# Programme Synopsis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>The European Partnership with Municipalities Programme – EU PROGRES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>CRIS Number: 2010/242-918, IPA 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall objective</td>
<td>To contribute to enhanced stability and socio-economic development in the South and South West Serbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To enhance governance, municipal and inter-municipal management capacity and social, economic and physical infrastructure in a holistic, area-focused fashion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total budget</td>
<td>18.1 million Euros</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start date</td>
<td>1 July 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>End date</td>
<td>Originally scheduled to end on 31 March 2014</td>
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| Zones covered by the project                                        | - Ivanjica, Nova Varoš, Novi Pazar, Priboj, Prijepolje, Raška, Sjenica, and Tutin in the South West Serbia  
- Blace, Žitorađa, Kuršumlija, Prokuplje in Toplica  
- Bojnik, Vlasotince, Lebane, Leskovac, Medveđa, Crna Trava, Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vladičin Han, Vranje, Preševo, Surdulica, Trgovište in the South Serbia |
| Donors                                                              | The Delegation of the European Union (DEU)  
The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)  
The Government of the Republic of Serbia |
| Implementing partner                                                | United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) |
| Report date                                                         | April 2013                                                        |
| Period covered                                                      | January - March 2013                                               |
| Prepared by                                                         | Graeme Tyndall, Manager of the UNOPS Serbia Project Centre and EU PROGRES Programme Manager  
EU PROGRES, Timočka 4, 18400 Prokuplje |
## 2 Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ANMC</td>
<td>Albanian National Minority Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>BDZ</td>
<td>Bosniak Democratic Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>Business Incubator Centre</td>
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<td>BIRN</td>
<td>Balkan Investigative Reporting Network</td>
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<td>CAC</td>
<td>Citizens Assistance Centre</td>
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<td>CAS</td>
<td>Citizens Advisory Service</td>
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<td>CB</td>
<td>Coordination Body for Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveđa</td>
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<td>CIF</td>
<td>Citizens’ Involvement Fund</td>
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<td>CIP</td>
<td>Capital Investment Planning</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>CzDA</td>
<td>Czech Development Agency</td>
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<td>DEU</td>
<td>Delegation of the European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRP</td>
<td>Detailed Regulation Plan</td>
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<td>DS</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EU PROGRES</td>
<td>European Partnership with Municipalities Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>Gender Equality Mechanism</td>
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<td>GG</td>
<td>Good Governance</td>
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<td>GRP</td>
<td>General Regulation Plan</td>
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<td>LED</td>
<td>Local Economic Development</td>
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<td>LSG</td>
<td>Local Self Government</td>
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<td>LTA</td>
<td>Local Tax Administration</td>
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<td>NES</td>
<td>National Employment Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIP</td>
<td>National Investment Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMC</td>
<td>National Minority Council</td>
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<td>OHMR</td>
<td>Office for Human and Minority Rights</td>
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<td>OSDUA</td>
<td>Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas</td>
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<td>OSS</td>
<td>One Stop Shop</td>
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<td>PB</td>
<td>Participatory Budgeting</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Programme Steering Committee</td>
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<td>PUC</td>
<td>Public Utility Company</td>
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<td>QMS</td>
<td>Quality and Management System</td>
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<td>RfP</td>
<td>Request for Proposals</td>
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<td>RNMC</td>
<td>Roma National Minority Council</td>
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<td>SDA</td>
<td>Party of Democratic Action</td>
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<td>SDC</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
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<td>SDP</td>
<td>Sandžak Democratic Party</td>
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<td>SEDA</td>
<td>Regional Development Agency of Sandžak</td>
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<td>SEIO</td>
<td>Serbian European Integration Office</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
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<td>SNS</td>
<td>Serbian Progressive Party</td>
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<td>SPS</td>
<td>Socialist Party of Serbia</td>
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<td>SS</td>
<td>South Serbia</td>
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<td>SWS</td>
<td>South West Serbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<td>UNOPS</td>
<td>United Nations Office for Project Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWTP</td>
<td>Waste Water Treatment Plant</td>
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Executive Summary

By the end of the first 2013 quarter, EU PROGRES contracted 201 projects: 107 or 53% were completed, which is 8% increase in comparison to the previous reporting period; 42 (21%) were fully on track; 41 (20%) were delayed with low risks; one project is critical; no projects were cancelled during this quarter. The total number of discontinued projects to date is ten.

EU PROGRES efforts to facilitate investments and generate employment have been fruitful: it is estimated that the Italian shoe manufacturer Geox will invest almost 16 million Euros, and employ 1,250 people in the next one to three years in its new factory to be built in Vranje. EU PROGRES’ support to develop detailed regulation plans (DRP) for Vranje’s Industrial Zone is instrumental for attracting this and other ventures as conditions are created to issue location permits. Positive developments were also recorded in the Leskovac Green Zone, one of key EU PROGRES projects, where a Greek company expressed interest to commit 75 million Euros into algae production and the City is considering using part of the Green Zone to host a new plant. This may be very positive development but could also change initial concept for the Green Zone.

This quarter also demonstrated importance of planning and technical documentation. Sjenica, for example, while using technical and planning documentation developed thorough EU PROGRES and its predecessor PRO, and continuing the work on the replacement of water pipelines that started with EU PROGRES support, obtained about 19.5 million dinars for new projects from the Government of Serbia. In Bujanovac, completion of the Elaborate, which is an integral part of Bujanovac Spatial Plan, enabled the municipality to work on development of the main design for the construction of the water well, which would improve water supply for the town and the settlements.

Programme’s work on good governance produced several major achievements. Participatory budgeting that was implemented in 12 municipalities shown initial impact: local budgets for 2013 in all 12 participating municipalities reflects priorities specified by some 5,000 citizens who took part in budgetary forums or voted for their preferences in allocation of local funding. For example, in Vranje, the highest priority for the citizens was youth employment and the City allocated 38 million dinars for this purpose for the first time. The priority for Leskovac citizens was opening of jobs and the City assigned funds to employ 54 young professionals with average grades above 9.00 while 70,000 Euros were put aside for employment subsidies. Citizens’ Involvement Fund (CIF) projects continued to improve lives on the local level and again proved to be solid capacity building exercise: compared to CIF-1, when half of the projects were delayed which led to contract extension, after five months of implementation of CIF-2 projects, only three projects, out of 26, will need extension. Almost 570 citizens received support through Novi Pazar and Preševo Citizens’ Advisory Service (CAS).

Nova Varoš has made a huge step in providing institutional framework for improving the quality of life of men and women on the local level, with EU PROGRES support. In March, the Municipal Council voted to establish Gender Equality Council, adopted the Local Action Plan for Gender and European Charter for Equality of Men and Women in Local Life. Priboj also adopted the European Charter. EU PROGRES extended support to municipalities to prepare local action plans (LAPs) for improvement of position of women. Sjenica, Raška and Žitorađa adopted the plans, while LAPs for Ivanjica, Prijepolje, Priboj and Tutin have been submitted into the procedure.
In 14 municipalities where the Programme was providing support in linking small infrastructure projects with the good governance (GG) practices, there are 30 different new or improved local policies or regulations adopted by local assemblies, while additional 14 are in the stage of final drafts, awaiting entry into local assemblies’ procedures.

The highlight of Component 2 and possibly of the whole quarter may be the successful support to local tax administration offices (LTAs). Revenues in 11 municipalities participating in the tax administration project increased on average by 20% as the number of registered taxpayers rose by 17,000, which is twice the number planned at the beginning of the EU PROGRES Programme. According to the financial statements and closing balances of the LTAs, the increase in property tax invoiced is roughly 700,000 Euros in total, or 37.3% on average. The increase in collected (paid) property tax is roughly 210,000 Euros in total, or 24.6% on average.

The work on infrastructure projects progressed. Public procurements for the construction of the Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTP) were successful in Trgovište and Crna Trava. WWTPs should purify waste water for estimated 3,750 people. These, and other projects related to development of technical documentation for three recycling centres, regional landfill Meteris, studies for Kopaošik WWTP, as well as several local infrastructure projects which introduce bio fuel and reduce CO2 omissions, will contribute to cleaner air and water in the area. Completed local infrastructure projects continue to provide benefits: Nova Varoš Dental Clinic recorded 1,100 examinations of school children in the first quarter of 2013 which is 60% of all examinations done in 2011; the installed heating systems using biomass fuel in Prijepolje municipal building and Museum records savings of 45%, and 10% in Technical and Economy Schools, and in Novi Pazar High School, there were no shortening of classes thanks to the new boilers and the average temperature in classrooms reached 24 degrees, compared to 15 during the previous heating season. In Vranje the public utility company (PUC) has, during the construction of the water supply for the Ćoška Roma settlement installed pumps and pressure regulators of higher capacities creating technical preconditions for re-connection of two other, already existing, secondary street lines in the vicinity of the Roma settlement. As a result, the water pressure in those pipelines is much better and regular water supply for another 45 households has been ensured.

During the first quarter of 2013, over 270 media reports were generated in media across country, five times more than planned. External audiences praise communication with the Programme as “clear, with useful information, absence of bureaucratic language”. There were 5,798 unique website visitors during the quarter, comparing to the 2,500 planned for each quarter, thus doubling the plan. Furthermore, this is an increase of 16% in comparison to the same period last year.

The Programme tackled successfully issues of critical projects: from six in January 2013 it ended this quarter with one (new) critical project. Political instabilities at the local level continued and range from reshuffling of ruling coalitions to arrests of former mayors. This affected the Programme, as some changes slow down projects. Nevertheless, the Programme was able to (re)establish cooperation quickly. There are, however, two risks that emerged during this period and have to be tackled by EU PROGRES and the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) in the nearest future. First, EU PROGRES has to commit the remaining funding and the Programme has already prepared a range of commitment requests. Second, there are uncertainties with several significant projects that were previously approved. These uncertainties prevent the Programme to actually sign grant contracts and launch implementation, while leaving solid financial resources “blocked”. The project for the construction of the Bujanovac Faculty Building is a good illustration: EU PROGRES reserved up to 250,000 Euros for this project but uncertainties with the land ownership, lack of funds for the entire project and other complexities, at this stage, pose too high risk for approving the grant. Thus, it is essential for the PSC to make decisions about several pending projects as well as to consider
funding commitment requests, in the first half of April. Otherwise, the Programme may not be able to complete projects on time, even if decisions are positive.

3 Review of Progress and Performance

3.1 Policy and programme context

The political instabilities in the Programme area continue, with changes of coalitions and arrests of former municipal appointees for alleged frauds. In February, the ruling coalition in Novi Pazar disintegrated after a two months crisis. Assembly quorum was provided by a Bosniak Democratic Union’s (BDZ) councillor Hedija Škrijelj, who was later excluded from her party. The new coalition is composed of the Sandžak Democratic Party (SDP), the Sandžak National Party (SNP), the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and Bosniak Democratic Union. In Lebane, the Mayor Mića Stanković (Democratic Party-DS) was voted out of the office. The newly appointed Mayor is Zoran Ilić, the Lebane leader of the United Regions of Serbia (URS), while the new President of the Assembly is Gojko Marjanović, from the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). In Žitorađa, DS, the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), URS and the Unique Serbia (JS) formed the new Assembly majority, leaving the SPS in opposition. In another Toplica municipality, Kuršumlija, the Head of Administration was replaced for alleged slow down of processes and for failing to adopt decisions that were important for the municipal functioning. Two former Mayors, both from DS, and their several associates, from Leskovac and Vlasotince were arrested for alleged abuse of authority. The former Mayor of Prokuplje and the Director of the Centre for Social Welfare in Žitorađa were freed after spending a month in custody for suspected misuse of power. The Mayor of Trgovište, Radoslav Jordanović passed away after a brief illness, at the age of 54. Nenad Krstić, from the SNS, who was previously the President of the Assembly, has been appointed the Mayor.

