

Aid Matters

Newsletter on Development Assistance in Serbia



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Bilateral Screening on Chapter 22 - Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

By:  Bilateral screening meeting on Chapter 22 – Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments was held on 28th and 29th January 2015 in Brus-

sels. The delegation of the Republic of Serbia, headed by Ms. Ana Ilic, Deputy Director - Coordinator for EU funds in the European Integration Office, gave an overview of the current state of the

system for the management of pre-accession funds, through the presentation of the situation in the following areas: legislative framework, institutional framework, administrative capacity, programming, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, control and audit. Also, plans regarding the adjustment of the system for management of pre-accession funds to the system for management of post-accession EU funds were presented. The discussion with the representatives of the EC was thought-provoking and very constructive. Strong correlation of this chapter especially with the following negotiating chapters 5, 8, 14/21, 15/21, 18, 19, 27, 32, 33 was emphasized, and it is necessary to ensure coordination between the aforementioned chapters. Chapter 22 includes regulations relating to planning and implementation of the EU cohesion policy. With over one third of the Union budget (EUR 351.8 billion for 2014-2020), cohesion policy is one of the key instruments to realise the Europe 2020 goals. It is the largest tool for EU investment in the real economy and a key pillar of the EU economic policy triangle - fiscal consolidation, structural reforms and investment in growth. Through



the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund, EU is supporting actions such as broadband access, SME start-ups, social inclusion, education, climate change, energy efficiency to deliver growth and create jobs EU-wide. The delegation of the Republic of Serbia consisted of Ms. Tanja Miscevic, Head of the Negotiating Team and the representatives of

the following institutions: European Integration Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Republic Secretariat for Public Policies, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and Audit Authority Office of EU Funds, as well as the representative of the Serbian Mission to the European Union. The European Union was represented by the experts from the European Commission, Directorate for Regional and Urban Policy and Directorate for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. European Commission representatives pointed out that the screening was professionally prepared, that the Serbian delegation has shown great dedication to its work and great knowledge in terms of the requirements necessary for the establishment of a future system for managing cohesion policy funds. With this regards, the experience gained by national authorities in managing the EU pre-accession assistance proved to be a valuable asset.

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Did you know?

Ms. Ksenija Milenkovic was appointed as the acting director of the Office for European Integration at the Government meeting on February 3rd. Before this position, Ms. Milenkovic was the Deputy Chief of Mission of Serbia to the European Union.

IPARD Programme

By: Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection

The process of European integration of Serbia and obtention of the candidate status for membership in the EU opened a possibility of using the EU pre-accession funds for Rural Development (IPARD), after the establishment and accreditation of the operating structure, and accreditation of the programme for rural development (IPARD Programme). Part of the necessary structures for the implementation of IPARD programme are located in the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection as follows: Managing Authority (Rural Development Department) and the IPARD Agency (Department for Agricultural payments). In order to improve the operating structure efficiency, IPARD Agency was relocated, on the EC proposal, from Sabac to Belgrade. Considering that the structure, layout and job descriptions should enable the preparation for the accreditation process and carrying out the minimum of the functions of the Managing Authority and the IPARD Agency, it is essential to perform the planned recruitment and training of new employees in the forthcoming period. Investments in these structures have a high level of justification and great potential benefits as compared with the amount of the anticipated funding. On 20th January 2015, the European Commission decided to approve the proposal of the IPARD Programme which was prepared by the Department of Rural Development, after a process of consultation with all stakeholders and relevant EC Directorates. By the decision of the European Commission, funds for the implementation of the IPARD Programme amount to 175 million euros for measures that will be accredited in two phases: First phase (until 2017): 1. Investments in the physical assets of agricultural

estates; 2. Investments in the physical assets relating to the processing and marketing of agricultural and fisheries products and 3. Diversification of agricultural estates and business development. Second phase (after 2017): 1. Agro-ecological and climate measures and measures of organic production and 2. The implementation of local rural development strategies-LEADER approach. The above measures should contribute to increasing productivity and competitiveness, harmonization with EU standards, adapting to the demands of domestic and foreign markets, as well as the development and diversification of economic activities through rural tourism. Priorities for investments are: milk, meat, fruit and vegetables and farming sectors. The measures will support investments in the construction and/or reconstruction of buildings and the purchase of new machinery, equipment and new technologies. Final beneficiaries are farmers, whether individual or legal entities, capable of implementing and financing of the investment. Within the IPARD Programme, beneficiary can get an average of 50% of the public support from the total value of the investment, as well as additional incentives of 10% if the investment is undertaken by young farmers, or women, or is carried out in mountainous areas. In parallel with the process of institution preparation, informing of the potential users will be conducted about funding opportunities under the IPARD Programme, in cooperation with Agricultural professional and advisory services, as well as other promotion partners. If all necessary actions are carried out in compliance with the accreditation plan, the first announcement of the competition for the use of funds from the IPARD Programme can be expected in 2016.

