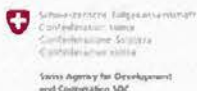




PROGRAMME STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Vranje, 10 August 2016



I. Agenda

1. Welcome and introductory speeches
2. Presentation of the City of Vranje
3. Approval of the minutes of the Steering Committee held in Bela Palanka on 1 March 2016
4. Update on the key European PROGRES developments and highlights from the Annual Report for July 2015 – June 2016
5. Presentation of requests for approval
 - *Provision of grants for local infrastructure projects*
 - *Provision of grants for enhancing competitiveness through creation of jobs in the private sector*
 - *Provision of grants for supporting youth self-employment*
 - *Support to CSOs for piloting the implementation of measures from the Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion at the local level*
 - *Feasibility study and planning documentation for Golija Destination Management*
 - *Support to the social inclusion project "El Sistema" in Vranje and Vranjska Banja*
 - *Support implementation of electronic building permits system*
 - *Criteria for the implementation of vocational trainings in local self-governments*
 - *Criteria for the selection of agricultural producer groups for the second phase of intervention*
6. Voting
 - *Quarterly Report 1 January – 31 March 2016*
 - *Annual Report 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016*
 - *Provision of grants for local infrastructure projects*
 - *Provision of grants for enhancing competitiveness through creation of jobs in the private sector*
 - *Provision of grants for supporting youth self-employment*
 - *Support to CSOs for piloting the implementation of measures from the Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion at the local level*
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 - *Criteria for the selection of agricultural producer groups for the second phase of intervention*
7. Other business

Minutes

Agenda item 1

Welcome and introductory speeches

Slobodan Milenković, the Mayor of Vranje, welcomed the participants and expressed special gratitude to the European Union (EU) and the Swiss Development Agency (SDC) for support both to infrastructure projects as basis for investments as well as for social inclusion projects. Milenković highlighted the support to planning documentation, which created preconditions for the opening of Geox factory and the start of construction of “Ditra Italia“ factory as well as support to the finalisation and capacitating of the surgical block of Vranje General Hospital. Milenković concluded that Vranje remains committed to completing the ongoing and engaging in new development projects funded by the EU and the SDC.

Branko Budimir, the Acting Assistant to the Director of the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (SEIO) and the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) Chairperson, also welcomed the participants and explained that the PSC served not only to give the final approval of the local development projects but also as a platform to report on and discuss the implementation process in the previous three months. As the Programme was entering its final year of implementation Budimir called upon the participants to focus on timely implementation of the projects.

Agenda item 2

Presentation of the City of Vranje

A short presentation of Vranje described the City as the leader in the attraction of investments listing numerous success stories. The presentation put the emphasis on the support provided by European PROGRES and its predecessor Programme.

Agenda item 3

Approval of the minutes of the Steering Committee held in Bela Palanka on 1 March 2016

The PSC unanimously approved the minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting held in Bela Palanka on 01 March 2016.

Agenda item 4

Update on key European PROGRES developments and highlights from the Annual Report for July 2015 – June 2016

Graeme Tyndall, European PROGRES Programme Manager, noted that the presentation of Vranje clearly showed the progress that the local self-governments could achieve if they take ownership of the process.

Marko Vujačić, European PROGRES National Programme Manager, presented the key results achieved by the Programme in the period July 2015 – June 2016. In all, 214 projects were approved of which 75% were implemented through grant methodology. So far 66 (31%) projects have been completed which best represents work ahead. Changes caused by the April elections prolonged the the Ministry of Finance Central Contract and Financing Unit (CFCU) scheme and issues related to legislation, capacity and planning were underlined as the most prominent risks.

Branko Budimir encouraged the participants to ask questions and openly discuss the covered topics and then asked a question about when the delivery of equipment for Women Entrepreneurship grant recipients was expected.

Marko Vujačić reiterated that the delivery of equipment was completed for 20 grantees so far and that the majority of remaining procurement will be completed by the beginning of October. The mentoring and coaching of the grantees will be completed within six months upon the delivery of equipment.