Situation has been tense in the South Serbian municipalities Bujanovac and Preševo following disagreements of the local political leaders with the Government of Serbia, about replacement of a memorial for the so-called Liberation Army of Kosovo for Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa. Several protests were held, both to request keeping of memorial and removal of the monument for the Gendarmerie erected in Lučane village. The President of the Coordination Body for Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, Zoran Stanković continued regular meetings with the leaders of Albanian political parties in the South Serbia. A platform was agreed for further engagement on improvement of economic situation, use of language and national symbols, infrastructure, construction of maternity ward, education, integration of Albanians into the state system. The ethnic Albanian councillors from the South Serbia held a session at the beginning of March and agreed to request

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from the Government of Serbia to form a community of municipalities\(^8\). Stanković objected to any parallels being drawn with the situation in Kosovo stating that Albanians were equal citizens in the country, and that the “Government was committed to improve living conditions in the area, in line with the laws, Constitution and taking into consideration the international conventions”\(^10\).

The Minister for the Regional Development and Local Self Government, Verica Kalanović, visited the South Serbia twice in February. On the first occasion Kalanović participated in a panel discussion organised by the Centre for Democracy and Development of South Serbia, in Preševo, along with the Mayor and the EU PROGRES Programme Manager, where she promised assistance for completion of the construction of the maternity ward, and support in development of the plan for Industrial Zone\(^11\). Subsequently, Kalanović attended a meeting in Niš, with the representatives of Jablanica, Pčinja, Toplica and Niš Districts, along with the Prime Minister and other senior Government officials, to discuss opportunities for economic development.

Kalanović’s Ministry prepared an analysis “South Serbia - The Poorest Part”, which showed that this area is being depopulated swifter than any other, with 37 inhabitants leaving each day. One of the main development problems in the region is insufficient education of the entire population, which contributes to high unemployment. The South covers 16% of territory of Serbia, and is inhabited by 930,000 people, which is 13% of total population. The most difficult situation is in Crna Trava, Trgovište and Lebane, where the number of employees dropped by 47% in comparison to 2002. Average employment in the South is 18%, which is by 6.3% less than Republic average, while average unemployment in the region is 44.8%. In Žitorađa, Lebane, Bojnik, Preševo, Merošina and Doljevac\(^12\), unemployment is higher than 60%. The infrastructure is described as catastrophic: i.e. 40.5% roads are covered by tarmac, while the rest are either earth or macadam; 42% population is not connected to water supply system, and only 43% are connected to the sewage\(^13\).

The Census 2011 results on education showed that the number of people without primary school dropped, while the number of people with high school education increased (by 4%). The total number of illiterate persons decreased by 45.28%. When observed by sex 82.1% illiterate people are women. Crna Trava is among the five municipalities with the largest share of persons without educational attainment – 34.84%\(^14\). According to the data on religion, majority of population is Orthodox (84.6%), there are 5% Catholics and 3% inhabitants practice Islam. Serbian is mother tongue for 88.09% people, Hungarian for 3.38%, Bosnian for 1.93%, while 1.4% speaks Romani\(^15\).

Two Laws regulating infrastructure development in Serbia were adopted in March: the Law on Special Conditions to Actualise the Property Rights over Houses and Buildings Constructed without the Building Permit and the Law on Efficient Use of Energy\(^16\). The first concentrates on private houses mostly, and does not apply to any buildings on public grounds, national parks, protected areas, areas planed for the infrastructure corridors. There are over 700,000 houses built without

permits in Serbia, and this Law is among the legal documents that aim to legalise such cases. The latter Law regulates the framework, conditions and modalities of efficient use of energy and fuels in sectors of production, transmission and distribution of energy. It establishes: policies, from the National Strategy to the municipal level; the management systems; minimal requirements of energy efficiency etc. One of the outcomes of the EU PROGRES infrastructure project in Vladičin Han was forming of the municipal team for energy efficiency and appointment of the project manager, which is now formalised by the new Law.

In Vranje, the City Council voted to create a Free Zone in Bunuševac area, while the Government of Serbia allocated 100 million dinars for the works on levelling the ground in the Zone. EU PROGRES is funding preparation of the Detailed Regulation Plan (DRP) for Bunuševac and along with the ongoing arrangements in this Greenfield location conditions for the start of construction of Geox shoe factory will be created.

Floods in Novi Pazar, Raška and Tutin reconfirmed the relevance of EU PROGRES support to those local self governments to prepare technical documentation for regulation of riverbeds which would enable them to protect the communities from future similar problems.

Ivanjica Day Centre “Sunce” for children with palsy, previously supported by EU through PRO and EU PROGRES, continues to attract donors’ attention. The International Women’s Club raised 1.35 million dinars and were donated the money for sensory room, the first of its kind in the Moravički District.

BBC journalist Tamara Shrewd rated Novi Pazar and Đavolja Varoš (Kuršumlija) among the best ten tourist destinations in Serbia in her article “Serbia’s Seductive Charms”.

More detailed overview of area developments is available in the Annex III, Attachment 3.1.

18 Through PRO and EU PROGRES Programmes
3.2 Progress towards objectives

Employment and Investments

The Mayor of Vranje, during the February 2013 EU PROGRES Steering Committee announced excellent news for investments and employment in the South Serbia: the Italian shoe manufacturer Geox would start construction of a factory in the City Industrial Zone in May 2013. The investment of estimated 15.8 million Euros should facilitate opening of 1,250 jobs in the next one to three years. The Mayor expected this investment would trigger arrival of several Geox sub-contractors that should open additional 500 jobs. In addition, negotiations with the Italian furniture producer Ditre, about investment of 13.4 million Euros that could open another 400 jobs, have been progressing well.

EU PROGRES’ support to Vranje efforts to attract these investments is instrumental: one of two supported detailed regulation plans (DRP) for the Industrial Zone has been adopted by the City Assembly in January while the other will be put for vote in early April. Adoption of the DRP created conditions for issuing of the first location permit in the Zone, intended for the construction of Geox factory. In addition, also with the USAID support, while using developed DRP as the basis, Vranje has started to prepare the main design for roads with public infrastructure for the Zone. The development of the Main Design for the By-Pass Road to the Zone, supported through EU PROGRES, is in the final phase. The City already plans to use the Main Design to request funds for the construction of part of the by-pass road from the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Self Government. On the whole, cooperation between Vranje, the Government of Serbia, EU PROGRES and USAID make investments’ prospects in the City positive.

There were some positive developments in the Leskovac Green Zone: the City Assembly adopted the Action Plan for the Zone Development and criteria for investors. It is, however, necessary to change purpose of the land from agricultural to construction, renew communication with investors, and continue works on the roundabout construction that were stopped also because of discrepancies between the design and the location permit. In March, Leskovac signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a Greek company, which expressed interest to invest 75 million Euros into algae production plant. The Greek company would possibly open 4,000 jobs in the next five years while the City needs to provide 100 hectares of land. The City is considering using part of the Green Zone to host this investment. This could be a major success for employment in Leskovac area but it could mean a change in the current concept of the Green Zone, which was originally intended for fruit and vegetables production, processing and distribution. Nevertheless, this is a positive signal: investors showing interest for the Green Zone. Leskovac and EU PROGRES discuss next steps in order to utilise this interest.

During this period it became increasingly obvious how technical and planning documentation can help, primarily municipalities to facilitate investments or access funds: Sjenica municipality, for example, while using technical and planning documentation developed thorough EU PROGRES and its predecessor, PRO, and continuing the work on the replacement of water pipelines that started with EU PROGRES support, obtained about 19.5 million dinars for new projects from the Government of Serbia. The Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection has been in contact with EU PROGRES to explore opportunities to request IPA funds for the construction of the Banjica Landfill (covers Nova Varoš, Priboj, Prijepolje and Sjenica). This investment could be worth between four and six million Euros. EU PROGRES has started to collect comprehensive information on investments facilitated through Programme projects and data will be available in the Annual Report, in July 2013.
Governance and Capacities

This period brought a major advancement in Programme’s work on good governance as a cross cutting theme: 30 new or revised local policies or regulations have been adopted by assemblies in 14 municipalities, as additional result of earlier completed local infrastructure projects. These policies and regulations, when implemented, from the project management point of view should enhance impact and sustainability of particular intervention. From the governance perspective, this means that municipality should better perform some of its duties.

Many obstacles for (economic) infrastructure development, identified in EU PROGRES’ publication\(^1\), remain in place: it is clear that municipalities lack strong project teams, the criteria for selection of projects that should be developed and or funded are often not developmental, issues with ownership and Cadastre continue to be frequent.

Social Inclusion

The theme of social inclusion has remained central for the Programme: about 1,300 people from vulnerable groups, primarily Roma and elderly, benefitted directly from EU PROGRES activities: free legal aid was provided to 568 citizens helping them mainly to obtain personal documents, access education and social welfare; seven projects supported through the second call for the Citizens Involvement Fund (CIF2) were completed providing assistance to 605 people. The Programme has up to date provided direct assistance to over 4,000 vulnerable and efforts in this regard will continue.

3.3 Progress towards results

Result 1: Participative, responsible and transparent management with respect of human rights

The projects funded through the second round of the Citizens’ Involvement Fund (CIF-2) continue to be managed better and implemented more efficiently than those in the first CIF round (CIF-1). In most cases, activities are delivered in timely manner, in accordance with project plans and in line with the EU PROGRES procedures and milestones defined within the grant agreement. Compared to CIF-1, when half of the projects were delayed which led to contract extension, after five months of implementation of CIF-2 projects, only three projects, out of 26, will need extension. This is even more significant knowing that almost all projects had one month delay at the start due to issues with dedicated bank account opening. Furthermore, most audits are conducted smoothly, with no bigger problems, and therefore there is almost no delay in transfer of second and third tranches.

Along with impacting increased capacities of civil society organisations and municipal institutions to manage projects, CIF is contributing to improvement of lives on the local level. Six housekeepers and one nurse were engaged temporarily to provide daily assistance to 12 people with multiple sclerosis in the Pčinja District, out of which two are immobile and two live alone. Vranje Assembly voted to give location to the Paraplegic Association to install a copy machine kiosk. In Leskovac, equipping and opening of Mini Rehabilitation Centre for people with physical disabilities, and engagement of two physiotherapists enabled medical treatments for over 100 members of Muscular Dystrophy Association of Jablanica District. The Municipality of Surdulica transferred additional 110,000 dinars to the Society for Roma Education for issuing gratuitous ID cards to Roma people. Having and ID card will enable them to apply for child benefits, health insurance or other social allowance. So far, 288 Roma obtained ID cards. In Novi Pazar, local civil society organisations

and the City Administration are making an effort to raise awareness of Roma population hardship and started development of Action Plan to assisting this community. In Bosilegrad, ten poor families received mini green houses, tools and strawberry seeds and started production.

CIF projects also greatly contributed to inter-ethnic dialogue and tolerance. For example, two-day multimedia Festival of cultural diversity “We and Others” was held in Prijepolje to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and tolerance. A film, resulting from the three-month investigations conducted by young Bosniaks and Serbs, about uniqueness of two culture and connections between them, was premiered at the Festival.

Half year later, many partnerships and initiatives supported through CIF 1 continue to provide benefits. Good example is Raška, where all four CIF 1 projects continue to live. Two more members of Association for People with Special Needs of Raška were employed on carpentry related works at the Tourist Centre Kopaonik. Previously 17 members of the Association had temporary employment through the project. Municipal Folklore Association enrolled 50 new members and won Radio Television of Serbia Award “Heritage guardians”. Primary school which established primary waste separation through CIF 1, a year after the project, collected 11 tons of paper for recycling and reduced waste disposal to the river by 45%. The project which supported Manifestation "Fortress Boat Race" and contributes to promotion of cultural heritage was also effective: manifestation is now attracting new municipalities and includes arrangement of picnic places.