Post-floods EU and FAO support to the agriculture recovery in Serbia

By:



Enabled by IPA 2012 funding of the European Union, in 2014 the Food and Agriculture organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported organic agriculture in Serbia when the country was struck with unprecedented rainfall and floods. Before flood waters fully subsided, the FAO emergency response team was on the ground evaluating the damages and have started the emergency response works. Thanks to the timely approval of the Euro 30 million flood recovery support programme to Serbia by the European Union (EU), FAO could start in August the implementation of the Euro 8 million project "Agriculture and Food Security Emergency assistance to flood affected small-scale farmers in Serbia". Since the beginning of the project, the focus was on small-scale family-run agriculture farms that suffered damages and losses during May 2014 floods. By the end of January 2015, FAO supported 9,734 families in 24 municipalities. From these, 4,428 agricultural families were supported with winter wheat packages, which included 250 kg of wheat and 300 kg of mineral fertilizer for each beneficiary family. Another 1,578 families were supported with fruit seedlings. Based on their needs, these beneficiary families received either 300 plum, cherry or sour cherry seedlings,

or 1,800 blackberry or raspberry seedlings. In this period, a total of 3,728 cattle and poultry producers also received support, each receiving 320 kg of cow, pigs or layers feed. In 2015, FAO shall continue to support agriculture producers through the EU assistance to flood-affected areas in Serbia. During the spring season, 7,763 spring crop producers will receive spring barley, peas, red clover, lucerne and maize seeds, all with appropriate quantities of mineral fertilizer. Another 700 vegetable producers will receive greenhouses in order to continue their vegetable production, which was severely damaged during the floods. Furthermore, the EU-financed FAO project will support 28 livestock producers through the provision of milking equipment and 326 families are aimed to receive live-stock ruminants, such as heifers, piglets, lambs and kids. Another 327 farming families, who had their farming machineries and tools damaged or lost during the floods, will be receiving replacement. In total, FAO will provide direct support to close to 20,000 farming families. Helping them to recover from the damages of the last year floods. The project is implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection and local governments off all 24 supported municipalities.

Regional Housing Programme

By:  Regional Housing Programme Council of Europe Development Bank

The Regional Housing Programme (RHP), which aims to provide permanent housing solutions to 74 000 refugees and internally displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia, has started to deliver its first results. In October 2014, 25 packages of building materials, each worth EUR 9 000, were delivered to refugee families in Serbia. In addition, the delivery of 100 further packages of building materials should start in March 2015, followed by the installation of 70 prefabricated houses starting in summer 2015. All this is done under the first Serbian project under the RHP. The RHP Fund Assembly of Donors has so far approved five projects for Serbia, with a total value of close to EUR 87.7 million, of which the RHP Fund will cover EUR 71.5 million and the national contribution EUR 16.2 million. These projects concern four different housing modalities: construction of flats, purchase of village houses, delivery of prefabricated houses and delivery of building material packages. In total, they should provide decent living conditions to close to 4 200 refugee families in Serbia, with the peak in implementation taking place in 2016. In 2014, the RHP delivered its first housing solutions in Croatia as well: in December 2014, the first apartment keys were handed over to returnees in the towns of Knin and Petrinja. In total, 101 apart-



ments should be provided in the coming months. Also, the construction of an apartment building for 29 former tenancy right holders in Korenica, which started in June 2014, is progressing well and beneficiaries are expected to move in in June 2015. An important number of those housing solutions will be for the benefit of ethnic Serbs who return to their places of origin. 17 projects have been approved under the RHP, for a total approximate value of EUR 126 million in grants from the RHP Fund: three for Bosnia and Herzegovina, five for Croatia,

four for Montenegro and five for Serbia. In the next few years, these projects should provide almost 6 000 housing units for around 20 000 vulnerable refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. The RHP is funded thanks to donor contributions held in the so-called "RHP Fund", from the European Union, the United States of America, Germany,

Italy, Norway, Switzerland and other countries. The four Partner Countries mentioned above implement the RHP themselves, with strong technical support provided by team of experts managed by the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) and financed by the European Commission. The RHP Fund and the Regional Housing Programme are managed by the CEB. In the case of Republic of Serbia, lead national institution is the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and is assisted by the PIU Research and Development Ltd.

BEST PRACTICE CBC PROJECTS IN SERBIA 2012 – 2014

DIAMOND - Jewels in turn of century - thematic roving of the world of Art Nouveau

By: CBC This project was financed through Hungary-Serbia IPA Cross-border Co-operation programme 2007-2013. Workshops and conferences were organized within the DIAMOND project, a thematic route „The Jewels of Art Nouveau“ was designed and promoted through touristic and cultural-historic brochures, internet presentation and via study tours organized for professionals in the field of culture tourism. Two endangered monuments, the Gróf-palace in Szeged and the Syna-

gogue in Subotica were partially reconstructed, but the attention was attracted to other important threatened cultural-historic monuments as well. This should encourage their further financing, reconstruction and restoration. Two publications were printed: a monograph on the life and work of Ferenc Reichl, one of the most important architect of Art Nouveau period, who worked both in Subotica and Szeged, and another book on buildings listed in the „The Jewels of Art Nouveau“ thematic route.

