



Public Call for Proposals for Local Self-governments to Implement Vocational Training in Accordance with Local Employment Action Plans CFP 07-2016

1. Background

European PROGRES is a multi-donor Programme, financed by the European Union (EU), the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Serbia, designed to support sustainable development in the South East and South West Serbia. The Programme has been conceptualised jointly with the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (SEIO), whose responsibility is to monitor implementation and provide assistance and facilitation. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has been granted with an initial budget of 17.46 million Euros and has the overall responsibility for the Programme implementation.

Through a multi-sector approach this Programme will contribute to sustainable development of underdeveloped areas and creation of more favourable environment for infrastructure and business growth by strengthening local governance, improving vertical coordination, planning and management capacities, improving business environment and development, as well as enhancing implementation of social inclusion and employment policies. European PROGRES document outlines the vocational training activity as means to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply on the labour market, through local labour market research and development of training programmes tailored to specific requirements of potential employers, and having as goal increased gender balanced employability.

The Programme works towards achieving four main results, while good governance principles are interwoven as a cross-cutting aspect of the entire intervention:

1. Strengthened local governance, planning and management capacities through introduction of new, or improvement/elimination of existing procedures in line with the principles of good governance
2. Increased competitiveness of local economy through improved business environment and management/organisational capacities of small and medium enterprises/agricultural cooperatives
3. Improved access to employment, offering equal opportunities to both men and women, and social inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups through development and implementation of local policies resulting in reduced migration from South East and South West Serbia
4. Effects of Serbia's European accession communicated to general public.

The final beneficiaries, but also the key stakeholders and financial contributors of this Programme are 34 local governments (LSGs) from the third and fourth group of development level, which have the responsibility of taking ownership of activities implemented in their territory:

- Novi Pazar, Raška and Tutin in the Raška District

- Nova Varoš, Priboj, Prijepolje, Sjenica in the Zlatibor District
- Ivanjica in the Moravica District
- Prokuplje, Blace, Žitorađa, Kuršumlija in the Toplica District
- Leskovac, Bojnik, Vlasotince, Lebane, Medveđa and Crna Trava in the Jablanica District
- Vranje, Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vladičin Han, Preševo, Surdulica and Trgovište in the Pčinja District
- Brus in the Rasina District
- Aleksinac, Gadžin Han, Doljevac, Merošina and Svrlijig in the Nišava District
- Babušnica, Bela Palanka in the Pirot District
- Knjaževac in the Zaječar District.

Other beneficiaries include institutions founded by LSGs and public utility companies, civil society organisations (CSO) and media in the participating LSGs. It is the inhabitants of the South East and South West Serbia who will feel the biggest benefits of the Programme.

2. Justification of the Intervention

According to the National Employment Service (NES) official data, the participation of young people up to 30 years in the registered unemployment rate amounts to 24.4 percent while for persons older than 50 years that rate is 28.3 percent. In relation to the educational structure, the total number of people with no qualifications and low-skilled (I and II level) that are on the NES register is 232,385 which represents nearly a third (32.2 percent) of the total number of unemployed persons. People with the secondary level of education (III - V grade) represent 53.6 percent, while the share of persons with higher education (VI - VIII level) is only 14.2 percent. More than 485,000 persons, or 67.3 percent have been unemployed longer than 12 months, which puts them in a category of long-term unemployment. In addition, the official statistical data show that education of Roma men and women is significantly lower than the average, thus affecting their employment opportunities.

The main priority of the National Employment Action Plan for 2016¹ is improved access to the labour market, particularly for the disadvantaged groups, including youth up to 30 years of age, redundancy, older than 50, unemployed without any or with low qualifications, long-term unemployed², persons with disabilities, Roma, and social assistance beneficiaries. One of measures to achieve this is improvement of knowledge and skills of the disadvantaged.

The European PROGRES Programme document outlines the vocational training as means to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply on the labour market. While following the National Employment Action Plan, the Programme will provide grants to support local self-governments in implementation of training

¹ The National Employment Action Plan for 2016 is available at http://www.poslodavci.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/nacionalni_plan_zaposljavanja-2016-1.pdf

² According to the National Employment Strategy for 2011-202 period, long-term unemployed are those being unemployed for a period longer than 12 months. The National Employment Strategy is available at http://www.ombudsman.osobesainvaliditetom.rs/attachments/016_Nacionalna%20strategija%20za%20zaposljavanje.pdf

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programmes for vulnerable groups. The suggested measures will derive from the Local Employment Action Plans and be tailored to specific requirements of potential employers.

3. Objectives of the Intervention

Overall objective: Enhance employability of vulnerable groups in the South East and South West Serbia.

Specific Objective: Enhance knowledge, skills, and competencies of at least 100 unemployed vulnerable persons from the South East and South West Serbia and reduce the mismatch between demand and supply on the labour market.

4. Scope of the Intervention

The Programme will support the LSGs in implementation of active labour policy measures related to vocational training that are envisaged in their LEAPs enhancing better employability of the vulnerable unemployed groups in accordance with the needs of the local labour market.

5. General Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants and activities

In order to be eligible for support, the applicant must fulfil the following criteria:

- i. Be one of 34 local self-governments that participate in the European PROGRES Programme
- ii. The adopted Local Employment Action Plan for 2016 which envisages active labour policy measures related to vocational training i.e. training for known employer, professional practice (intended for high educated young people who need to gain the first hand experience in their field of education) and acquisition of specific practical knowledge (intended for low educated people in order to gain additional skills and knowledge)
- iii. Allocated municipal funds for active labour measures at the local level
- iv. Proposed activities must predict measures deriving from LEAPs that targets one of more of the following vulnerable groups: youth up to 30 years of age, redundancies, older than 50, unemployed without any or with low qualifications, persons unemployed longer than 12 months, persons with disabilities, Roma and social assistance beneficiaries.
- v. One applicant can apply for only one project

Financial allocation provided by the European PROGRES

The overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is 100,000 Euros. The award per grantee shall not exceed 10,000 Euros.