Initial impact of participatory budgeting is already seen: local budgets for 2013 in all 12 participating municipalities reflects priorities specified by some 5,000 citizens who took part in budgetary forums or voted for their preferences in allocation of local funding. For example, in Vranje, the highest priority for the citizens was youth employment and the City allocated 38 million dinars for this purpose for the first time. The priority for Leskovac citizens was opening of jobs and the City assigned funds to employ 54 young professionals with average grades above 9,00 while 70,000 Euros were put aside for employment subsidies. Efforts were put to ensure sustainability: Municipal Councils in Nova Varoš, Vranje and Leskovac adopted decisions to institutionalise participatory budgeting while 11 municipalities signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishment of participatory budgeting teams. Finally, participatory budgeting activities attracted attention of 30 local, regional and national media outlets thus additionally enhancing transparency of the process.

Almost 570 citizens received support through Novi Pazar and Preševo Citizens’ Advisory Service (CAS). In Prokuplje CAS has been incorporated into the Mayor’s People Office, which is the first step towards sustainability of this free legal aid mechanism. The municipality took over CAS’ employees on a temporary base and provision of services has continued. More detailed statistics is provided in the Annex I, attachment 1.1.

With Prokuplje re-appointing members of the Gender Council in March, there are nine operational gender equality mechanisms (GEMs) in the South West Serbia and Toplica District. Although officially established, GEMs in Blace and Novi Pazar are not active, while Kuršumlija has not yet selected its GEM members. Seven municipalities have allocated budgets for gender equality activities. Nova Varoš has made a huge step in providing institutional framework for improving the quality of life of men and women on the local level, with EU PROGRES support. This was the only municipality that has never had a gender equality mechanism. In March, the Municipal Council voted to establish Gender Equality Council, adopted the Local Action Plan for Gender and European Charter for Equality of Men and Women in Local Life. Priboj also adopted the European Charter. EU PROGRES extended support to municipalities to prepare local action plans (LAPs) for improvement of gender equality.

22 It has been agreed that EU PROGRES will only cover 12 municipalities in the South West Serbia and Toplica as PBILD Programme worked in the Jablanica and Pčinja on the same issues.
of position of women. Sjenica, Raška and Žitorađa adopted the plans, while Ivanjica, Prijepolje, Priboj and Tutin have been submitted theirs into the procedure.

In 14 municipalities where the Programme was providing support in linking small infrastructure projects with the good governance (GG) practices, there are 30 different new or improved local policies or regulations adopted by local assemblies, while additional 14 are in the stage of final drafts, awaiting entering into local assemblies’ procedures. These policies and regulations, if implemented, from the project management point of view should enhance impact and sustainability of particular intervention. From the governance perspective, this means that municipality should better perform some of its duties.

**Result 2: Municipal organizational effectiveness and efficiency improved and capacities to deliver services to citizens and business increased**

EU PROGRES description of action envisaged at least 10% increase in tax collection until the end of the Programme. Following a project that supported local tax administrations (LTAs), there was an increase in property tax invoiced, roughly 700,000 Euros in total or 37.3% on average. The increase in collected (paid) property tax so far is roughly 210,000 Euros in total or 24.6% on average increase. The effects are especially visible in Priboj, Prokuplje and Žitorađa where the increase in collection rate is 65, 83 and 99% respectively. Having in mind the cost-benefit ratio of the action, as the total investment was 129,000 Euros (EU PROGRES 104,000 Euros, and 25,000 Euros from the municipalities) causing an almost double return in collected property tax by the end of the very fiscal year during which the activity was implemented. Most importantly, these data will be further improved for 2013, as some of the new taxpayers’ database entries have not been invoiced in 2012, e.g. in Žitorađa or Sjenica, while for all of the municipalities, in accordance with the Law on Property Tax, all newly constructed premises registered in 2012 will be first invoiced for the first time in 2013. This number of new premises ranges from ten (in Žitorađa) to 320 (in Vranje) and, depending on the category and size of the premises, could significantly increase the revenues.

Works related to opening of the One Stop Shops (OSS) in Vranje and Leskovac are near the end and operational mechanisms for more effective and efficient communication and documents exchange between the City administrations and their respective PUCs have been formalized. In effect this means that the burden of responsibility for acquiring various approvals will be taken of the investors/citizens and taken over by the LSG, which as a result will most definitely mean much better service to citizens and business entities. Preparation for construction of OSS in Ivanjica and Novi Pazar completed and works should start in early April.

A new BIC Vranje project that should enable distant incubation for Roma entrepreneurs advanced: 32 most promising candidates were selected and attended three starting training modules: legal framework for business establishment, management for entrepreneurs and marketing.

Surudlica and Ivanjica adopted the Quality Management System (QMS) procedures and distributed them to all employees. The QMS should enable municipalities to improve efficiency in service delivery and better use of resources, draw clear accountability lines and enhance transparency by granting access to information about work of the municipal administration.
**Result 3: Support to municipalities in preparation of local urban planning documents**

DRPs for Bunuševac Industrial Zone in Vranje, Preševo Industrial Zone and Sokolica in Crna Trava were adopted by municipal assemblies, bringing the number of completed DRPs to five. In addition, five DRPs were approved by municipal planning commissions and awaiting assembly adoptions in April/May.

Importance of planning documentation is increasingly being demonstrated: by completing the Elaborate for the Protection of Water Springs, which is an integral part of the Bujanovac Spatial Plan, the municipality was able to work on development of the main design for the construction of the water well, which would improve water supply for the town and the settlements. The project is now ready for funding and demonstrates effectiveness of EU PROGRES’ action. While importance of plans for Vranje Industrial Zone was explained in previous sections, other municipalities are also starting to utilise planning documentation. Preševo used the DRP for municipal industrial zone designed through EU PROGRES and has started work on development of technical documentation. Furthermore, Preševo has requested from the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Self Government support for the construction of the access road to the industrial zone, using available planning documentation as a strong argument.

In Vranje the PUC has, during the construction of the water supply for the Ćoška Roma settlement installed pumps and pressure regulators of higher capacities creating technical preconditions for re-connection of two other, already existing, secondary street lines in the vicinity of the Roma settlement. As a result, the water pressure in those pipelines is now much better and regular water supply for another 45 households has been ensured.

**Result 4: Projects and project documentation prepared for key economic, environmental and social projects**

The Law on Public Enterprises from December 2012 did not properly predict establishment of regional PUC. Four municipalities that are involved in Banjica project, Nova Varoš, Priboj, Prijepolje and Sjenica, that planned to found joint public utility company (PUC) that would manage the Landfill were not discouraged – they had regular consultations and are close to agree to found joint Limited Liability Company, whose establishment would be more efficient while not negatively affecting management of the Landfill.

The Feasibility Study for the Waste Water Treatment Plant for Kopaonik, indicating location for the facility, has been completed. Stakeholders, primarily the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM) positively assessed the Study. The final approval of the Study is expected in April – this would enable EU PROGRES to finish preliminary design and thus create conditions for (funding of) construction of the WWTP. Although the key impact of this project will be provision of clean water, the action contributed to active involvement of the Government and respect of the good governance principles, primarily the rule of law and participation.

Building upon EU PROGRES’ water supply projects and documentation developed through predecessor (PRO), Sjenica obtained about 20 million dinars from the Government of Serbia for continuation of works. Tutin will fund works on the sewage collectors’ network this year. Main design is funded by EU PROGRES.

Works started on development of five technical designs in Novi Pazar, two in Tutin, and one in Bujanovac for the transfer station. The PSC approved development of the main design for the reconstruction of the Vranje Theatre.
Nova Varoš is financing construction works needed for the installation of the equipment for the recycling yard after EU PROGRES funded technical design.

Vranje already started to develop an application to request funds for the construction of part of the by-pass road to the City Industrial Zone from the Ministry of Regional Development and Local – Self Government on the basis of this Main Design developed through EU PROGRES.

**Result 5: Project financing facilitated through enabling contacts with ministries, donors and other projects**

Support has been extended to the Coordination Body Support to prepare a project proposal and determine the implementation modality for construction of the Bujanovac Faculty. Continuation of support to Prijepolje, Priboj, Nova Varoš and Sjenica to draft the foundation papers for the PUC Banjica.

**Result 6: Selected projects financed and implemented through EU PROGRES sub-projects**

**Infrastructure projects**

Ivanjica Kindergarten opened in February 2013, enabling enrolment of 180 children and employment of 28 people. This is an example of the effective project: technical documentation was developed through EU and Swiss funded PRO; the construction was funded by the Ministry for National Investment Plan; and the kindergarten was furnished and equipped through EU PROGRES. Previously opened Nova Varoš Dental Clinic recorded 1,100 examinations of school children in the first quarter of 2013, which is 60% of all examinations done in 2011 (prior to procurement of dental equipment). In Prijepolje the installed heating systems using biomass fuel records trend of savings: 45%, or 7,000 Euros saved compared to the previous heating period in Prijepolje municipality building and Museum and 10%, or 4,000 Euros savings in Technical and Economy Schools. In Novi Pazar, there were no shortening of classes thanks to the new boilers installed in the High School. Furthermore, the previous heating system could not exceed temperature of 15 degrees, while the new one reaches 24 degrees. The expenses in the City budget reduced from around six million dinars before the works to 968,000 dinars per heating season.

The project that will provide water supply to some 379 families in Jelašnica, Surdulica, was launched and was progressing well. Of 1,500 people who are benefitting from this project, 45% are Roma. The evaluation of offers received in an open public procurement for the construction of the Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTP) in Trgovište and Crna Trava is ongoing. WWTPs should purify waste water for estimated 3,750 people.

The City Council of Novi Pazar adopted the decision to join the company Regional Centre for Development of Agriculture as co-founder.

**Result 7: Awareness of the need for, the logic of, and the effects of changes communicated to a broad public**

During the first quarter of 2013, over 270 media reports were generated in all media outlets, clearly emphasizing European Union and Government of Switzerland support through various project and Programme activities. This is an increase comparing to the previous quarter, when 240 media reports were generated, and it is a valuable outcome comparing to the planned 50 reports per quarter. Media were interested in infrastructure projects, formation of clusters, and activities within campaign “Europe, That is You”. Nine press releases were distributed to all media only in this quarter in comparison with ten press releases planned annually. This increase significantly impacts high number of good quality media reports. Journalists praise the press releases as “very clear, full
of useful information and absence of bureaucratic language that is hard to understand.” As for the relations with media and public, EU PROGRES is a step ahead from other programmes”, said Vojkan Ristić, journalist for “Danas” daily newspaper.

Europe, that is you campaign kicked off successfully. So far, the campaign implementer organized a working lunch with the high representatives of 22 municipalities, including 14 mayors, on EU pre-accession instruments (IPA), and two trainings for 35 journalists on reporting on themes related to European integrations, with special emphasis to situation in local communities they come from.

Municipal officials provide positive feedback about the Programme. Jasmina Petrović, from Vranje Office for Local Economic Development said that EU PROGRES has recognized the main points of development in Vranje, and has supported all the segments: investment, infrastructure, good governance, and promotion. “We have good results and thus my message would be that we should learn from EU PROGRES and follow the structure of development programme”, she concluded. “You have helped us to obtain resources for improving the quality of lives of our residents and in that manner you have made our job easier”, said Jovan Ćorbić, the President of Raška Municipality. In an interview for the national daily Danas, Prijepolje Mayor Emir Hašimbegović said that the projects financed by the European Union and the Government of Switzerland through EU PROGRES led to concrete results which gave a new energy and a stimulus to the citizens to work harder on the development and improvement of living conditions.

The tenth Programme Steering Committee in Ivanjica gathered over 80 participants, including representatives of the European Union, the Government of Serbia, municipal officials and CSOs. There were 5,798 unique website visitors during the quarter, comparing to the 2,500 planned for each quarter, thus doubling the plan. Furthermore, there is an increase of 16% in comparison to the same period last year. Two blogs uploaded on the Programme website in comparison to six planned annually.

