



PROGRAMME STEERING COMMITTEE

Surdulica, 14 September 2017



I. Agenda

1. Introductory remarks
 - Senior Advisor in the Ministry of European Integrations, Luka Pivljanin
 - Mayor of Surdulica, Aleksandra Popović
 - Swiss Cooperation Office to Serbia, Petar Vasilev, National Programme Officer
 - Project Manager in the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, Ana Stanković
2. Presentation of the Surdulica Municipality
3. Approval of the minutes of the Steering Committee held in Kuršumljija on 16 May 2017
4. Update on key European PROGRES developments and highlights from the Annual Report for June 2016 – July 2017
5. Presentation of successful practices – Protection of geographic origin of Vlasina Honey
6. Presentation of successful practices – Corporate social responsibility
7. Voting: Annual Report for June 2016 – July 2017
8. Other business

II. Minutes

Agenda item 1

Welcome and introductory speeches

Luka Pivljanin, Senior Advisor to the Director of the European Integration Office of the Government of Serbia who chaired the third annual European PROGRES Programme Steering Committee (PSC) welcomed the donors and the participants.

Aleksandra Popović Mayor of Surdulica, welcomed all of the officials and attendees to Surdulica, a municipality with a long and rich history.

Luka Pivljanin gave a brief overview of the Programme implementation achieving almost 80 percent of its set goals. Underlining the importance of completing the existing activities before the new Programme - EU PRO begins, participants were invited to contribute to the undergoing Impact Analyses in order to capture good and poor practices and to better plan the future activities. Also participation in the upcoming Citizen Satisfaction Survey (CSS) to help better understand wider impacts of the Programme in the past three years was requested from Municipalities.

Ana Stanković, Project Officer in the European Union (EU) to the Republic of Serbia thanked the hosts and attendees and noted that it's important to focus on the final phase of the Programme. After highlighting the Programme's success achieved so far the Municipalities were invited to contribute to ongoing activities and especially Programme's Competitiveness Portal. The new Programme, EU PRO was announced, implemented by UNOPS and focused on support to SMEs, local self-governments (LSGs), CSOs and inclusion of marginalised groups.

Petar Vasilev, National Programme Officer in the Swiss Cooperation Office to Serbia (SCO) thanked the hosts and reflected on the completion of Good Governance (GG) trainings and the relevant study tour to Switzerland which further strengthened the knowledge of LSG staff to implement GG principles in their own Municipalities with a long term results in mind. Praising the cooperation with UNOPS implementing partner so far, Vasilev announced the new, four yearlong SCO Programme SWISS PRO intended to compliment EU PRO. The Programme worth 6.3 million EUR will be implemented by UNOPS and will focus on GG, social inclusion and gender balance.

Đorđe Staničić, Secretary General of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SKGO) reflected on the cooperation with European PROGRES so far and announced close collaboration on the upcoming SWISS PRO Programme. Emphasising that the announced Programmes are a part of a much larger national development efforts to transfer further ownership and competencies to Municipalities who will ultimately be carriers of changes. All of participants were called upon to work together on overall improvement and implementation of national reform.

Ankica Milenković, the Head of Surdulica Municipality Local Development Office, gave an overview of the local history and potentials as well as the key development projects implemented. The Municipality bordering Bulgaria encompasses a large areas of ecologically preserved agricultural land suitable for growth of medicinal herbs and development of rural tourism. With the European PROGRES, Surdulica is working on upgrading the municipal geographic information system (GIS), has prepared detailed regulation plan for waste water management on Vlasina Lake, Technical documentation for sewerage network in Jelašnica village and has received Protection of Geographic Origin for Vlasina honey. Additionally the Municipality has participated in the Gender Equality Mechanism initiative and has received funds for reconstruction of the school in Suvojnica village.

Pivljanin commended the work of Surdulica Municipalities and invited all of the LSGs to work closely with this and similar Programmes to voice their needs and then to duly implement the financed projects in order to ensure current and future success.

Agenda item 2

Approval of the minutes of the Steering Committee held in Kuršumljia on 16 May 2017

Pivljanin called for adoption of the meeting minutes from the eleventh PSC meeting that took place in Kuršumljia on 16 May 2017. The document was unanimously adopted.