The European PROGRES reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Duration of the intervention

The planned duration of the intervention may not exceed eight months following the signing of a grant agreement. This period includes preparatory activities, implementation of active labour measures envisaged by the LEAP related to vocational training, and preparation of the final report. However, the implementation must be finalised by 1 June 2017 at the latest.

Applicant co-funding

Applicants are expected to provide cost share of at least 20% of the requested award. The total applicant cash co-funding cannot exceed 49% of the requested award.

6. Selection Criteria

Technical evaluation of the received proposals will be conducted in line with the following selection criteria.

CRITERIA	MAX POINTS
Operational Capacity	20
1.1 Does the applicant have experience in project management? <i>Applicants with references on successful implementation of three or more projects (e.g. projects involving trainings, international donors, etc.) will be awarded with five (5) points</i>	5
1.2 Does the applicant have knowledge of the issues to be addressed? <i>Applicants with references for three or more activities or projects related to vocational training will be awarded with five (5) points</i>	5
1.3 Did the applicant cooperate with the National Employment Service in implementation of active labour measures? <i>Applicants with references to at least one project with the NES will be awarded with five (5) points</i>	5
1.4 Does the applicant have adopted LEAPs for periods before 2016? <i>Applicants with adopted LEAPs for years 2015 and 2014 will be awarded with five (5) points and applicants with either 2015 or 2014 LEAP will be awarded with two (2) points</i>	5
Relevance of the Action	20
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?	10
2.2 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.3 Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, or addressing of multi-layered vulnerability, or innovation and best practices?	5
Effectiveness and Feasibility of the Action	15

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3.1 Are the proposed activities appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outputs and outcomes of the action?	5
Impact of the Action	30
4.1 What is the number of people that is expected to receive the vocational training? <i>Projects with up to 15 beneficiaries will receive five (5) points and additional five (5) will be awarded for projects with more than 15 beneficiaries</i>	10
4.2 How many jobs are expected to be generated after implementation of the proposal and whether the applicant provided valid argumentation for assertion? <i>From one to three jobs – five (5) points; from three to five jobs – ten (10) points; from five to ten jobs – 15 points; over ten jobs – 20 points</i>	20
Budget and Cost-effectiveness of the Action	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the ration between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	10
TOTAL POINTS	100

Only the applications that have been given a minimum total score of 50 points will be considered for selection.

7. Application Procedure

Application forms and supporting documents

The applicant has to submit the following application forms in English language:

- Application form (Annex A)
- Logical framework matrix (Annex B)
- Application budget (Annex C)
- Project proposal submission form (Annex 1)
- The co-funding statement (Annex 3)

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

The grantees must monitor their own projects and prepare relevant records, including photos, which must be included in all reports.

The following reports will be expected from the grantee:

- Monthly progress reports by 5th day of the following month (after the first month and thereafter)
- The final report assessing and analysing implemented project, its outputs and outcomes, no later than 30 days upon completion of activities

All reports should be in English and include narrative, financial aspects and photos. These reports will be considered public information.

European PROGRES will monitor implementation and will audit grantees. The grantee can be evaluated at any time during the project implementation and subsequent actions may be taken according to the assessment's findings. The payment schedule will be linked to the project milestones and findings from the Programme's audits.

Selection of beneficiaries

UNOPS, as implementing partner of European PROGRES, reserves the right to participate in the selection of training beneficiaries, while respecting national and local regulatory framework in this area.

Additional consideration

Successful project proposals **must demonstrate** awareness of good governance requirements and sensitivity to gender. The applicant **must** clearly indicate how vulnerable and marginalised groups will be involved in and/or benefit from the project.

Indicative timeframe

Activity	Timeframe/ Deadline
Launching of the Public Call	Week of 15 August 2016
Organisation of Info Sessions for the Call	Late-August 2016
Deadline for Submission of Applications	22 September 2016 – by 15:00 hrs
Information on the Evaluation Results	14 October 2016
Signing of Agreement	31 October 2016

Deadline for submission of the application

The deadline for submission of the applications is **22 September 2016, at 15:00h** local time as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt by European PROGRES representative. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

All requested forms must be filled out appropriately. Insufficient information or failure to provide inputs for requested questions in the forms will result in dismissal of application.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Where and how to send the application

The application forms with required supporting documents must be submitted in one original and one copy in A4 size. The complete application package must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-ROM). The electronic format must contain exactly the same application as the paper version.

The outer envelope must contain the following information:

- Reference number of the Call for Proposal
- The title of the Call for Proposal
- The full name and address of the applicant and

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- The words "Not to be opened before the opening session" and "NE OTVARATI PRE ZVANIČNOG OTVARANJA PRIJAVA".

The application must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or hand-delivered (a signed and dated certificate of the receipt will be given to the deliverer) at one of the addresses given below, before the stated deadline:

European PROGRES

Ćirila i Metodija 23,
18000 Niš, Republic of Serbia

or

Kragujevačka 1,
36300 Novi Pazar, Republic of Serbia

or

Kneza Miloša 52,
17 500 Vranje, Republic of Serbia

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

For more information about the Call please contact: Nataša Ivanović, Programme Associate for Empowerment of the Vulnerable Groups, European PROGRES Programme, natasai@unops.org mobile: 063/8614 528