Osman Balić, Roma Association SKRUG shared a positive outcome of the Programme supported Fire Prevention in Roma Settlements project. Since the project completion and delivery of fire extinguishers and fire prevention trainings, the voluntary anti-fire brigades have been set up in ten local self-governments (LSGs) with significant Roma population. Balić expressed hope that these brigades get integrated in the Safety Councils of Local Governments.

Nenad Tairović, Deputy President of the Roma National Council and the President of Roma Associations, suggested the Ministry of Interior Affairs and other national institutions are always included in planning and implementation of similar projects as these contribute to sustainability.

Branko Budimir referred to the presentation of the Annual Report and explained that evaluation of the CFCU Call for Proposal (CfP) was still in progress. It is expected that projects will be selected and approved and grant agreements signed during the last quarter of 2016. Funds saved due to redefined Programme activities and tender procedures will be used for additional projects. This is why each CfP's financial envelope will include both approved and the reserve list of projects. By the end of the year applicant municipalities will also be informed if their projects from the reserve list will be financed.

Agenda item 5

[Presentation of requests for approval](#)

5.1 Provision of grants for local infrastructure projects

Jasmina Ilić, Infrastructure Advisor gave an overview of the concluded CfP for Local Infrastructure Projects. The Call was initially advertised for 45 days but was later extended to allow the newly formed municipal structures (post-election) to develop applications. In total, 31 applications were received in the amount of EUR 3.2 million. After the administrative check 24 applications underwent evaluation process out of which 14 project proposals in the value of EUR 1.8 million were recommended for funding - three related to economy and eleven related to social infrastructure. Additional four project proposals in the total value of EUR 380,000 were placed on the reserve list. The projects recommended for funding come from Priboj, Brus, Sjenica, Kuršumljija, Prijepolje, Doljevac, Vranje, Lebane, Bojnik, Ivanjica, Bela Palanka, Bosilegrad, Surdulica and Vlasotinca. The projects from the reserve list, which will be financed if leftover funding becomes available, come from Leskovac, Tutin, Babušnica and Crna Trava.

Branko Budimir said that even though there are many competing Programme activities and subsequently only one infrastructure CfP was planned, with donors' approval, activities were redefined and the second infrastructure CfP was conducted. However as only three recommended

projects are related to economic infrastructure Budimir suggested that both LSGs and the Programme identify development potentials outside of the CfP and implement them as regional projects.

5.2 Provision of grants for enhancing competitiveness through creation of jobs in the private sector

Olivera Kostić, European PROGRES Competitiveness Sector Manager presented results of the CfP for enhancing competitiveness through creation of jobs in the private sector. During three months of the call 270 participants attended 20 info-sessions, three trainings on preparation of business plans were organised. Fifty-seven applications were received in the total value of EUR 491,000. Thirty-five applications passed administrative check and threshold. Seventeen applications, from 14 municipalities, were recommended for funding in the total value of EUR 250,000, which should enable creation of 43 new jobs. Nine applications, which should create 22 new jobs, were placed on the reserve list.

5.3 Provision of grants for supporting youth self-employment

Ana Nedeljković, European PROGRES Good Governance and Social Inclusion Sector Manager gave an overview of the completed Call for Support of Youth Self-employment. The Call was launched on 28 March and lasted until 11 May. Intensive informative campaign was organised, with nine info-sessions attended by 200 participants. In total, 92 applications were received from 26 municipalities. During the first stage of evaluation, 52 candidates were interviewed out of which 32 were recommended for the second stage of selection. Out of those 32, 27 passed training on development of business plans, marketing and business communication, while seven candidates voluntarily withdrew. In total 22 projects were recommended for funding in the amount of EUR 183,307 while four applications were placed on the reserve list. Mentorship support will be provided for grantees.

5.4 Support to CSOs for piloting the implementation of measures from the Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion at the local level

Nataša Ivanović, Programme Associate for Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups presented the CfP for piloting the implementation of measures from the Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion at the local level. Six info-sessions were organised attended by 63 participants. In total, 39 applications were received from 23 municipalities and 25 were selected for the second phase of evaluation, which involved the training on preparation of project proposals. All 25 representatives of applicant organisations attended the training. In total EUR 150,000 is available for up to 16 projects under this activity.

