

Aid Matters

Newsletter on Development Assistance in Serbia



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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Republic of Serbia Initialises the Planning of National Priorities for International Assistance in the Period 2019-2025

By:  REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The Ministry of European Integration, as an institution responsible for the coordination of international development assistance, is commencing with the process of drafting a new multi-annual planning document for development assistance in the period 2019-2025. This document will be one of the key instruments that the Government will be utilising to define the strategic directions of Serbia's development and it will also support the activities planned through the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis. A proposal shall be made to finance priorities and measures from international development funds in the nine most crucial sectors: public administration reform, justice, internal affairs, transport, environment, energy, competitiveness, human resources development and social development, agriculture and rural development. The



document represents the basis for negotiations with development partners with the aim to precisely define the areas of cooperation and to direct donor support towards implementation of the most vital socio-economic reforms, as well as strengthening of administrative and institutional capacities of our country. The donor community in the Republic of Serbia consists of more than 30 bilateral development partners, multilateral organisations and international financial institutions. On the basis of the agreements concluded with them, Serbia has resources

available to finance the implementation of reforms in the process of Serbia's accession to the EU and its socio-economic development. More information on international development assistance can be found at:

<http://www.mei.gov.rs/src/fondovi/medjunarodni-fondovi/> and www.evropa.gov.rs

Support within Chapter 13 on Fisheries

By:  Project funded by the European Union
Projekat finansira Evropska unija

Pravna podrška pregovorima

Serbia opened Chapter 13 in the negotiations with the EU in June 2018. To encourage further progress in the area, Ministry of

Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management was supported in aligning the national legislation with the EU acquis. As Serbia is a landlocked country, inspection and control need to focus on the fisheries and aquaculture products on the market, retail sale, restaurants, processing factories, transport, import-export, farms and fresh water fishermen. To that end, Practical Guideline for control of fisheries and aquaculture products on the market according to the Common Fisheries Policy rules was developed. Three new Rulebooks were drafted to enable operators and control authorities to check traceability of fisheries and aquaculture products from catch to the consumer. Amendments to the draft Law on the Structural Support and Market Organisation in Fisheries were also prepared. Having in mind that most of

the products are intended for export, and that the EU legal requirements are less strict than the national ones, new rulebooks are welcomed by the Serbian fish processing industry. The producers will know what information about the product they should receive, and what information they should provide to the next operator, which will contribute to cost reduction and to a better position of the Serbian producers on the market.

More about the EU funded PLAC II Project: <http://euinfo.rs/plac2/en/>



Did you know?

Serbia opened two more chapters in its pre-accession negotiations with the European Union: chapter 33 (financial and budgetary provisions) and 13 (fisheries).

Serbia - Slovakia Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation Protocol Signed



The eight meeting of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and the Slovak Republic was held on 4 and 5 June 2018 in Bratislava. Three years have passed since the previous JC meeting, which made this an excellent opportunity for the representatives of both countries to contribute to establishing new arrangements of cooperation and finding solutions for certain important issues. In his opening address, Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic Peter Žiga said that it was good that, in addition to official state meetings and discussions, the JC would contribute to realising cooperation between the representatives of economic communities. He emphasised that Serbia was Slovakia's most important economic partner in

the Western Balkans, adding that support to Slovakia's investments in Serbia would continue, particularly in the areas of renewable energy resources, IT, transport and transport infrastructure etc. Serbian Ministry of European Integration started the preparation of the new multi annual planning document which will identify the development priorities for the 2019-2025 period to be co-financed by the international development assistance, which could help identify priority areas in the mid-term strategy for official development assistance of the Slovak Republic for the period 2019-2023. This year, we are marking the 100th anniversary of establishing bilateral relations, and the Republic of Serbia has so far used Slovakia's experiences in many areas. In the coming period, both sides will commit to intensifying and deepening this cooperation.



International Conference on Work-Based Learning



Conference titled "Work-based learning: a road to opportunities" was held on June 12 in Hyatt hotel in Belgrade. It was organized by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, in partnership with Austrian and Swiss Development Cooperation. The conference was an opportunity to present and discuss different aspects related to the development and implementation of work-based learning (WBL) policy and to summarize results achieved so far in this area. Among other things, participants engaged in the topics such as: models of cooperation between public and private sector in WBL, achieving complementarity between skills and labour market, quality management, employment, permeability in vocational education and training and disadvantaged youth in vocational education and training. The conference was attended by more than 200 participants from state institutions, secondary vocational schools, companies, civil society organizations, as well as representatives



of international and regional organizations and agencies active in the field of education. One of the key messages of the conference is that work-based learning is a mechanism that enables students access to modern forms of work and acquiring competences in a real work environment, thereby increasing their chances of employment upon finishing secondary education, while at the same time complying with the principles of lifelong learning. Monitoring and evaluation of the results of WBL, further development of cooperation models between education and economy, financing and promotion of work-based learning are some of the topics identified by the conference participants as crucial for the following period when the legislative framework that defines work-based learning in Serbia becomes effective. The conference "Work-based learning: a road to opportunities" was organized within the project "Reform of Vocational Education and Training in Serbia". On behalf of the German Government, this project is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development as the main implementing partner.