Agenda item 3

Presentation of the Annual Report for June 2016 – July 2017

Graeme Tyndall, European PROGRES Manager commended the LSGs work during this Programme noting that past mistakes should serve as greatest lessons in the future implementation. Subsequently Impact Assessment and CSS are key tools to capture both ongoing results but also those that peek long after the projects are finalised. CSS in particular will look into impact on larger communities therefore participants were invited to comment and advise on how these tools can be improved to collect most accurate inputs. Appreciating the positive feedback from the donors all of the stakeholders including the strong leadership were commended for their hard work.

Marko Vujačić, European PROGRES National Programme Manager gave a short overview of the Programme implementation during the previous year. The Programme is entering its final phase, has been extended until March 2018 while all of the Projects funded through Department of Contracting and Financing of EU funded Programs (CFCU) have been contracted. The period was fruitful with 251 projects implemented of which 198 successfully completed. Significant benchmarks were presented in all four Programme sectors and priorities for the remainder of the Programme set – completion of remaining 53 projects, institutionalisation and reform of GG implementation of CSS and finalisation of Competitiveness Portal data collection.

Pivljanin invited the participants to comment, ask questions and actively participate in the discussion.

Nenad Tairović, President of the Roma Societies Alliance thanked the key stakeholders for the support provided to the Roma community through the European PROGRES and emphasized that an expert group has been compiled to work on future project applications in order to attract more funding for Roma projects.

Pivljanin confirmed that a well written project proposal makes all the difference when applying for funds and the expert group is a good advance in moving these issues forward.

Agenda item 4

Presentation of successful projects: Protection of geographic origin of Vlasina Honey

The European Union and the Government of Switzerland, through European PROGRES, have provided technical assistance for the development of the specification for the registration of the geographic indication of Vlasina Honey in the amount of 9,900 Euros. The geographic indication, by providing a guarantee of quality, enables honey producers to sell their products at a higher price and be more competitive, while also promoting a certain geographic area.

Laboratory analyses undertaken during the process confirmed the special properties and quality of Vlasina Honey and the beekeeping, process control and honey keeping systems were defined. The six

trainings on good beekeeping practice were attended by over 60 beekeepers at each one. The specification was approved by the Intellectual Property Office in August 2017.

Beekeepers' Association "Matica" from Surdulica, which gather about 80 beekeepers from Bosilegrad, Crna Trava and Vladičin Han. Future steps include application for more funding to build honey collection storing and promotional activities for the product.

Luka Pivljanin noted that this is only one of the successful projects supported and that these kind of projects have been giving good results across the region and should be strongly considered for further funding in the upcoming Programme.

Presentation of successful projects: Family Dairy Veličković

The family owned dairy and cheese making production has been provided with a cooling chamber. The new cooling area contributed to the increase in storage capacities, reduction of transport cost up to 10% and allowed the enterprise to supply additional quantities on the market. They employed two people, while three potential jobs are to be opened during next year. The proposed CSR measure included donation of dairy products in the amount of 5,660 Euros to socially vulnerable groups through NGO "Life Aid" from Vranje. The second part of CSR measure related to the cleaning of 300m of the Vrla River banks in village Alakince.

Luka Pivljanin added that this project is a good example of how the received funds can be utilised for additional investments to ensure sustainability which is the ultimate goal of each individual donation as it leads to overall success and development.

Voting

Luka Pivljanin opened the voting procedure and after no objections from the PSC members concluded that the PSC unanimously approved the following:

- Annual Report June 2016 – July 2017
- PSC Meeting minutes Kuršumlja on 16 May 2017¹

Luka Pivljanin concluded that the Programme is being implemented according to plan and that projects are making an impact in the field. Surdulica was comended for hospitality and participants for attendance. Next meeting was announced for November 2017.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
European PROGRES Steering Committee Vlasina Lake, Surdulica, 14 September 2017			
Organisation	Name	Position	
STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS			
Ministry for European Integration	Luka Pivljanin	Advisor	
Ministry of Economy	Miona Popović	Head of Group for Planning of IPA Projects	
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	Vera Veljanovski	Independent Advisor	

¹ The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management sent electronic approval of the Annual Report and the Programme Steering Committee.