Žika Mitrović, the Vice President of the National Minority Council of the Roma National Minority and the President of the Steering Committee of the AMARO network asked how many, out of 16 projects, were prepared by Roma non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as the Call was primarily intended to strengthen their capacities. He was also interested whether the allocated budget from this Call can support/solve at least one measure predicted by the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma.

Nataša Ivanović replied that Roma organisations and organisations dealing with Roma issues were eligible to apply. Selection process has not yet been completed but a substantial number of Roma organisations were selected for the second phase of the evaluation. Regarding the available funds

general agreement is that that EUR 10,000 increment would be sufficient to implement concrete actions at the local level.

Nenad Tairović underlined that it was necessary to provide support to Roma NGOs as numbers of recently registered organisations that declare their realm as Roma issues increased, while they were only concerned with financial gain. This results in stagnation of improvement in status and living conditions of Roma population.

Nataša Ivanović added that the Programme checked previous experience of all organisations that applied within the CfP.

Branko Budimir asked that the list of all organisations that were selected and passed to the second phase of evaluation, was read. Marko Vujačić read the names of 25 organisations on the list.

Graeme Tyndall reiterated that the trainings of 25 Roma Associations were completed and the finalisation of primary and the reserve lists of projects was expected in the following week. The National Minority Council of the Roma National Minority was invited to voice their objectives, if any, after the announcement of the list, after which relevant clarifications can be provided. Tyndall reminded that European PROGRES supports Roma Culture Day celebration, which will take place on 30 September and invited all PSC members to take part in the event.

5.5 Support to the social inclusion project “El Sistema” in Vranje and Vranjska Banja

Ana Nedeljković briefed the participants about the El Systema Music Art Project, which facilitated inclusion of children from disadvantaged groups, especially Roma children, into the education system through group music making, and trained teachers on practices of social inclusion through musical education. It is proposed that the project is continued in Vranje and includes additional two elementary schools and two Roma centres. The planned budget for this seven month project is EUR 30,000.

5.6 Support to implementation of electronic building permit system

Jelena Bojović, Policy Director in the National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED) presented the Alliance’s Electronic System for Issuing Construction Permits project that has been developed in partnership with the Ministry of Construction, Transportation and Infrastructure since 2014. The system was finally introduced for the first time in 2016 and supports the Central Registry of Planning Documentation and facilitates filing for the municipal planning documentation. The project supported by the Programme will provide trainings to the municipalities and their Urbanism departments on ways to increase municipal capacities through mentoring as well as to improve the legal framework for building permits.

5.7 Support to Golija Mountain Development

Aleksandar Denda, Advisor to the Minister in the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications (MTTT) presented the project intended to support Golija mountain

development, implemented in partnership with the MTTT, as well as the relevant LSGs. The project was initiated in 2006 while the Working Group formed in 2014 spent the past 18 months on gathering all project documentation. The main activities include development of the detailed regulation plan for infrastructure corridor, which will create conditions for infrastructure development in the area starting with 2020.

Olivera Kostić presented the CfP for Proposals for Local Self-governments to Implement Vocational Training in Accordance with Local Employment Action Plans with the aim to increase the employability of vulnerable groups. All LSGs that have adopted their 2016 Local Action Plans for Employment and have allocated municipal funds for the annual active labour measures were eligible to participate.

Branko Budimir asked municipal officials if 30 days is sufficient duration for a Call, considering the holiday season. The municipal representatives agreed that 21 September was a reasonable date for application submission and that the extension of the CfP would not be necessary.

Olivera Kostić also presented the second phase of the CfP for assistance to Agricultural Producers Groups (APGs). During the first phase 32 APGs have been selected and subsequently became eligible for applying under the second phase for the total funds of EUR 200,000 with the maximum grant of EUR 40,000 per applicant.

Branko Budimir invited the PSC members to vote.