Exhibition 'Applied Nostalgia' Opened in Belgrade



Minister of European Integration Jadranka Joksimović and Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Serbia Radko Vlaykov, on 21st June 2018 opened the fourteenth photo exhibition from the 'Applied Nostalgia' series in the presence of President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić and President of the Republic of Bulgaria Rumen Radev. This time, the exhibition is dedicated to Belgrade and Sofia. The Gallery of the National Bank of Serbia hosted the works of Serbian author Dragana Udovičić, who visited Sofia in April 2018 where she took photos of places, events, scenes and



people that reminded her of Belgrade. At the same time, Bulgarian author Hristo Rusev visited Belgrade and took photos of the city and its citizens through the lens of a 'nostalgic' photographer. The project 'Applied Nostalgia' has been designed as a series of joint photo exhibitions of two photographers, one from Serbia and one from an EU presiding country. The main idea is to improve cultural exchange between the two countries in this way as well, and to promote European values and Serbia's cooperation with the EU Member States. To learn more about the project and to view the photos from all previous exhibitions, visit the 'Applied Nostalgia' website: <http://www.primenjenanostalgija.com/>

New EU Funded Project Introduces Sector Approach to the Visibility of IPA Projects



REINFORCED IMPLEMENTATION OF VISIBILITY AND
COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES OF IPA PROGRAMMES



This project is funded
by the European Union

The new 18 months IPA Visibility project launched in February 2018 has a pioneering task: to join the individual IPA projects' activities regarding communication and visibility and to emphasize their impact on the efforts of Serbia to further develop and improve the quality of life. The analysis of the existing practices proves that communication activities of individual projects have far smaller impact on citizens than combining projects' benefits within familiar sectors. With the recently introduced sectoral approach to communication, transition to better coordinated joint events, and sectors' result-oriented EU visibility activities became a necessity. IPA communication project aims to connect communication strategies, plans and activities of the Ministry of European Integration, line ministries and the EU Delegation in Serbia, with the specific EU funded projects. Effective coordination of the EU related communication policies of the state and public institutions with the respective projects by sectors form an integral part of the new approach, which helps complement and multiply positive results. An important part of the project activities is dedicated to



strengthening the skills and competencies of IPA visibility officers in the respective ministries. Along with the existing online EU projects' database update it implies organization of a number of training sessions, workshops and study trips. Special attention will also be paid to media training, in view of the current state of the ongoing negotiations. Offering specific support, mentoring and coordination activities, the project has already achieved respectable results. Workshops covering five proposed sectors (to follow NAD structure): justice & home affairs, environment, competitiveness, agriculture and connectivity (including transport, energy & ICT) have been organized in Ruma and Belgrade. More than 85 professionals from different ministries, the EU Delegation and specific projects joined efforts to discuss current problems and challenges to IPA communications. Final goal was search for the best possible solutions to form an integral part of the communication strategies and action plans of each sector currently under development, to be considered also in the new IPA Communication Strategy.

In Brief

Three-year project "Key Steps Towards Gender Equality in Serbia" (March 2018 – February 2021) provides support to the Government of the RS in implementing the acquis in the field of gender equality and the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2018, by supporting specific measures within the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2018 and by supporting women civil society organisations. The project is financed by the European Commission through the IPA II and is implemented by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) in cooperation with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of European Integration, the EU Delegation to the RS and other partner institutions.

Introducing the European Energy Award in Serbia

By:  Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Embassy of Switzerland
Swiss Cooperation Office in Serbia

The Republic of Serbia is ranked among the 20 most energy intensive and ten most carbon intensive countries in the world. The Serbian Government is strongly committed

to improve the situation in this area in order to fulfil its obligations towards the EU acquis and to provide better living conditions and a healthier environment for its citizens. By adopting the Law on Efficient Use of Energy in 2013 the main piece of legislature exists. The Law defines the obligation of all municipalities with more than 20'000 citizens to establish a local energy management system. In order to support the Serbian Government in transferring the national energy efficiency policy to the local level, Switzerland started the Municipal Energy Efficiency and Management Project (MEEMP). The project was launched last month with a kick off conference held in Belgrade. The project partners are the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Ministry of Mining and Energy of the Republic of Serbia, while the beneficiaries of the project are four local governments: Kruševac, Užice, Vrbas and Paraćin. The project's main goal is to improve the energy management at municipal level through the introduction of the European Energy Award