	Government of Serbia Coordination Body for the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa	Jelena Čolić	Deputy Director of the Coordination Body's Office
	Government of Serbia Coordination Body for the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa	Jelena Marjanović	Assistant Director of the Coordination Body's Office
	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities	Đorđe Staničić	Secretary General
	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities	Zorica Vukelić	Deputy Secretary General
	European Union Delegation to the Republic of Serbia	Ana Stanković	Project Manager
	Swiss Cooperation Office	Petar Vasilev	National Programme Officer
MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVES			
	Municipality	Name	Position
	Blace Municipality	Zoran Jozić	Mayor
	Blace Municipality	Miloš Vasiljević	President of the Municipal Assembly
	Bojnik Municipality	Boban Petrović	Assistant Mayor
	Bojnik Municipality	Saša Dodić	Department for Economy, Finance and LED
	Bujanovac Municipality	Fisnik Beluli	Office for LED
	Bosilegrad Municipality	Mikica Vasilev	Municipal Associate
	Doljevac Municipality	Neda Jovanović	LED Office Associate
	Doljevac Municipality	Jasmina Zlatanović	European PROGRES Municipal Contact Person
	Kuršumlja Municipality	Rodoljub Vidić	Mayor
	Lebane Municipality	Nenad Jovanović	LED Office Associate
	Lebane Municipality	Saša Đorđević	Assistant Mayor
	Medveđa Municipality	Nebojša Arsić	Mayor
	Nova Varoš Municipality	Mirel Roljević	Chief of Municipal Administration
	Nova Varoš Municipality	Željko Bojović	Administrator
	Prokuplje Municipality	Aleksandar Simonović	Mayor
	Prokuplje Municipality	Miloš Kostić	Municipal Council Member
	Raška Municipality	Tijana Pajević - Đorđević	Assistant Mayor
	Raška Municipality	Đorđe Gogić	Deputy Mayor
	Sjenica Municipality	Mustafa Baltić	Assistant Mayor
	Sjenica Municipality	Edis Muminović	LED Office
	Sjenica Municipality	Maida Kasumović	Department for Economy and Development
	Surdulica Municipality	Aleksandra Popović	Mayor

	Surdulica Municipality	Ankica Milenković Žegarac	LED Department Associate
	Surdulica Municipality	Kristina Savić	LED Department Associate
	Surdulica Municipality	Jelena Radojković	Assistant Mayor
	Surdulica Municipality	Ljubiša Stojković	Deputy Chief of Municipal Administration
	Svrljig Municipality	Jelena Radojković	LED Office
	Svrljig Municipality	Dragica Ristić	Assistant Mayor
	Town of Vranje	Boban Stanković	LED Office Coordinator
	Town of Novi Pazar	Emir Aščerić	Assistant Mayor
	Trgovište Municipality	Nenad Krstić	Mayor
	Tutin Municipality	Šemsudin Kučević	Mayor
	Vladičin Han Municipality	Miroslav Đorđević	Deputy President of the Municipal Assembly
	Vlasotince Municipality	Zoran Todorović	Mayor
	Vlasotince Municipality	Marinko Đorđević	Assistant Mayor
CSOs, Institutions, Organisations			
	Organisation	Name	Position
	Roma Education Society	Kadrija Ređepović	President
	Roma Education Society	Milkica Tasić	Associate
	Roma Societies Alliance	Nenad Tairović	President
	Veličković Dairy	Milica Veličković	Entrepreneur
	Veličković Dairy	Milan Veličković	Entrepreneur
	Life Aid	Ljubinka Milovanović	President
	Tourist Organisation of Surdulica	Biljana Nikolić	President
	Association of European Police Officers of Roma Nationality	Aleksandra Stanković	Technical Secretary
	Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit	Jelena Milovanović	Deputy Manager
	Beekeepers' Association "Matica"	Ivica Kostić	President
	Media Research Centre	Biljana Ljubisavljević	Journalist
	Organisation	Name	Position
	European PROGRES	Graeme Tyndall	Programme Manager
	European PROGRES	Marko Vujačić	National Programme Manager
	European PROGRES	Jasmina Ilić	UNOPS Advisor for Infrastructure
	European PROGRES	Ivana Popović	Communication Manager
	European PROGRES	Nermin Hasanović	Regional Coordinator
	European PROGRES	Radule Ristović	Regional Coordinator
	European PROGRES	Tatjana Mrvaljević	Programme Officer for Competitiveness
	European PROGRES	Evgjenije Islami	Regional Associate

	European PROGRES	Ivana Todorović	Regional Associate
	European PROGRES	Aleksandra Radivojević	Regional Associate
	European PROGRES	Nataša Ivanović	Programme Associate for Empowerment of Vulnerable
	European PROGRES	Biljana Kerić	Programme Associate for Social Inclusion
	European PROGRES	Marija Radulović	Communication Associate
	European PROGRES	Mladen Cvetanović	Programme Associate for Competitiveness
	European PROGRES	Milica Radović	Junior Communications Assistant