Agenda item 6

Voting

The PSC unanimously approved the following:

- Quarterly Report 1 January – 31 March;
- Annual Report 1 July 2015- 30 June 2016;

Funding of projects:

- Grants for local infrastructure projects:
up to 1,506,873 Euros + reserve list
- Grants for enhancing competitiveness through creation of jobs:
up to 253,880 Euros + reserve list
- Grants for supporting youth self-employment:
up to 183,307 Euros + reserve list
- Support to CSOs for piloting the Strategy for Roma Inclusion:
up to 150,000 Euros
- Feasibility study and planning documentation for Golija:
up to 300,000 Euros
- Social inclusion project “El Sistema” in Vranje/Vranjska Banja:
up to 30,000 Euros
- Support implementation of electronic building permits system:
up to 71,050 Euros

Criteria

- For the selection of agricultural producer groups for the second phase of intervention
- For support to the LSGs in implementation of vocational trainings

Agenda item 7

Other business

Ana Stanković thanked the Mayor of Vranje for hospitality and the European PROGRES team for activities conducted so far and noted the uneven participation of Programme municipalities in the activities. She concluded that there was either lack of interest or low capacities at the municipal level but that all administrations need to be more active and complete projects on time.

Branko Budimir thanked all participants for attending and expressed hope that the approved projects will be implemented without hindrance.

Marko Vujačić proposed that the next PSC should take place in Surdulica while Jasmin Hodžić proposed Priboj. Branko Budimir added that the consultations on the matter will continue and added that the weather conditions and accessibility of the municipality should also be considered.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
European PROGRES Second Annual Steering Committee			
Vranje 10 August 2016			
Organisation	Name	Position	
STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS			
1.	European Integration Office - SEIO	Branko Budimir	Acting Assistant to the Director of the European Integration Office
2.	Ministry of Economy	Miona Popović Majkić	Head of Group for Planning of IPA Projects
3.	Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection	Branislav Veljković	Advisor for the promotion of IPARD Programme
4.	Government of Serbia Coordination Body for the	Jelena Čolić	Deputy Director of the Coordination Body's Office
5.	Standing Conference of Towns and	Ljiljana Jovanović	Project Manager
6.	European Union Delegation to the	Ana Stanković	Project Manager
7.	Swiss Agency for Development and	Petar Vasilev	National Programme Officer
International Organisation			
8.	OSCE	Sherif Abduli	Coordinator of the OSCE Office in Bujanovac
Institutions			
9.	Roma National Council	Vitomir Mihajlović	President
10.		Žika Mitrović	Vice President
11.	NALED	Jelena Bojović	Policy Director
12.	Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit	Ivan Sekulović	Manager
13.		Irena Latinović	Coordinator
	Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications	Aleksandar Denda	Advisor to the Minister
Host			

14.	City of Vranje	Slobodan Milenković	Mayor
15.		Jasmina Petrović	LED Office Associate
16.		Milan Stojanović	Public Relations Office Intern
17.		Ana Golubović	Public Relations Office Intern
18.		Nikolija Stanković	Public Relations Office Intern
MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVES			
Municipality		Name	Position
19.	Aleksinac	Čedomir Rakić	Deputy Mayor
20.		Dalibor Marković	Head of the Department for Economy
21.	Babušnica	Goran Dimitrijević	Deputy Mayor
22.		Milan Iskrenov	LED Office Coordinator
23.	Bela Palanka	Goran Miljković	President of Interim Municipal Government
24.		Biljana Milenković	Project Team
25.	Blace	Jasmina Lapčević	Secretary of the Municipal Assembly
26.	Bojnik	Boban Petrović	Assistant to the Mayor
27.		Saša Dodić	Municipal Associate
28.	Bujanovac	Enis Salihi	Head of LED Office
30.		Fazila Azemović	Head of LED
31.	Bosilegrad	Vojislav Božilov	Culture Centre Director
32.		Igor Jovanovski	Culture Centre
33.	Doljevac	Bratislav Jovanović	Assistant to the Mayor
34.		Neda Jovanović	LED Office Associate
35.	Gadžin Han	Goran Stojiljković	Deputy Mayor
36.		Dragan Mijlaković	Assistant to the Mayor
37.	Ivanjica	Nenad Glavinić	Assistant to the Mayor
38.		Milka Kaplanović	LED Office
39.	Knjaževac Knjaževac	Marija Jelenković	Head of Department of Economic and Social Affairs
40.	Kuršumlija	Radoljub Vidić	Mayor
41.	Lebane	Marjan Stanković	Head of Department for Public Affairs
42.	Leskovac	Marija Jovanović	Assistant to the Mayor
43.		Đorđe Stanković	LED Office Coordinator
44.		Saša Mladenović	LED Office Coordinator
45.	Medveđa	Svetlana Todorović	Head of the Municipal Administration
46.		Ivan Kostić	Head of the Department of Urbanism
47.	Merošina	Sanja Stajić	Mayor
48.		Nataša Andrejević	LED Office Associate
49.	Nova Varoš	Branko Bijelić	Mayor
50.	Novi Pazar	Faruk Suljević	Assistant to the Mayor
		Milena Ilić	City Administration Associate
51.	Preševo	Siprim Arifi	Mayor
52.		Armend Aliu	Assistant to the Mayor