Within the Open Day activity, launched in November 2012 during the Good Governance campaign, 550 citizens approached Blace Mayor’s Cabinet or municipal high officials, mostly seeking help to find employment and one-time financial assistance.

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23 Bratislav Ivanović, journalist from Leskovac.
Result 8: A plan to develop the areas’ images and self-images as unique regions of Europe are established and implementation begun

More than 8,000 people visited the stand of Blace Municipality during the Tourism Fair in Belgrade, where Blace Plum Festival branding project was presented. During the Fair 1,000 brochures and DVDs with promo film about the project were handed out to visitors. The stand was visited by the State Secretary for Tourism within the Ministry of Finance and Economy, Iraqi Minister of Tourism, Ambassador of Indonesia to the Republic of Serbia, representatives of the Chinese Embassy and many local celebrities. Opening of the Tourist Info Centre in Blace, marked the end of the project.

Contract signed for the Cherry Festival project in Leskovac. Proposal for the promotion of the Green Zone is finalised and the contract will be signed in early April. The first draft of project proposal for “Promotion of Pešter Products” has been drafted. Other branding projects going on in accordance with the work plan.

More detailed overview of the status of each project as well as on planned/achieved outcomes and impact are provided in the Implementation and Impact Matrixes, the Annex II, attachment 3.2 and 3.3 respectively.

3.4 Activities undertaken

Component 1 - Good governance

Result 1: Participatory, accountable and transparent governance, respecting human rights

Activities

1.1 Citizens’ Involvement Fund supports projects that have resulted from partnerships of civil society organisations and local government institutions

CIF 1: Eighteen out of 40 projects were officially closed. Documentation for closing another 20 is prepared and pending Operations and Programme Managers’ approval. Benefits of the projects are still reported, e.g. two members of Raška Association for People with Special Needs were employed on carpentry related works at the Tourist Centre Kopaonik a year and a half after ending of the CIF-1 project.

CIF-2: out of 27 projects, ten are finalised (audits to be conducted to confirm completion). So far 182,508 out of 217,028 Euros were disbursed, with municipalities co-funding additional 34,645 Euros.

1.2 Citizens’ Satisfaction Surveys

The Request for Proposals (RfP) for organising the second Citizens’ Satisfaction Survey (CSS) has been advertised. The closing date is 29 April. The relevant ToR is available in the Annex I, Attachment 1.2.

1.3 Citizens’ Advisory Services provide practical assistance and information to citizens, enabling them to access their rights and entitlements

Prokuplje: the project ended on 31 January and the Citizens’ Advisory Service (CAS) has been integrated into the Mayor’s People Office.
Žitorađa: the project ended on 31 January. As the Office has not been integrated into the municipal administration, negotiations are ongoing with the top management to find institutional models for the continuation of CAS activities.

Novi Pazar: the project ended on 13 March. The integration of the CAS Office has still not been carried out in the manner stipulated by the project. A working group was created in January and it prepared a draft decision that regulates establishment of an advisory unit/department in the City. Due to the change of municipal authorities, the decision has still not been adopted.

Preševo: The project should end on 30 April, though implementer plans to request extension for up to two months. The decision is to be taken after the audit. During a meeting on integration of methodology CAS office the Mayor thought that existing municipal department for the provision of free legal assistance would be sufficient for services to citizens. According to CAS’ implementers, however, this department is not functional. On the other hand, the Mayor said he’d not object to assuming the methodology of current CAS’ work with beneficiaries in this unit.

1.4 Support local self-governments to conduct appropriate consultation on annual budgets, involving representatives of civil society and media

Participatory budgeting: BIRN submitted the draft final report in March, EU PROGRES sent feedback and requested an updated version. According to available information, 12 municipal24 budgets reflect priorities as specified by citizens in discussions and debates, and participatory budgeting process has been introduced as a regular activity. In Nova Varoš, Vranje and Leskovac, the procedure is defined and secured by the official Decision of Municipal Councils. In other municipalities the sustainability of the process is secured by the Memorandum of Understanding and institutional knowledge gained through the project. The project produced a booklet on local budgetary practices, “Citizens Budget Guide”.

Anti-corruption/development and adoption of municipal integrity plans and municipal information bulletins: although the process of development of integrity plans (IPs) started in January 2012, very few public institutions did any work. EU PROGRES is supporting 19 municipalities to finalise their obligation and held two workshops on the content of IPs, stages of drafting, forming of working groups and competencies thereof.

1.5 Conducting a baseline study on competiveness level in the twenty five municipalities

Following a request from donors, a baseline survey was expanded quantitatively – to cover 36 municipalities instead of 25 initially planned. Evaluation for the selection of the best service provider, after successful conduct of tender, is in the final stage and contracting is expected early in April. EU PROGRES has been also asked to conduct a survey on public private partnerships as well as skills gap analysis – preparations ongoing.

1.6 Support municipalities to develop and adopt Local Gender Strategies and Action Plans, with the aim of strengthening women participation in policy making processes

Priboj and Nova Varoš adopted the European Charter for Equality of Men and Women in Local Life, bringing the number of municipalities who adopted the Charter to ten. Nova Varoš, Žitorađa and Raška adopted Local Action Plans, while Ivanjica, Prijepolje, Priboj, Sjenica, and Tutin are finalising the process of adoption the plans by local Assemblies.

24 In Vranje, Leskovac, Kuršumlija, Bojnik, Surdulica, Žitorađa, Medveđa, Nova Varoš, Novi Pazar, Raška, Sjenica and Prijepolje.
The Call for Proposals (CfP) aimed at 12 gender equality mechanisms (GEMs) which were subject of EU PROGRES support was advertised on 20 March, with a closing date of 19 April. The objective of the Call is to further develop existing GEMs; capacities, to increase their visibility at the local level and to further empower local GEMs and reassert their positions within local decision makers. The Call criteria are available in the Annex I, Attachment 1.3.

1.7 Improve the ethnic representation of local-decision making in the Programme Area

Three National Minority Councils (NMCs) project: The project has been extended for the fourth and the last time and will end on 30 April. The last tranche, i.e. 3,920 EUR has so far not been transferred, as the unsettled debt is unresolved. Several events were organised, in Prokuplje and Bosilegrad, to present the project achievements and cultures of different minorities. The website in four languages - Roma, Albanian, Bulgarian and Serbian - is being finalised.

Support to the Office for Human and Minority Rights (OHMR): The EU PROGRES assistant at the OHMR took part in: preparation of the Draft Strategy for Fight Against Discrimination (2013-2018), meeting with representatives of Roma families living near the Ada Bridge that are scheduled to relocate to other parts of the City, logistical and administrative organisation of the Conference “Enhancement of Cooperation of State Bodies and National Minority Councils”.

Support for Establishment of Municipal Inter-Ethnic Councils: ToR for an expert, who will support to establishment of municipal inter-ethnic councils has been advertised and is available in the Annex I, Attachment 1.4.

1.8 Good Governance as a cross-cutting aspect of the Programme

Small (SIPs) and large infrastructure projects (LIPs): In 14 municipalities where the Programme was providing support in linking their SIPs with the good governance (GG) practices, there are 30 different new or improved local policies or regulations adopted by local assemblies, while additional 14 are in the stage of final drafts, awaiting entering into local assemblies’ procedures. While Bosilegrad, Bojnik, Ivaničica, Leskovac, Raška, Sjenica, Surdulica and Tutin are fulfilling virtually all discussed and agreed steps, other municipalities are still in the stage of having draft decisions/regulations prepared, with no actions by local assemblies taken up to now (e.g. Prijeponje and Lebane). There are concerns in Vlačin Han, Preševo or Medveđa, where agreed documents have not yet been submitted to the Programme for comments and suggestions.

Three major LIPs - Pčinja Fruit, Pešter Agriculture and Banjica Landfill, organised their project processes. E.g. in the case of Pčinja Fruit, support was provided to municipalities to establish the Project Steering Committee, to elect the Project Manager, to draft Rulebooks and criteria for distribution of the goods to the end users, and to begin process of establishing the project Sound Board.

With Novi Pazar finally making decision to join the Pešter agriculture project, this inter-municipal effort is back on track, as it is the case with the Banjica Landfill, which needs to resolve certain legal issues arisen after changes in the Law on Public Enterprises. For both projects a clear road-maps were created.

A certain level of concern, however, remains with the Leskovac Green Zone, where recent changes on political level brought some previously unforeseeable elements in the project implementation,

25 This obligation applies to 11 local self-governments in South Serbia: Preševo, Bujanovac, Medveda, Lebane, Surdulica, Vlačin Han, Bosilegrad, Bojnik, Žitorađa, Leskovac and Vranje.
such as the decision not to establish a new legal entity which would be dealing with the Zone, but instead to assign this task to the Local Agency for Development, whose commitment, competency and resources are yet to be determined.

**Ivanjica pure governance reform**: the Programme provided support to the municipality to better understand the planning process, to develop templates and harmonization/adjustment processes for the PUCs’ work plan elements and structure, both for mid-term and annual planning purposes; and in development of templates for quarterly and annual reports the PUCs are to be submitting to the specific municipal bodies and the Assembly.

**Vertical dimension/GG**: two workshops were organised, gathering 50 participants from 17 municipalities of Jablanica and Pčinja, representatives of the line ministries and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM). The initial assessment of questionnaires from the workshops pointed that an overwhelming majority of obstacles are the result of inadequate legislative solutions, unclear processes, undetermined or insufficiently determined procedures, poor communication and coordination, inadequately created public policies, impossibility of implementation of certain legislative solutions at the local level etc. The relevance of statements obtained at the previous workshops would be confirmed by organizing this type of a workshop in addition to providing an opportunity for representatives of higher level of authority to find the most effective solution in overcoming the identified obstacles. The preliminary plan is to hold this workshop in May 2013.

**Component 2 - Municipal management and development planning**

**Result 2: Municipal organizational effectiveness and efficiency improved and capacities to deliver services to citizens and business increased**

**Activities**

**2.1 Establishment of Citizens’ Assistance Centres in municipalities where they do not exist, and further improvement of services in existing CACs**

Three and a half month’s delay after a complaint procedure regarding tender for the construction of the CAC in **Crna Trava** ended in January, and the works started in March are progressing faster than planned.

Construction of CAC in **Bosilegrad** is finished. However, there are serious delays, as the Mayor has repeatedly refused to sign bank transfer orders for the construction works, formally accept the delivered IT equipment and sign the contract for furniture delivery.

The project proposal and technical descriptions and BoQs for the **Novi Pazar** CAC expansion project were discussed and finalized, primarily in terms of resolving property ownership issues and updating bill of quantities with the support of EU PROGRES engineers.
2.2 Strengthening of LED offices in their abilities to provide coherent and strategic support to business growth in their municipalities through promoting innovativeness and competitiveness of SMEs, and Industrial Park and Business Incubator Cluster Developments

Thirty-two candidates were selected for series of trainings that will lead to distant incubation through Business Incubator Centre (BIC) in Vranje. During March, three training modules - legal framework and regulations for business establishment, management for entrepreneurs and marketing - were completed.

Three clusters – Radan Mountain, Pešter Agro and South Serbia Fruit – signed EU PROGRES operational grants. Press conferences were organized for all three increasing the visibility of this activity and promoting clusters’ work (by meeting with other stakeholders – LSG representatives, regional development agencies, local tourism organisations or scientific institutions such as Kraljevo Agriculture Research Institute).

Start of foreign direct investment (FDI) attraction planning in five municipalities had to be postponed due to prolonged illness of the LED Expert. This is still not critical in terms of timely completion of the activity.

2.3 Technical Assistance to municipalities in establishing ‘One Stop Shops’ and simplifying administrative procedures for small and medium sized businesses

In both Leskovac and Vranje, Beta version of the web application has been installed and will be tested during the next two weeks. The organizational chart and re-systematization of the employees has been approved by the Cities’ administration and the One Stop Shops (OSSs) could be officially opened in April.

