

The Ninth Programme Steering Committee

Medveđa, 1 November, 2012

Minutes



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I Agenda

1. Welcome and introductory speeches
2. Presentation of Medveđa municipality
3. Approval of the minutes of the previous Steering Committee held in Raška
4. Presentation of the Quarterly Report July – September 2012
 - a. Overview of outputs and potential Programme impacts
 - b. Overview of critical projects and challenges
 - c. Update on implementation of the Mid Term Evaluation recommendations
5. Presentation of requests for funding commitments
6. Voting
7. Any other business

II Minutes

Agenda item 1: Welcome and introduction speeches

- **Mayor of Medveđa, Slobodan Drašković**, welcomed all participants of the ninth EU PROGRES Programme Steering Committee (PSC). Drašković gave a brief overview of the projects that EU PROGRES is supporting in the municipality and spoke about the impact those interventions have for the citizens of Medveđa. He emphasized the importance and need to continue supporting such projects in the future.
- **Deputy Director of the Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO) and the Chairman of the PSC, Ognjen Mirić**, introduced new PSC voting members and welcomed the new Director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Serbia, Isabel Perich. Mirić said that the results of the EU PROGRES work are already visible and named several: Medveđa Termovent factory (that was visited prior to the meeting), the Green Zone in Leskovac, kindergarten project in Raška (visited during the last PSC) and added that this was the right moment to talk about important projects that would be implemented in the future.
- **Head of Operations of the Delegation of the European Union (DEU) in Serbia, Martin Kern**, said there was very good progress of the Programme in the past quarter. He mentioned the recent visit of Result Oriented Monitoring Mission (ROM), whose full report would be available soon and thanked all municipal officials for the interviews they gave to mission members. Kern emphasized that the EU was fully committed to the new project, as it wanted to support “municipalities to develop socially and economically”.
- **Director of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Serbia, Isabel Perich**, said that elections and harsh winter conditions made implementation of EU PROGRES more difficult and that the Office would request Programme extension to create positive social change. Switzerland promotes the rule of law and good governance, and the implementation of these principles have brought improvements in everyday lives of citizens and improved access to services. “Good governance ensures sustainability of infrastructure projects, for example the factory we have visited, or the market in Bojnik where rules and regulations are crucial”, Perich said. She concluded that performance of good government principles would be essential in bringing decision to support any future programme.



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Agenda item 2: Presentation of Medveđa municipality

- **The Head of Medveđa Local Economic Development (LED) Office, Dejan Simić**, gave a presentation of Medveđa socio-economic characteristics, municipal potentials for development including tourism in Sijarinska Spa. Simić spoke about the EU PROGRES projects in the municipality, with a special focus on Termovent Factory reconstruction. A short film on the factory followed his presentation.

Agenda item 3: Approval of the minutes of the previous Steering Committee

- **EU PROGRES Programme Manager, Graeme Tyndall**, reiterated Programme's methodology to work with all beneficiaries and to support connections between the local and national levels. The Programme is half way through and it was important for the new PSC members to understand all its activities, especially those which could be complex to grasp as they were implemented within all four components, e.g.: the Green Zone in Leskovac, Pešter Agro Development, Fruit production in Pčinja etc. "It is up to us to show good projects and implement them efficiently with the EU and Swiss taxpayers money", Tyndall concluded.
- **Ognjen Mirić** said that it was important to discuss both positive and negative impacts of EU PROGRES. A proposal for the new programme, which will be implemented after 2013, will be soon drafted.

Following brief introductions, the PSC voting members unanimously approved the minutes of the second annual EU PROGRES Steering Committee meeting held in Raška on 18 July 2012.

Agenda item 4: Presentation of the July – September 2012 Quarterly report

- **EU PROGRES Deputy Programme Manager, Marko Vujačić**, presented Quarterly Report for July – September 2012. He highlighted that 69 (40 %) projects have finished, out of which significant number of small infrastructure projects. EU PROGRES remains committed to application of grants methodology as recommended by the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Programme.
- **Mayor of Leskovac, Slobodan Kocić**, spoke about the Green Zone Project (GZ), which was strategic not just for the City of Leskovac and 25 municipalities of the EU PROGRES but for all municipalities south of Jagodina, and even those outside the Serbian borders (such as the municipalities of Kavadarci and Rosoman in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). The main problem of the agriculture in the region remained the sale of goods. It is planned that the ownership structure in the Green Zone will be equally divided between the City and farmers, at the beginning. As the Zone develops, farmers will have possibility to get majority shares. Kocić thanked EU PROGRES for a major role in development of the Green Zone, and huge support that was not only financial, but also consulting, marketing and human.
- **Representative of the Roma National Minority Council, Nenad Tahirović**, expressed gratitude for outstanding EU PROGRES support to improve lives of Roma community.
- **Ognjen Mirić** informed the participants that one of the IPA 2013 projects is dealing with housing of Roma through production of urban and technical documentation, and pointed to



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the weak response from municipalities: Leskovac didn't submit any proposals, Prokuplje got funding in 2009 but no progress was made; Bojnik and Lebane didn't have any projects, and having in mind the Belville returnees projects were needed. The Ministry of Construction and Urbanism has secured funds and all municipalities that are dealing with Roma housing issues should contact Svetlana Ristić, phone number 064 80 96 730, e-mail: svetlana.ristic@mgu.gov.rs.