Belgrade Dialogues

By:  giz Belgrade dialogues - a conference organized by the Forum Serbia Germany in cooperation with the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE), was held on February 10 at the Belgrade City Hall. The conference was organized with the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Belgrade Dialogues aim at advancement of the knowledge and experience exchange between decision-makers and experts from Serbia, Germany and other EU countries in order to strengthen Serbia on its way to the EU membership. Opening speeches were held by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Vucic and Mr. Gernot Erler, Special Representative of the Federal Government for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2016. Within three panel discussions dedicated to the topics of accession negotiations, public

administration reform and Serbian economy competitiveness, participants were addressed by Mr. Ivica Dacic, Mr. Oscar Benedikt, Ms. Jadranka Joksimovic, Mr. Zeljko Sertic, Mr. Martin Knapp, Mr. Marko Cadez, and many others. The concept of Belgrade Dialogues continues and new events of this kind are foreseen for March 2015.

In Brief:

Donation of the Japanese Government to the Government of Serbia, comprising of 150 next-generation vehicles, have started to arrive in Serbia. First contingent of vehicles arrived on March 4th, and it is expected that the whole package, value of 500 mil. YEN (approximately 5 mil. USD), will be delivered by the end of March. Official handover ceremony is expected to be held in April.

Japan Support to Local-level Resilience and Disaster Preparedness in Serbia

By:



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Japan will support municipalities in Serbia this year with a USD 3.64 million grant aimed at increasing local-level resilience and preparedness to respond to disasters. The 12-months-long project will be implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Project will benefit communi-

ties in at least 27 municipalities in Serbia, totaling some 1.3 million inhabitants, which have been identified by Serbian government as the most affected by last year's devastating floods. Working in close partnership with the national and local authorities, the project will center on specifically targeted areas of Serbia with integrated sets of measures aimed at addressing the needs identified during the UN's post-floods emergency response phase. The project will include the following activities:

1.Small scale infrastructure works, including reparation and im-

provement of water supply systems, wastewater treatment and improving sanitation at municipal level, 2.Improving public utility infrastructure damaged during the floods and supporting municipalities in developing technical project documentation for larger scale infrastructure investments (thus allowing municipalities to access EU, multilateral and bilateral funding), 3.Enhancing municipal capacities for disaster preparedness in line with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, 4.Supporting women's NGOs in advocating for women participation in disaster risk management and planning, and in strengthening women' security in crisis and 5.Landslides rehabilitation. The Project will enhance human security of the local people through the activities above. Japan has introduced the concept of human security as a guiding principle of its official development assistance (ODA) and actively promoted the concept in cooperation with the UNDP. The project will be implemented from March 2015 to February 2016.

Upcoming events:

9-17 March	Novi Sad, Sremska Mitrovica, Subotica, Sombor: Info days regarding launching of 3rd Call for project proposals under the IPA CBP Croatia-Serbia 2007-2013
17 March	Belgrade, EU project fair "EU AND SERBIA AT WORK"
17-18 March	Venafro (Italia): Joint Working Group meeting for the programming of Adriatic-Ionian TN programme 2014-2020
18 March(to be confirmed)	Sarajevo (BIH): JMC meeting for IPA CB Programme Serbia - BIH 2007-2013
22-23 April	L'Aquila (Italy): Joint Monitoring Committee meeting for IPA Adriatic CBC Programme 2007-2013
22-23 April	Belgrade: Danube TN programme NCP/Implementing Working Group meeting

Public Health and Emergency Management Course (PHEM)

By: World Health Organization - Regional Office for Europe

WHO Regional office for Europe will organize course addressing critical public health aspects for effective crisis management in the WHO European region in Belgrade from 9 – 13 March 2015. This course is designed to support the establishment of sustainable training programs in selected Member States of the WHO European Region (Albania, BiH, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovakia and Serbia) in order to prevent and manage public health

emergencies through emergency preparedness and risk management knowledge and policies. Main modules and topics that will be covered are: 1.Emergency preparedness and capacity building, 2.Training principles and development of exercises, 3.Mass casualty management and medical surge capacity, 4.Public health programs and International Health Regulation in health emergencies and 5.Development of national public health and emergency management training programs.

About Aid Matters Newsletter

Aid Matters Newsletter on development assistance to Serbia is developed by the Sector for Planning, Programming, Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds and Development Assistance of the Office for the EU Integrations of the Republic of Serbia.

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

If you wish to contribute, subscribe or unsubscribe, please send an e-mail to Nemanja Jakovljevic, njakovljevic@seio.gov.rs

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