In Ivanjica and Novi Pazar the technical design for reconstruction and adaptation of the premises approved, works commence in April. The final version of the permitting guideline handbook approved by all parties involved and will be ready for printing during next month.

2.4 Support to LSG to improve the rates of collection of property taxes

Activity completed. Planned outputs exceeded, with 11 instead of planned ten LTAs receiving support to update taxpayers’ database. The cumulative number of new registered taxpayers in 11 municipalities exceeds 17,000, which represents an average 20% increase over the total number of taxpayers. This is twice more than initially anticipated by the respective municipal LTAs.

2.5 Support LSG to implement Programme budgeting

Participating municipalities - Medveđa, Vladičin Han, Raška, Nova Varoš and Vlasotince – underwent trainings on Programme Budgeting and Capital Investment Planning and acquired knowledge about approaches to accomplishing the goals of the programme, concepts and methodology, planning life-cycle costs, financial and cost benefit analysis, credit worthiness assessment. Following the workshops, data on local budgets of all five municipalities were collected and analysed in order to evaluate the financial capacities of local finances. The analysis covered current and capital revenues, own and shared revenues, current and capital expenditures, budget expenditures by functional classification, level of indebtedness and borrowing capacity, calculating operating surpluses. On-the-job trainings in the preparation of capital project proposals were held in all five municipalities. The trainings included the following budget beneficiaries: Raška (Agency for Development, Cultural Centre, Centre for Social Policy); Nova Varoš (Budget and Finance Department, Agency for Development, Tourism Organization); Vlasotince (Agency for Development, Cultural Centre, Health
Care Centre); Medveđa (Tourism Organization, Agency for Development, Centre for Social Policy); Vladićin Han (Agency for Development, Sports Centre). During the meetings, a Citizen Participation and Communication Dynamics Plan for involving key stakeholder groups in the preparation of Capital Investment Plan were developed.

2.6 Introduce Quality Management System in Municipal Administration

Surdulica and Ivanjica adopted new QMS and EMS procedures and distributed them to all municipal employees and implementation period commenced.

Prokuplje and Novi Pazar: draft municipal procedures reviewed and ready for adaptation.

Bujanovac: some of the draft municipal procedures reviewed and prepared in both Serbian and Albanian.

However, due to previous delays in Bujanovac and Novi Pazar, extension of the contract and change of payment schedule has been approved, so the completion can be expected by mid-June for these municipalities.

Technical description and minimum requirements for the Certification ToR were submitted by the consultants, and will be advertised by mid-April.

Result 3: Capacities for planning municipal and regional sustainable development strengthened and relevant development documents created

Activities

3.1 Support to municipalities in preparation of spatial, urban and waste management plans

Direct procurement: for up to nine planning documents, earlier approved by the Steering Committee started. With the exception of Radan Mountain and Caričin Grad archaeological site, all other plans are ready for tendering. Letters distributed to municipal urbanism departments in order to inform them about necessary documentation/relevant cadastre-topographic surveys that need to be submitted to EU PROGRES no later than 1 April.

General Regulation Plans (GRP): Sijarinska Banja – request for quotations (RfQ) for additional geodetic surveys closes on 2 April. Upon completion of additional surveying, draft GRP can be completed within ten days. Minimum one-month extension will be needed for completion of grant. Draft GRP for Kuršumlijska Banja should be ready by May. Extension of contract will be needed.

Detailed Regulation Plans (DRP): concepts for Trgovište Industrial Zone and Sports Centre were endorsed by the municipal Planning Commission, while drafts should be ready by mid-May.

Tutin, Vranje and Bojnik Planning Commissions endorsed draft DRPs for Ribariće settlement, Neradovac and Brestovac. Adoption planned for next assemblies’ sessions, most probably in April. Vladićin Han’s request for additional funds to complete the Environmental Impact Assessment was turned down, as this is not an obligatory part of the DRP. The draft DRP will be ready by mid-April. Assembly will adopt Kukavica and Jovac Lake DRPs in a session scheduled for 5 April. Bosilegrad DRP Ribarci border crossing has reached the draft stage without any problems and should be endorsed by municipal Planning Commission in early April.
Blace DRP Centre 1 is in the draft stage and should be finalized by the end of April, while the DRP for the Fruit Distribution Centre reached stage II, in which geodetic surveying should be conducted. This should happen during April, after which the DRP can be finalized.

3.2 Re-conceptualized. Assistance to municipalities to establish effective and sustainable mechanisms for capital investment planning

Please refer to 2.5 for more info.

3.3 Support to LSGs in planning to improve citizen access to key public services and social welfare entitlements regardless of citizenship status or ethnicity

Novi Pazar, Blaževo Roma settlement: Following the completion of the hydro-geological sonar research elaborate and identification of potential water source that could be used as a well for the water supply system for the settlement, the EU PROGRES engineer identified further tasks for the City, which should resolve issues related to the ownership rights on the lot where the source is situated, acquire exploration rights from the Ministry of Mining and Spatial Planning and obtain exploitation rights. This could consume from six to 18 months. Following coordination meetings with the City, technical description of the water supply system was finalised. However, the City failed to provide exact and detailed information of the timeframe for resolution of ownership issues (as the land where the pumping station and the reservoir should be located, are property of the Ministry of Agriculture and the PC “Serbia forests“). Final coordination meeting before any recommendation to the PSC is scheduled in early April.

Component 3 - Physical, economic and social infrastructure

Result 4: Projects and project documentation prepared for key economic, environmental and social Activities

4.1 Support to prepare documentation for inter-municipal economic, environmental and social infrastructure projects

Banjica Landfill – a set of instructions for forming regional PUCs was sent from the SCTM to municipalities in March, which enabled the Heads of Administration of Prijepolje, Priboj, Nova Varoš and Sjenica to adjust the founding documents for the Banjica management company. It was agreed that consultations with decision makers in each municipality should be convened, to re-consider the whether the new enterprise will take a PUC organizational model or LLT. At the same time, the municipal departments will initiate the work on determination of duties, responsibilities, borrowing conditions and founding capital. Regardless of the model, the deadline for registration of the joint enterprise is set for 15 June.

Redesign – due to staffing problems, one of the consultancies lagged in implementation and it was decided to terminate its contract as it could not guarantee it could complete the design as per technical control’s findings. EU PROGRES advertised for the design company that would finish the redesign. Deadline for contracting is the end of May, for the finalised design end July.

Sjenica Transfer Station – Sjenica received confirmation from the Ministry of Finance that their request for transfer of ownership from Srbija Šume is complete in terms of documentation supplied and that the case shall be transferred to the Property Directorate. However, at the end of March, the municipality still did not provide the follow up information about their application to the Ministry of
Finance, regarding the declaration of public interest. The deadline for Sjenica to issue the location permit was 31 March.

Development of the main design for the Meteris Landfill is in progress. Vranje Assembly adopted the concept DRP for the Landfill. The development of Strategic Environmental Impact Analysis for the Waste Management Implementation Plan is advertised, closing date 1 April.

The concept solution for the **bypass road to the industrial zone in Vranje** was presented to the City of Vranje. The completion is planned for the end of April.

The preliminary technical solutions for the third location for the **Waste Water System for the National Park and Tourism Centre Kopaonik**, Repuške Bačije completed. The Feasibility analysis will be done by mid April and will include three options, as requested by the Water Directorate: 1) WWTP in Rudnica – **preferred option and approved for further designing by the Directorate**; 2) WWTP in Lisina weekend settlement, collects all waters from the tourist centre as well; 3) WWTP in Repuške Bačije, with another WWTP in Lisina.

Contract signed for the **Technical Study of Underground Drinking Water Reserves for Raška**, and activities will start in the first week of April.

Designs for all 13 structures for the **regulation of Raška river watershed** are completed. Deadline for technical control is mid May.

Grant Agreement is signed for the **preparation of the Tourism Strategic Marketing Plan** for a part of the South West Serbia.

**4.2 Support selected municipalities to prepare documentation for municipal economic, environmental and social infrastructure projects – SLAP data base**

**Recycling Centres**: Raška and Vranje grants closed. The Ministry of Energy, Development and Environment replied to both municipalities that the contracts for construction of recycling centres were not valid any longer. **Nova Varoš** finances three million dinars construction works necessary for the installation of equipment. The contract for the equipment was signed. The consultants working on the recycling PR campaign did not produce proposal of acceptable quality. They were asked to revise the material, otherwise face cancellation of contract.

**Development of Technical Documentation** out of **23 local projects** eight were completed (Blace kindergarten extension in the last quarter); four are ongoing (main designs for the reconstruction of Dositej Obradović school in Vranje, water supply in Donji Stajevac – Trgovište, sewage collectors in Jošanička Banja – Raška should be finalised in April, while the Transfer Station in Bujanovac should be ready by the end of September). Novi Pazar signed the contract for development of five main designs in March. EU PROGRES advertised for the main design for sewage network in Tutin. The ToR for the regulation of Vidrenjak and Pećaonica rivers was put on hold because Tutin is considering change of scope of services. The deadline for Tutin is 31 March to come up with the final say. A new grant was signed with Vranje for development of the main design for the reconstruction of the Theatre.

**Result 5: Project financing facilitated through enabling contacts with ministries, donors and other projects**

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26 Previously two contracts were cancelled: the main design for Nova Varoš sewage collectors and procurement for the main design for Prokuplje green market
Activities

5.1 Support inter-municipal partnerships to develop project finance plans

Support to the Coordination Body for Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveđa in establishing preparing the project proposal and the implementation modality for the construction of the Bujanovac Faculty continued. Support was also provided to the Heads of Administration in Prijepolje, Priboj, Nova Varoš and Sjenica to draft the foundation papers for the PUC Banjica.

Result 6: Selected projects financed and implemented through PROGRES

Activities

6.1 Implementation of small municipal infrastructure projects in Blace, Kuršumlija, Prokuplje and Žitorađa municipalities

Prokuplje: contract for works signed for the regulation of Stražavačka Reka project, supervision nominated, start of works at the beginning of April.

Žitorađa: works on the reconstruction of the Dairy market started.

Blace: the tender package for the water system in Đepnica village prepared, to be advertised in April, with the start of works expected at the beginning of June.

Kuršumlija: projects commissioned.

6.2 Call for proposals for small scale municipal or inter-municipal projects

The first and the second calls for proposals: 19 out of 21 projects were successfully ended. In Novi Pazar, the contractor was selected for the installation of heating in the Sports Hall, works start in April. The Government of Serbia – Property Directorate signed the contract with Kuršumlija for the public interest over land, which enabled preparation of tender package for the green market project. Sjenica water pipeline – the first consignment of pipes delivered to Sjenica. The PUC “Vrelo” will install the pipes, signing of the contract expected in the first week of April.

Medveđa Termovent – training of workers depends on the delivery and installation of the machines for pellet production that are to be brought from Slovenia. According to the latest plan the machines would be delivered by early May at the latest. The Mayor is in constant contact with the Slovenian Development Fund for confirmation of delivery. The grant agreement is extended until end August 2013. The issue of registration of the rent of factory at the Cadastre office has not been finished yet.

Additional infrastructure projects available for funding: 18 local infrastructure projects ready for quick implementation - project duration not longer than six months, in total value 1,2 million Euros.

6.3 Financially and technically support the implementation of the projects of inter-municipal or national importance

Leskovac Green Zone – The Agency for Local Economic Development (ALED) was officially appointed by the Assembly to manage the Green Zone. The City signed a loose MoU with a Greek investor. The City is expected to finalise the change of the use of land from agricultural to construction by the end
of April. The works on the roundabout to the Green Zone, through the contract with the Roads of Serbia, stopped because the design is not in accordance with the location permit.

**Pešter Development** – all prefabricated elements to site delivered, brick laying works finished, assembling of the building structural elements started and should finish in the first week of April. Tender for procurement of agricultural machines for the Centre was closed on 28 March, evaluation of offers and contracting in April.