- **Potential Green Zone investor, Miodrag Nedeljković**, the owner of "Strela Klajić", enterprise for processing and export of forest fruits, said that he invested three million Euros in the past years to develop company's capacities. Nedeljković said he had difficult time, in land conversion (from agriculture to construction) and obtaining communal infrastructure. On the other hand, the GZ offers possibility for immediate investment and it is a pity that such conditions did not exist before. His intention is to invest in the GZ, in new processing capacities, with his German partner and asked whether EU funds intended for investments in agriculture processing facilities were available.
- **Ognjen Mirić** advised that the Ministry of Finance, SEIO and the Ministry for Agriculture are trying to bring the IPARD funds to Serbia, but there are strict EU criteria and there was a great risk that the funds remained unspent. Five to ten million Euros should be accessible in 2014, while more funds could be expected after 2014.
- **Project manager at the Leskovac Educational Centre, Violeta Stanković**, said it was good that young people were included in the implementation of EU PROGRES as it meant strengthening capacities. She recommended to EU PROGRES to continue investing in development of civil society organisations (CSOs) capacities since their human resources are weak (example – CIF project forms in English were a challenge).
- **Lebane Centre for Democratic Activities Coordinator, Biljana Nikolić**, praised EU PROGRES, which funded one of CSO's best projects that reached women who were unemployed, with no funds for even basic living, and the Programme's support brought doctors to their doorsteps.
- **President of the Centre for Democracy and Development of the South Serbia and Editor of the JUGPress Agency, Ljiljana Stojanović**, asked about continuation of the EU PROGRES, as the DEU Ambassador announced during a recent visit to the South that 20 million Euros were already provided for the second phase. "This Programme is very important for small municipalities, as it is the only one investing here", she added.
- **Ognjen Mirić** replied that the new Programme is in preparation and that 20 million Euros is an indicative budget. However, the achievement of results of the ongoing Programme should be first considered. There is a possibility to have Swiss as the co-donor, and negotiations are in progress with Norway and Sweden. The Government of Serbia doubled co-financing of the EU PROGRES, and it was currently at three million Euros. The implementation of the new programme should start by 2014.
- **Martin Kern** said that EU would remain committed to development of the South and South West Serbia, however it was still too early to speak about design of the new programme, which should lead to developed local self governments. "We should carefully consider what was successful, examine lessons learned and repeat what worked", Kern said.



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- **SDC National Programme Officer, Petar Vasilev**, said that major contribution of the Swiss Government to EU PROGRES is promotion of the good governance (GG) principles, which are important for the quality of life. A lot of time was wasted with the spring elections, but SDC expected municipalities to have capacities for GG, namely to apply theory in practice, and that would be a sign for continuation of the Programme. “Everything depends on municipalities”, Vasilev concluded.
- **Ognjen Mirić** reminded that the proposals to DEU were coming from the Government of Serbia, line Ministries and responsible institutions and that their role should not be undermined.
- **Mayor of Sjenica, Hazbo Mujović**, mentioned positive impacts of the replacement of pumps in Public Utility Company (PUC) “Vodovod”, which resulted in twice smaller electricity bills - 10,000 Euros compared to 20,000 Euros before the project.
- **Roma Society Prokuplje President, Dejan Živković**, spoke about Citizens’ Advisory Services (CAS) established in Prokuplje and the commitment of the local self government to take on two employees currently engaged in the project. He explained they had a meeting with Svetlana Ristić and pleaded for Prokuplje to remain in the project as the Roma (and non-Roma) problems were immense.
- **Marko Vujačić** presented draft of the EU PROGRES nine-month No Cost Extension (NCE) request. Approval of the request would allow application of grant methodology and ensure maximum benefits for the area, with no additional costs.
- **Martin Kern** concluded it was important to assess outputs and results achieved in EU PROGRES, which was also important for the design of the new programme. In principle, the DEU is in favour of the request for NCE, but duration, budget application and activities should be examined before approval to allow gradual winding down of the Programme. Visibility of the Programme was very important as well as sustainable results, good practices and other sources of financing. “We should consider putting bilingual visibility signs to maximise visibility”, Kern said.

Agenda item 5: Presentation of requests for funding commitments

The EU PROGRES staff presented the requests for funding:

- Roma entrepreneurship development in Pčinja District through virtual business incubation model
- Promotion of Vranje as investment friendly City
- Preservation of natural and cultural values on the Mountain Zlatar
- Reconstruction of a part of transit asbestos-cement pipelines In Sjenica Municipality
- Improvement of the wood processing industry in Medveđa through restoration of the Termovent factory

The EU PROGRES staff requested approval for further development of:

- Reserve list of infrastructure projects
- Bujanovac Faculty
- Competitiveness Study of 25 municipalities.