53.		Gazmend Selmani	Head of Mayor Cabinet
54.	Priboj	Jasmin Hodžić	Head of the Department for
55.	Prijepolje	Nebojša Žunić	Municipal Councillor
56.	Prokuplje		Mayor
57.		Vladimir Pešić	Municipal Councillor
58.	Raška	Maja Vujanac	Head of Mayor's Cabinet
59.	Sjenica	Maida Kasumović	Head of Economy and Development Department
60.	Surdulica	Ankica Žegarac Milenković	LED Office Associate
61.		Kristina Savić	LED Office Associate
62.	Trgovište	Nenad Krstić	Mayor
63.		Jelena Stanisljević	Deputy Mayor
64.	Tutin	Bajram Aljović	Head of LED Office
65.	Vlasotince	Zoran Todorović	Mayor
66.		Marinko Đorđević	Head of LED Office
NGO			
Organisation		Name	Position
67.	LIGA Roma SKRUG	Osman Balić	Chairman
68.	Union of Roma Societies of Pčinja	Nenad Tairović	Chairman
69.	Association "Radanska ruža"	Predrag Stošić	Director
71.		Saša Đorđević	Coordinator
72.	NGO Nexus Vranje	Vesna Cvetković	Steering Committee President
73.		Nataša Milosavljević	Coordinator
74.	Citizen Association "Optimist"	Vladimir Stojanović	Programme Director
75.	Roma Association Prokuplje	Dejan Živković	President
Development Agencies			
76.	Regional Agency for Economic Development and Entrepreneurship of Pčinja District - VEEDA	Biljana Stojanović	Deputy Director
77.		Jelena Antić	Monitoring and Communication Manager
78.	Regional Development Agency Eastern Serbia - RARIS	Vladan Jeremić	Director
79.	Regional Development Agency Zlatibor	Nataša Knežević	SMEs Manager
Organisation		Name	Position
80.	European PROGRES	Graeme Tyndall	Programme Manager
81.	European PROGRES	Marko Vujačić	National Programme Manager
82.	UNOPS	Dušan Čukić	Programme Advisor
83.	European PROGRES	Jasmina Ilić	UNOPS Advisor for Infrastructure
84.	European PROGRES	Ana Nedeljković	Sector 1 Manager
85.	European PROGRES	Olivera Kostić	Sector 2 Manager
86.	European PROGRES	Milan Kolašinac	Sector 3 Manager
87.	European PROGRES	Nermin Hasanović	Regional Coordinator for South West Serbia
88.	European PROGRES	Nataša Ivanović	Programme Associate
89.	European PROGRES	Ivan Mladenović	Programme Engineer
90.	European PROGRES	Boris Zlatanov	Programme Engineer
91.	European PROGRES	Mladen Cvetanović	Programme Associate for Business

92.	European PROGRES	Slobodan Derikonjić	Regional Associate
93.	European PROGRES	Edin Bašić	Programme Associate for Good
94.	European PROGRES	Aleksandra Radivojević	Regional Associate
95.	European PROGRES	Ivana Todorović	Regional Associate
96.	European PROGRES	Evgjenije Isljami	Regional Associate
97.	European PROGRES	Enis Ujkanović	Programme Associate
98.	European PROGRES	Marija Radulović	Communications Associate