**The forming of the Regional Centre for Development of Agriculture (Pešter)** - The City Council of Novi Pazar adopted the decision to join the company Regional Centre for Development of Agriculture as co-founder, only after the letter of enquiry from the PSC. The Centre can now be registered.

**Water supply to Jelašnica Village** – works reached to the first interim certificate (20% completed).

**Regulation of Raška river watershed** – works on six priority structures advertised in March, closing date is 5 April.

Tender package for **Crna Trava collectors and WWTP** advertised, bid opening scheduled for 1 April.

**Vlasotince pumps** – delivery of water pumps for the municipal PUC in April.

**Bujanovac Faculty of Economy Building** - draft project proposal prepared and agreed with the Coordination Body. The formal applicant will be Bujanovac Municipality. The design company finished the main design and delivered it to Bujanovac, for issuing the building permit. However, two new issues arose in March, which slow down the process of contracting. The first are land property issues and the other discussions over the gap in funding. The latter is also impacting committing of funding from Component 3 for local infrastructure projects and could possibly affect adversely EU PROGRES relations with other municipalities.

6.4 **Implementation of municipal infrastructure projects in Pcinjski District municipalities**

**Establishment of Pčinja District Regional Fruit Production Centre** – the contract for the design and establishment of the experimental orchard will be signed in first week of April. Tender for the procurement of agricultural machines closed on 28 March, evaluation and contracting in April. The consultant prepared the training needs analysis and presented it to the working group. The training will be in each municipality, with translation into Albanian for Preševo and Bujanovac. The working group proposed the selection criteria for the distribution of fruit seedlings to the project steering committee. The steering committee will decide in the first week of April.

**WWTP Trgovište** – tender closed on 28 March, seven offers received, good turnout for the “design and build” modality. Six offers within the estimated value of works. Contracting expected in April.
Component 4 - Public awareness and branding of areas

Result 7: Awareness of the need for, the logic of, and the effects of changes communicated to a broad public

Activities

7.1 Communicate Achievements of Governance, Municipal Management, Development Planning, and Infrastructure Components

The tenth Programme Steering Committee meeting was organized in Ivanjica in February, with over 80 participants, including representatives of the European Union, the Government of Serbia, municipal officials and civil society. Prior to the meeting, a ceremony was organised to mark the end of project of equipping Kindergarten in local community Bukovica.

The final design of signboards for municipalities was prepared. The signboards will be installed by the main and regional roads in 25 municipalities, highlighting European Union support to the municipalities. In multi-ethnic municipalities, the inscriptions will be bilingual.

During the celebration of the Day of the City of Vranje on 31 January, EU PROGRES received a special award for outstanding contribution to the development of the local community. Video messages were broadcast from the Ambassadors of the partner countries – DEU, Switzerland, USA and Japan.

Programme website had 5,798 unique visitors, which is 16% increase in comparison to the same period last year 2012.

Final pre-press of “Obstacles to Infrastructure Development” publication in Serbian and English was prepared and sent for printing, with expected delivery date mid-April 2013. Prior to this, International Standard Book Number and Cataloguing in Publication inscription was obtained from the Serbian National Library, in order to produce brochure as official publication, filed in the National Book Registry.

7.2 Information-education and/or advocacy campaigns are implemented in partnership with civil society

Good Governance campaign ended in November 2012, but monitoring of activities of the Open Door initiative and other results continues. In Blace, 550 citizens sought support, mainly to find employment and get one-time financial assistance. In Ivanjica the process of introducing the Open Door has not started yet due to the insufficient engagement of the municipality. However, a desk and a phone line have been provided, but there is a problem in deciding who would work at the “Open Door” service. While the Mayor claims municipality has sufficient number of employees and one of them could be reassigned for this job, the Head of Administration pointed that the number of employees has been cut down to 68, from 79, and that a practitioner should be hired for a year, through the National Employment Service programme. Ivanjica has until mid-April to solve this issue.

Europe, that is you campaign kicked off successfully. So far, the consultancy organized a working lunch with the high representatives of 22 municipalities on EU pre-accession instruments (IPA), two trainings for 35 journalists on reporting on themes related to European integrations, with special emphasis to situation in local communities they come from. Campaign materials were produced and subsequently distributed at events - canvas bags, T-shirts, notebooks, pens. The campaign internet portal www.evropatositi.rs was launched with all information related to the campaign portal. Team of potential bloggers is formed and briefed on campaign goals and activities and will start producing
texts as of next month. Thirty-five schools applied for participation in the quiz on EU integration and European values. The first round of the competition is planned for 15 April, in Prokuplje. Cooperation with the Belgrade based EU Info Centre was agreed and will include content exchange and promotion of the campaign through EU Info Centre outlets, and use of promotional materials and info-sheets prepared for specific target groups by the Centre.

The ToR for the third campaign, on **environment protection**, was submitted to the PSC for approval. Donors, relevant ministries, selected NGOs and GoS and other relevant EU funded development programmes have been consulted and involved in preparation of the ToR.

**Result 8: A plan to develop the areas’ images and self-images as unique regions of Europe is established and implementation begun**

**Activities**

**8.1 Designs of plans and implementation of projects for image building in partnership with relevant organisations**

Tourist Information Centre in Blace, that was equipped through “Blace Plum Festival” project, was officially opened in February. The project was promoted during the Tourism Fair in Belgrade where 8,000 people visited the municipal stand.

Production of tourism signposting and coffee mugs within “Vlasina Health Factory” project was completed. In April, as the last activity, the Tourism Organisation of Surdulica will organise closing press conference.

“**Golija Lakes Myths and Legends**” text for the brochure was completed, design is in progress.

The manager of the “**Novi Pazar Way of Living**” moved to another job in January and the new manager was appointed from the Mayor’s cabinet/information department. The project had to extended until the end of May. In February, a promotional press conference was symbolically organised on Valentines’ Day to correspond to the project slogan “Fall In Love with Novi Pazar”. Preparation of the visual identity and tourism signposting is ongoing and will be finalised in early April. For signposting, all permits were acquired, however draft design and the content was not in line with main theme of the project – promotion of the City as a place with rich multi cultural heritage. The main signboards, scheduled to be posted on the regional road, presented only three Islamic monuments, rather that all main historical monuments.

Contract for “**Cherry Festival**” project was signed and the project activities will start in April. The proposal for the promotion of the “**Green Zone**” is completed but the contract has not been signed yet, as the project is pending the resolution of the unresolved issues in regards to the change of the purpose of the Green Zone.

Tourism routes were drafted within “**Preservation of Natural and Cultural Values on the Mountain Zlatar**” project and are being discussed among the Uvac Reserve and Tourism Organizations of Prijepolje and Nova Varoš. The Tourism Organizations are finalizing identification of households, which will be trained in providing tourism services.

The first draft of text for brochure and illustrations for the project “**Promotion of Vranje as an Investment Friendly City**”, have been partly drafted, while the Directorate of Urbanism prepared 3D graphic illustration of the Industrial Zone Bunuševac.
Draft project proposal for “Promotion of Pešter Products” was drafted, it’d be finalised in April.

3.5 Management and coordination arrangements

By the end of the first quarter in 2013, EU PROGRES contracted 201 projects: 107 or 53% were completed, which is 8% increase in comparison to the previous reporting period; 42 (21%) were fully on track; 41 (20%) were delayed with low risks; one project is critical; no projects were cancelled during this quarter. The total number of stopped projects to date is ten.

The Delegation of the European Union approved the No-Cost Extension Request until 31 March 2014, while the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation approved in principle.

3.5.1 Financial resources

Total Programme disbursement, as of 31 March 2013, is 10,201,282.31 Euros or 62.21% of the overall budget.

At the end of March 2013:

- Out of 3,851,542 Euros contracted co-funding, 1,712,275 Euros was transferred and 667,751 realised

3.5.2 Human resources and procurement

The summary of recruitments and procurements is available in Annex IV, Attachment 4.1.
3.6 Assumptions and risks

The political instabilities in the Programme area have continued with changes of coalitions and arrests of former mayors. Ruling coalitions changed in Novi Pazar and Žitorađa, Lebane got new municipal leadership, in Kuršumlija, the Head of Administration was replaced. Two former Mayors, both from DS, and their several associates, from Leskovac and Vlasotince were arrested for alleged abuse of authority. There are announcements that similar reshuffles at the local level will continue, while speculations about extraordinary national elections are additionally stirring up instability.

EU PROGRES has been aware of these risks and, primarily due to presence in the field and regular communication, has been able to quickly (re)establish relationships and ensure projects’ implementation continue. However, the Programme could not accommodate all negative effects, having in mind massive scope of changes. Formation of new coalitions has been causing hiatus of several weeks, or longer, in cases when new people were appointed to manage projects. The fact that some of the existing coalitions are fragile does not help – there are examples where due to mistrust among key political factors everyone wants to be involved in cooperation with EU PROGRES (and other similar interventions) in order to “control” each other. This means that even finding a convenient time for a meeting for all key political stakeholders takes more effort.

This period was particularly interesting for overall political relations between Serbia and the EU. Kosovo negotiations between Belgrade and Priština under EU auspices were in the Serbian public limelight. General perception that awarding of date to Serbia for the start of EU accession negotiations depends directly on negotiations’ results, holds risks for the Programme. So far, the assumption that Serbia-EU relations will be consolidated and strengthened has been true. Possible negative decision about the date, however, may enhance the number of those who negatively perceive the EU. While this would likely not mean significant worsening in overall Serbia-EU relationship, at the local level, EU funded programmes, such as EU PROGRES, may encounter difficulties in cooperation. Indeed, there were cases when municipal officials expressed reservation towards the EU. The Programme thus insists to delink development from political issues and would continue to do so.

This quarter was positive regarding the number of critical projects. There were six critical projects in January 2013. EU PROGRES, as announced in the previous report, increased number of meetings about critical projects and set clear deadlines to grantees to tackle problems. This was effective, all six projects have moved forward now. Interest by the Programme Steering Committee to review and cancel critical projects certainly has helped EU PROGRES’ efforts. Thus, the Programme has finished this quarter with one (new) critical project, the second phase of Medveđa Factory project which is experiencing delays without strong justification.

There are, however, two risks that emerged during this period and have to be tackled by EU PROGRES and the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) in the nearest future. First, EU PROGRES has to commit the remaining funding of over 700,000 Euros, including some of the savings made in course of implementation. The Programme prepared a range of commitment requests, mainly referring to local prepared infrastructure projects, and these should be considered at the Extraordinary Steering Committee that is planned for early April. Second, there are uncertainties with several significant projects that were previously approved (some only in principle). These uncertainties prevent the Programme to actually sign grant contracts and launch implementation, while leaving solid financial resources “blocked”. The project for the construction of the Bujanovac Faculty Building is a good illustration: EU PROGRES reserved up to 250,000 Euros for this project but uncertainties with the land ownership, lack of funds for the entire project and other complexities, at this stage, pose too high risk for approving the grant. Status quo is not an option either, knowing that EU PROGRES is in the last implementation year. Thus, it is essential there is resolution of
problematic issues and that the PSC decides about Bujanovac and several other projects, including consideration of commitment requests, in the first half of April. Otherwise, the Programme may not be able to complete projects on time, even if decisions are positive.

The winter conditions in 2013 have been milder than the last year’s ones and enabled the Programme to continue activities with limited or no delays. The state of emergency that was declared in Trgovište after heavy rainfall and flooding in Novi Pazar and Bujanovac postponed of some activities (e.g. QMS in Bujanovac). Since critical situation did not prolong, the Programme has continued with work normally after a week to two weeks slow down.

