the Republic of Serbia.

Sector for Planning, Programming, Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds and Development Assistance

Serbian European Integration Office

Nemanjina 34, Belgrade, Serbia

011/3061-100

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