(EEA) methodology that will be customized to the Serbian context and legal framework. The EEA is a methodology developed in Switzerland in 1988. In the past three decades, it has become the internationally recognized framework for the transfer of national energy targets to the local level. Around 1'500 cities in 11 countries all over the world use the EEA methodology. More than 50%

Swiss citizens live in cities with this Energiestadt concept. In addition, the MEEMP project will rehabilitate 20 public buildings in these four local governments, mainly kindergartens and schools. The rehabilitation will significantly increase energy efficiency and reduce CO2 emissions. Complementary to this, the project will work on strengthening institutional and professional capacities to manage energy at the local level. In the long run, MEEMP will raise awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and renewable energy and generally improve municipalities' capacity in energy management. Consequently, living and economic conditions in the municipalities will improve. The project is within the framework of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy Serbia 2018-2021 in the field of sustainable energy and resilient cities. The Swiss contribution of EUR 7.4 million will be accompanied with Swiss expertise and know-how. The Contribution of local governments is EUR 1 million.

€175 Million in Grants to Agricultural Sector from the EU by 2020



By: Minister of European Integration Jadranka Joksimović and Head of EU Delegation to Serbia Sem Fabrizi, in the presence of Minister of Agriculture Branislav Nedimović, had signed 29th of June IPARD II - a Financial Agreement by which the EU has provided €175 million in grants to Serbia for the enhancement of Serbian agriculture. With additional funds provided by the state, the agrarian sector will have €230 million available. She has pointed that the Financial Agreement opens up a "new page of Serbian agriculture" because Serbia and farmers are, for the first time ever, given the opportunity to use grants from European funds. She has said that the Ministry headed by her, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and the EU Delegation to Serbia, have commenced the process of increasing visibility and informing of farmers on the areas where they can apply for funds from the IPARD Fund. According to her, with this Agreement, Serbia gets the opportunity to gradually align the Serbian agricultural policy with the EU policy, adding that this is a long, serious and challenging process. The ex-



periences of the countries that became EU Member States in the most recent waves of enlargement indicate that farmers expressed the greatest scepticism before the accession, but that they had the most benefits from the membership during the initial years of EU membership. This will, minister Joksimovic believes, also be the case in Serbia. She has stated that the Agreement provides the opportunity not only to increase the competitiveness of Serbian agriculture - through modernisation of agricultural and food facilities, equipment renewal and overall modernisation, but also to achieve an equal territorial development. That will result in a solution to the biggest challenge, which also represents a big motivation - for people to stay in the countryside, and not only farmers, but also women and youth. She has pointed out that 478 people have applied for IPARD funds so far, adding that she expects that the number of applications will be even greater in the coming period. The Minister has specified that we must work together to raise the awareness of our people, help them prepare projects, so that they would be able to fully use the resources that we have at our disposal by 2020.

New Promotional Program to Foster Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship in Serbia



By: On 4th of July 2018, high-ranking representatives of the Government of Serbia and KfW Belgrade – witnessed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia Ana Brnabić and the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Serbia, Axel Dittmann – signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a new promotional program to foster self-employment and entrepreneurship in Serbia. For KfW Development Bank, the goal of the "Promotion of the Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment Programme" is to increase the access of up to 1.500 young micro-, small-, and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) to adequate financial products. The program, which is part of the German-Serbian Initiative for Sustainable Growth and Employment, consists of three components. First of all, the program will set-up a guarantee mechanism for banks to collateralize credits for start-ups, which would not be financed otherwise. Secondly, grant incentives for start-ups will be provided under this program. Last but not least, an accompanying technical assistance will strengthen



capacities of both, banks and start-ups in the form of trainings and personal coaching. By systematically encouraging mostly young entrepreneurs, unemployed, returnees and minorities to open their own business, the program aims to improve the employment and income possibilities in Serbia (60% of Serbian's workforce is employed in MSMEs). Hereby, the program provides incentives for young businesses to exit the grey economy and contributes to a decrease in the Serbian unemployment rate. The pilot phase of the program is supported by the Serbian Government, and the German Government has committed €12.9 million for the roll-out phase. Furthermore, the German Government provides expert staff support for the development of this program. The Serbian government's support in building and financing a start-up financing program in Serbia enables the German Development Cooperation to actively support the Serbian Government's "Growth and Employment" funding approach. All in all, KfW can draw on its many years of experience in German start-up financing, as well as on its 16 years of experience in the Financial System Development in Serbia.

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 Ministry of European Integration.

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



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