Finally, The Programme has been directly affected by changes of two Laws. First, the new Law on Public Companies from December 2012 delayed establishment of joint enterprise that supposed to manage the regional landfill Banjica. Second, the Law on Value Added Tax (VAT) from September 2012 introduced changes in VAT payment procedures for construction works. The changes include transfer of obligations for VAT payment to investors which are by the definition in the Law on Planning and Construction carriers of building permits. The investors (carriers of building permits), may be PUC, school, kindergarten, and often have no grant contract with EU PROGRES although benefit from the particular project. Thus they may not have the legal grounds to request VAT exemption. EU PROGRES is discussing options with the Tax Service to overcome this potentially significant obstacle. Indeed, the changes could affect grant methodology and delay some ongoing projects, if no satisfactory solution is found.

On a whole, the Programme tackled successfully issues of critical projects and copes well with continuing political changes. PSC decisions on funding commitment requests and several projects that face uncertainties are important to tackle budgetary and time risks. Winter was mild, but the spring and summer may be very hot, in the light of Kosovo negotiations, Serbia’s EU accession progress and speculations on national elections. All these will affect the Programme.

4 Workplan for Q2 2013

The following are key expected results/milestones in Q2 2013:

Component 1 - Good Governance

Result 1

- CIF-2 projects to be finalised
- Select consultancy for the conduct of the second Citizens’ Satisfaction Survey, finalise Survey questions, start preparations
- Close down CAS projects in Preševo, monitor provision of CAS services in Prokuplje, and work on sustainability of methodology in Novi Pazar and Žitorađa
- Finalise report/analysis on effects conducted participatory budgeting and agree measures facilitating process sustainability
- Start the conduct of competitiveness study
- Support implementation of minimum five project deriving form the local gender action plans
- Continue provision of support to 12 GEMs
- Organise a mission of Swiss GG experts to EU PROGRES in April. Continue work on GG as cross cutting
Component 2 - Municipal management and development planning

Result 2

• Open Citizens’ Assistance Centre in Bosilegrad
• Launch Foreign Direct Investment planning process in five municipalities
• Open One Stop Shops in Vranje and Leskovac
• Complete Quality Management System implementation process in Ivanjica and Surdulica

Result 3

• One GRP and five DRPs adopted by municipal assemblies
• Start work on the development of the last lot of DRPs

Component 3 - Physical, economic and social infrastructure

Result 4

• Complete four main designs for local infrastructure projects

Result 5

• Expert support provided to ongoing projects. Focus on Banjica, Green Zone, Pešter

Result 6

• Complete works on Novi Pazar Sports Hall heating system
• Make final commitments. Prepare grant contracts for approved local infrastructure projects. Start implementation
• Complete construction of the building of the Regional Centre for Development of Agriculture (Pešter)
• Start construction on flood protection objects on the Raška River Basin, start construction on the waste water systems in Trgovište and Crna Trava

Component 4 - Public awareness and branding of areas

Result 7

• Increase donors’ visibility through at least two high profile functions
• Launch of the Municipal Profiles section on the Programme website
• Prepare and distribute of Programme Newsletter issue 10
• Organise marking of Europe Day, close implementation of awareness campaign “Europe That Is You”
• Select consultancy for implementation of the third EU PROGRES campaign, dedicated to environmental awareness (recycling and energy efficiency)

Result 8

• Advance implementation the projects promoting Green Zone in Leskovac, Pešter Products; Vranje investment potentials and Cherry Festival
5 Visibility

More than 270 reports were generated in the first quarter of 2013, in national, regional and local media. In March, the number of reports rose by 65% from February, mainly due to an increased number of press releases issued by EU PROGRES. Substantial number of stories was generated during the visit of the DEU representatives to the South Serbia, where Head of DEU Operations III opened the first Sports Hall in Surdulica and renovated public library “Desanka Maksimović” in Vlasotince; the Programme Steering Committee meeting in Ivanjica and completion of equipping the kindergarten in local community Bukovica which was organised prior to the meeting; and “Europe, That is You” campaign.

Additional visibility to the donors was secured through production of visibility materials for CIF 2 projects - 600 flyers for “Sandžački čilim”; 2,230 flyers, 390 brochures, 190 posters and 30 t-shirts for “Progressive Toplica”; 200 Guides to Gender Budgeting for project implemented by the CDA Lebane; video advertisement for “Diversity Connects” project, implemented by Educational Centre Leskovac; “We and Others” multimedia festival bulletin (100 copies) implemented by NGO “LimArt” in Prijepolje. In addition, 2,000 brochures were prepared for CAS Prokuplje.

During this quarter, Programme website had 5,798 unique visitors, which is 16% increase in comparison to the same period last year. As usual, most visitors were interested in vacancy announcements, general information about the Programme, news, blog and photo galleries. Most redirections were from Programme Facebook page and group, municipal websites, DEU website, United Nations Serbia website.

The programme Facebook group currently has 379 members – about 25 more than at the beginning of the year. In addition, the Facebook page provided wider outreach. Page has 161 likes and this number increases constantly. Majority of followers are women (50,1%), and the largest portion of the audience is between 25 and 44 years old.
Progress against Logframe Matrix Indicators
European Partnership with Municipalities - EU PROGRES
Status of the Programme indicators at the level of impacts and outcomes, 31 March 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Key developments, January-March 2013</th>
<th>Overall Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to creation of 1,500 jobs in the EU PROGRES AoR by 2017.</td>
<td>At the February 2013 EU PROGRES Steering Committee meeting, Vranje Mayor announced that the Italian shoe manufacturer Geox would start construction of a factory in the Industrial Zone in May 2013. The investment should facilitate opening of 1,250 jobs. The Mayor expected this investment would trigger arrival of several Geox sub-contractors that should open additional 500 jobs. In addition, negotiations with Italian furniture producer Ditre that could open another 400 jobs have been progressing well. EU PROGRES’ support to Vranje to attract Geox and Ditre is instrumental: one of two supported detailed regulation plans (DRP) for the Industrial Zone has been adopted by the City Assembly; the other was adopted by the City Planning Commission and will be considered for the City Assembly approval in early April. Adoption of the first DRP already enabled work on development of technical documentation for Geox facility. In addition, the Concept for the Main Design for the by-pass road to the Zone has been approved by Vranje project team. Vranje already started to develop an application to request funds for the construction of part of the by-pass road from the Ministry of Regional Development and Local – Self Government on the basis of this Main Design. Synergies between Vranje, the Government of Serbia, and EU PROGRES make investments’ prospects positive.</td>
<td>EU PROGRES’ projects for the Green Zone in Leskovac, Industrial Zone in Vranje, the Centre for Pešter Development, Support to Fruit Production in Pčinja, and renovation of Termovent Factory in Medveđa are expected to contribute to creation of 3,000 jobs in the next one to five years while several hundred entrepreneurs and several thousand agricultural producers should be positively affected. Other EU PROGRES’ projects (e.g. Citizens’ Involvement Fund) created 70 permanent and temporary employments, primarily for vulnerable people. More than 50 jobs are expected to be generated in the coming several months, through EU PROGRES infrastructure projects primarily.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
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<td>Leskovac signed MoU with a Greek company, which expressed interest to invest 75 million Euros into algae production and processing. This investment would enable opening of 4,000 jobs in the coming five years. The City would need to provide 100 hectares of agricultural land and considered to use part of the Green Zone. While this could be positive in terms of jobs opening it could mean change in the current concept for the Green Zone, which was to use it for food processing and fruit and vegetables sales. EU PROGRES and Leskovac are exploring investments’ options, including companies that earlier expressed interest for the Zone.</td>
<td>EU PROGRES work on technical and planning documentation for Vranje Industrial Zone is a part of the “package” that should facilitate investments of Geox and Ditre worth over 29 million Euros. The Green Zone in Leskovac, whose internal infrastructure has been constructed with EU PROGRES support, is one of the key investment locations in the South Serbia: at this stage three investors showed clear interest to put 3,5 million Euros to open their facilities. A Greek company expressed interest to invest 75 million Euros – part of this may be realised in the Green Zone. EU PROGRES activities facilitated significant in kind contribution and investments into projects by local self-governments, the Government of Serbia and donor community. The Programme will provide comprehensive information for the Annual Report that is due in July 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contribute to investments of 20 million Euros into economic, social and environmental projects in the EU PROGRES AoR by 2017.</td>
<td>EU PROGRES work on development of technical and planning documentation for Vranje Industrial Zone should contribute to investments by Geox (15,8 million Euros) and Ditre (13,45 million Euros). As per agreement with EU PROGRES, Leskovac made progress regarding the Green Zone: the Agency for Local Economic Development (ALED) established the Zone management team; the City Assembly adopted the Action Plan for the Zone and criteria for investors. The next step will be to re-establish communication with investors: Lemax-Gamakom, Matielo-Fungojug and Strela-Kljajić, which together plan to provide 3,5 million Euros for their projects. EU PROGRES and Leskovac discuss ways to use the Green Zone for accommodation of possible investment of 75 million Euros by the Greek Company. Upon request from the Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection, EU PROGRES provided an update regarding the status of technical documentation for the Banjica Landfill (covers Nova Varoš, Priboj, Prijepolje and Sjenica).</td>
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<td>is considering possibilities to provide funding for this project through EU IPA funds. At this stage, the cost to finish the construction of the Landfill is estimated to be between four and six million Euros.</td>
<td>EU PROGRES work on development of technical documentation for three recycling centres and regional landfills Banjica and Meteris, work on studies for Kopaonik WWTP, than construction of WWTPs in Crna Trava and Trgovište, and implementation of several local infrastructure projects which introduce bio fuel and reduce CO2 omissions, will contribute to cleaner air and water in the area.</td>
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<td>Comprehensive information on investments facilitated through EU PROGRES’ projects will be available in the Annual Report that is due in July 2013.</td>
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<td>Reduced level of air and water pollution by 5% in the EU PROGRES AoR by 2020.</td>
<td>Four municipalities reached agreement to establish a joint company that will manage the Landfill. Evaluation of offers received in an open public procurement for the construction of the Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTP) in Trgovište and Crna Trava is ongoing. WWTPs should purify waste water for estimated 3,750 people. The Feasibility Study for WWTP for Kopaonik, indicating location for the facility, has been completed. Stakeholders, primarily the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM) positively assessed the Study. The final approval of the Study is expected in April – this would enable EU PROGRES to finish preliminary design and thus create conditions for (funding of) construction of the WWTP.</td>
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<td>The number of women at decision making positions in EU PROGRES participating municipalities increased by at least 5% during the Programme lifetime.</td>
<td>Support given to the local gender equality mechanisms resulted in Priboj and Nova Varoš adopting the European Charter on Equal Participation of Men and Women in Local Life. Nova Varoš, Sjenica, Raška and Žitorađa adopted Local Action Plans (LAP) for improvement of position of women, while LAPs for Ivanjica, Prijeplele, Priboj and Tutin have been submitted into the Establishment of gender equality mechanisms in 12 municipalities supported which contributed to development of gender policies at the local level. Through CIF, several gender equality projects implemented. Women representation in municipal assemblies in the South West and Toplica, where EU PROGRES worked on gender, is 11% higher after 2012 elections. The number of female local</td>
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### Indicator
Contribute to improvement of living conditions of the marginalised and vulnerable groups by providing access to employment, housing and social support to at least 3,000 people in the AoR

### Key developments, January-March 2013

- Citizens’ Advisory Service (CAS) in Novi Pazar and Preševo offices provided free legal aid to 568 citizens targeting vulnerable groups.

- Six of 17 projects supported through the second call for the Citizens Involvement Fund (2) have been completed providing direct benefits to 605 people, primarily Roma and the disabled.

- Project for the water supply in Jelašnica (Surdulica), launched and progressing well. It will provide water for 379 families, estimated 1,500 people, of which 45% are Roma.

### Overall Status

- About 4,000 vulnerable received assistance: 2,468 people received free legal aid through Citizens’ Advisory Services in four municipalities and exercised their rights in obtaining personal documents, access to health protection, pension, education etc.

- Eighteen CIF projects implemented through the first public call supported employability and social integration of additional 600 beneficiaries; seven completed CIF 2 projects provided assistance to 605 vulnerable.

- Projects providing access to clean water for 800 Roma in Novi Pazar, Surdulica and Vranje will improve their harsh living conditions. Vranje project completed and provided water to over 30 Roma families.

- Part of planning documentation will facilitate legalisation of informal Roma settlements, while some infrastructure projects improve physical access to public institutions. Work on good governance ensures local policies are developed or redesigned in a manner that will ensure rights of vulnerable communities are addressed.

### Level of outcomes

| Increased satisfaction of citizens with public services over three years of EU PROGRES implementation | Terms of Reference for the second Citizens’ Satisfaction Survey was advertised at the end of March 2013. | EU PROGRES conducted Citizens Satisfaction Survey (CSS) that provided baseline indicators and contributed to increased awareness of the public what needed to be improved in municipalities. The second survey is scheduled for 2013 in order to access trends in citizens’ satisfaction. |
| Gross LSGs allocations for the CSOs in the EU PROGRES AoR increased by | Ten of 27 partnership projects between CSOs and LSGs supported through CIF 2 have been completed. | Through CIF and CAS, the Programme facilitated 71 partnership projects between civil society organisations |
## Indicator

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<tr>
<th>Key developments, January-March 2013</th>
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<td>at least 10% by the end of the Programme. At least 5 partnership projects between LSGs and CSOs established and continue independently of the Programme. In Surdulica, 288 Roma obtained ID cards, over 100 people with disabilities received treatment in Leskovac Mini Rehabilitation Centre, ten poor families in Bosilegrad received mini green houses, tools and strawberry seeds and started production, in Vranje 12 persons with disabilities are included into home care service, in Novi Pazar efforts were put to raise awareness of Roma population hardship and work started on development of action plan for assisting this community etc. (CSOs) and local self governments (LSGs). EU PROGRES assessed possible effects of CIF and reviewed the grantees’ reports: for CSOs this opened up room for more regular communication and enhanced cooperation with LSGs. Sixteen partnerships between LSGs and CSOs continued after CIF 1.</td>
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| Initial effects of participatory budgeting, conducted in 12 municipalities in 2012, are: over 4600 citizens voted in surveys to define budgetary priorities, while 380 were actively involved in budgetary forums; the local budgets for 2013 in all 12 municipalities reflect the priorities specified by their citizens. For example, in Vranje, the highest priority for the citizens was youth employment and the City allocated 38 million dinars for this purpose for the first time. The priority for Leskovac citizens was opening of jobs and the City allocated funds to employ 54 young professionals with average grades above 9,00 while 70,000 Euros were allocated for employment subsidies. Efforts were put to ensure sustainability: Municipal Councils in Nova Varoš, Vranje and Leskovac made decisions to institutionalise participatory budgeting while 11 municipalities signed the MoU for the establishment of participatory budgeting teams. Finally, participatory budgeting activities attracted attention of 30 local, regional and national media outlets thus additionally enhancing |

<p>| The participatory budgeting process in 2012 was finalised in 12 municipalities. Key tools used in the process were public budgetary forums and citizens’ survey on priority projects. Findings were translated into recommendations to the local assemblies for specific lines in budgets for 2013. The draft final report on the activity outlined that all 12 municipalities respected citizens’ views when finalising budgets. Eleven municipalities signed MoU for the establishment of teams for the conduct of participatory budgeting and this was a good step towards sustainability. |</p>
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<td>Citizens Advisory Services continue in at least two municipalities after the Programme finishes</td>
<td>The first step towards sustainability made - CAS in Prokuplje has been incorporated into the Mayor’s People Office. The municipality took over CAS’ employees on a temporary base and provision of services has continued. EU PROGRES will work with Prokuplje to ensure the methodology is fully incorporated. Negotiations about incorporation of CAS methodology in Novi Pazar are ongoing but progress is limited. Changes in the composition of City ruling coalition of 24 February negatively affected the process. EU PROGRES started to discuss options for incorporation of CAS methodology in Preševo administration.</td>
<td>The Programme supported establishment and work of four CAS offices. There are agreements for their incorporation into local administrations. About 2,500 citizens, primarily from vulnerable groups, received assistance to obtain personal documents and access basic services such as health protection, education and pension. EU PROGRES works to ensure CAS methodology is sustainable in at least two municipalities.</td>
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<td>Local mechanisms for gender equality in place in at least twelve municipalities; at least five municipalities allocate funding for gender equality activities.</td>
<td>With Prokuplje re-appointing members of the Gender Council in March, there are nine operational GEMs. Although officially established, GEMs in Blace and Novi Pazar are not active, while Kuršumlija has not yet selected its GEM members. Seven municipalities have allocated budgets for gender equality activities.</td>
<td>Gender equality mechanisms established in 11 (out of 12) municipalities that took part in the EU PROGRES supported project. Four Local Gender Action plans were adopted, four are in the final process of adoption. So far, ten municipalities adopted the European Charter on the Equality of Men and Women on the Local Level. EU PROGRES cooperates with NMCs – supported joint project of three NMCs, provision of furniture and IT for the ANMC, advocated for coordinated donors’ assistance and provides technical assistance to the Office for Human and Minority Rights with the Ministry of Justice.</td>
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<td>Period for responding to requests regarding building permits and conditions reduced by 20% in at least four EU PROGRES participating municipalities.</td>
<td>Works on establishment of One Stop Shops (OSS) in Vranje, and Leskovac are completed, IT equipment delivered. The opening is planned for mid April, after training of employees. Preparation for construction of OSS</td>
<td>EU PROGRES supports establishment of One Stop Shops in Vranje, Leskovac, Novi Pazar and Ivanjica. Indirectly, development of over 30 planning documents and design of technical documentation for more than 20 projects will enhance LSG’s efficiency</td>
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27 It was decided that the EU PROGRES gender project would focus on the South West and Toplica District as the PBILD programme was working on similar approach in Jablanica and Pcinja Districts.
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<td>Increased level of tax collection in at least ten municipalities by at least 10% by the end of the Programme.</td>
<td>Update of databases resulted in registration of 17,000 new taxpayers, which represents average increase of 20% over the total number. Data show that collection of local taxes increased in 11 municipalities. According to the financial statements and closing balances of the Local Tax Administrations, the increase in property tax invoiced is roughly 700,000 Euros, which is an average increase of 37.3%. The increase in collected property tax is roughly 210,000 Euros, which is an average increase of 24.6%. The effects are especially visible in Priboj, Prokuplje or Žitorađa where the increase in collection rate is 65, 83 and 99 % respectively. The above stated data shows activity the cost-benefit ratio: the total projects’ investment was 129,000 Euros, while the return in collected tax by the end of the first year only is almost double.</td>
<td>Cumulative total number of registered taxpayers, in 11 municipalities participating in the tax administration project, increased by over 17,000. On average, this represents 20% increase over the total number of taxpayers. EU PROGRES analysis in the first year of implementation, showed average increase of 37% in the invoiced local tax and increase of 24.6% (210,000 Euros) in collected local taxes.</td>
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<td>Increased level of services for businesses in at least two municipalities. At least 20 enterprises from the Programme AoR involved in clustering by end of the Programme.</td>
<td>A new BIC Vranje project that should enable distant incubation for Roma entrepreneurs advanced: 32 most promising candidates were selected and attended three starting training modules: legal framework for business establishment, management for entrepreneurs and marketing.</td>
<td>Support to businesses is provided on several levels: three clusters involving 27 entities established, two businesses established through BIC Vranje, four One Stop Shops being established and will enhance quality of services to business investors, preparation of Capital Investments Plans in five municipalities will provide valuable inputs for development of business related infrastructure.</td>
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<td>Spatial and General Regulation Plans, and priority Detailed Regulation Plans in place in all municipalities by the end of the Programme</td>
<td>DRPs for Bunuševac Industrial Zone in Vranje, Preševo Industrial Zone and Sokolica in Crna Trava adopted by municipal assemblies. Five DRPs approved by municipal planning commissions and awaiting assembly adoptions in April/May. By completing the Elaborate, which is</td>
<td>EU PROGRES supports development of one Elaborate for Spatial Plan, six GRPs and 28 DRPs. In addition, the Programme provided equipment for geodetic surveys and IT hardware and specialised software for Urban Planning Directorates in Vranje, Leskovac and Novi Pazar.</td>
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## Key developments, January-March 2013

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<td>an integral part of Bujanovac Spatial Plan, the municipality was able to work on development of the main design for the construction of the water well, which would improve water supply for the town and the settlements. The project is now ready for funding and demonstrates effectiveness of EU PROGRES’ action.</td>
<td>The number of projects from the area on SLAP was 147 in May 2011 and 342 in 2012. Increase of over 100%. 61 projects included in SLAP after May 2010 are linked to EU PROGRES.</td>
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<td>Up to 40 projects from SS and SWS on the SLAP data base – the third level until the end of the Programme</td>
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<td>Works started on development of five technical designs in Novi Pazar, two in Tutin, and one in Bujanovac, for the transfer station. The PSC approved development of the main design for the reconstruction of the Vranje Theatre.</td>
<td>EU PROGRES supports development of five technical designs for regional projects and 20 designs for local infrastructure to the stage of building permits. Seven technical designs were developed. EU PROGRES would, after completion of designs, have a pipeline of “ready to build” projects of estimated value of 44 million Euros.</td>
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<td>Municipal capacity for absorption of funds for implementation of infrastructure projects enhanced by 40 million Euros by the end of the Programme.</td>
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<td>Project for the water supply in Jelašnica, Surdulica, launched and progressing well. It will provide water for 379 families, estimated 1,500 people, of which 45% are Roma. EU PROGRES project in Vranje, Ćoška, providing water supply to 30 Roma families facilitated investment by the City into provision of additional 30 connections and reconstruction of one km of sewerage system. Building up on EU PROGRES’ water supply projects and documentation developed through predecessor (PRO), Sjenica obtained about 20 million dinars from the Government of Serbia for continuation of works.</td>
<td>Implementation of five local projects and one inter-municipal project will directly improve water supply for tens of thousands of citizens. The Programme also supports development of documentation for Kopaonik Mountain that will provide overview of water sources for Raška and the area – this is key for future water supply system development.</td>
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<td>Access to clean water improved for at least 20,000 citizens from the EU PROGRES AoR (2.5% of the total area population) by the end of the Programme.</td>
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<td>Ivanjica Kindergarten opened on 24 February 2013. An effective project: technical documentation was</td>
<td>Implementation of eight local infrastructure projects that will improve conditions for education for</td>
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### Indicator: Key developments, January-March 2013

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<td>the Programme AoR by the end of 2013.</td>
<td>developed through EU and Swiss funded PRO; the construction was funded by the Ministry for National Investment Plan; and the kindergarten was furnished and equipped through EU PROGRES.</td>
<td>about 5,500 children - <strong>completed</strong>. EU PROGRES is involved in development of the project for construction of premises for the Bujanovac Faculty. This is instrumental effort for the area, both in terms of socio-economic development and stability.</td>
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### Annex I - Good Governance Component

Attachment 1.1 – Citizens Advisory Services, Statistics, January-March 2013
Attachment 1.2 – ToR, Citizens Satisfaction Survey
Attachment 1.3 – Criteria for Public Call for Gender Projects
Attachment 1.4 – ToR for establishment of inter-ethnic councils

### Annex II - Public Awareness and Branding of Areas Component

Attachment 2.1 – Media Coverage, January-March 2013
Attachment 2.2 – Website Statistics, January-March 2013
Attachment 2.3 – Communications Plan, Q2 2013
Attachment 2.4 – ToR for Environmental Campaign

### Annex III - Programme General

Attachment 3.1 – Area Developments
Attachment 3.2 – Implementation Matrix
Attachment 3.3 – Impact Matrix

### Annex IV - Operations General

Attachment 4.1 – HR, Grants and Procurements Table