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- **The Ministry of Finance, Sector for Tourism, Žarko Malinović**, objected at untimely delivery of material for the PSC. Malinović was interested in more details about Vranje BIC and Nova Varoš branding projects, how would they be implemented and whether the relevant institutions/organisations were consulted in the process of preparation of those two proposals. He added that for Vranje branding project promotion was very important and should be in several languages, including Russian, Turkish, Chinese, but omitting Serbian, and that mobile application should be specific and related to an area. For Nova Varoš project, both Sjenica and CSOs, which protect Griffon Vulture, should be involved.
- **Ognjen Mirić** suggested full project proposals and fact sheets for any motions for approval should be delivered to the PSC members ten days ahead of the meeting.
- **Slobodan Drasković** explained Medveđa proposal and said that all activities were planned in cooperation with the Slovenian partner. Žarko Malinović enquired about the cost analysis, components of education and equipping of the administrative offices, while **Milan Petrović**, from **the Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection** asked about the heating system, installations and the fuel that would be used. **Slobodan Drašković** explained that boilers, which will be used in production, produce heat up to 400°C and will be room heaters, while scrap wood will be used as the fuel.
- **Priboj President of the Assembly, Saša Vasilić**, expressed satisfaction with EU PROGRES support in renovating of the Native Museum, and said that there was a significant progress with the Banjica Landfill since the last PSC meeting. He also mentioned that care for youth is very important and asked whether it was possible for EU PROGRES to finance the construction of tennis courts, which aims to improve lives of young in Priboj. Vasilić also asked for EU PROGRES support in reconstruction of the Youth Centre. **Graeme Tyndall** remarked that Priboj didn't apply with the tennis court project and that it couldn't be considered at the meeting and similarly that the Youth Centre has been, for the first time, mentioned. **Ognjen Mirić** said that projects are delivered to the PSC if they are ready and relevant. If the tennis court project could generate ten new jobs, then it was relevant.
- **Mayor of Raška, Jovan Čorbić**, expressed gratitude for support to date and asked the PSC whether it was possible to support provision of equipment for the kindergarten whose reconstruction was also financially supported by EU PROGRES. **Ognjen Mirić** said that more attention should be paid to budget preparation and that PSC couldn't allow financing of incomplete projects. **Graeme Tyndall** said that this issue should be taken as a lesson learned. Raška co-funded reconstruction of the kindergarten with more than 30,000 Euros and they expected financial support from the Ministry for Education. In cases like this other partners should be involved.



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- **Deputy Mayor of Bojnik, Aca Jovanović**, thanked the donors and EU PROGRES for construction of the Dairy market and asked whether it was possible to include provision of the equipment as Programme's priority.
- **DEU Project Manager, Ana Stanković**, criticized this kind of oversight in projects implementation and said that in future incomplete project proposals should be refused. She also mentioned that tennis court project was not on the priority list, even if it was technically ready.
- **Leskovac Mayor's Assistant Milorad Mladenović**, said EU PROGRES shouldn't be blamed, but municipalities which do not plan accordingly their infrastructure projects. Most municipalities have problems in planning and priorities' selection.
- **Ognjen Mirić** said the project proposal for the construction of the **Faculty building in Bujanovac** has great importance for the municipality but has to be fully ready in order to be approved by the PSC. **The Coordination Body for Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa (CB) representative, Milica Rodić**, said that most important thing in the project realization is technical documentation – main design, which is financed by the CB. So far there are no permanent solutions for accommodation of the second year students and deadlines are short. **Martin Kern** said this was an important project but the proposal should be complete, so that "we don't end up with a sliced approach". **Graeme Tyndall** observed that there was obvious willingness to support the project, but if EU PROGRES was to be involved, the tender documents should be ready by January 2013 and building start in March. This meant that the site should be ready **by 19 November 2012**, which is the absolute deadline for any EU PROGRES involvement. There was a great vision, to grow from a Faculty to the University, but it could not be done overnight.

Head of OSCE South Serbia Office, Eric Manton, said the building should be ready by October next year, as currently rent is being paid for premises.

Head of Bujanovac Local Economic Development Office Fazila Azemović, said that there were three possible locations and that the Ministry for Education was also included in the selection process. Municipality is working on production of all planning documentation and urban project for one of the suggested locations will be completed in two weeks.

Bujanovac Mayor, Nagip Arifi, explained there was a Municipal Assembly decision to allocate a plot of land for the purpose of building the Faculty. Unless the privatisation of Gumoplastika factory is resolved until 19 November the municipality can go ahead with that option. "Where schools and Faculties are built, the prisons are closed", Arifi concluded.

Ognjen Mirić said that there was Programme support in principle, but all the preconditions have to be fulfilled in order to approve the project and that tentative allocation of funding could not be made at this stage.

Agenda item 6: Voting

- The Quarterly Report, for July-September 2012 - approved unanimously



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- Vranje Roma entrepreneurship development in Pčinja District through virtual business incubation model – approved unanimously
- Promotion of Vranje as investment friendly City – approved unanimously
- Preservation of natural and cultural values on the Mountain Zlatar –PSC voting members to make decision by email upon receiving the proposal
- Reconstruction of a part of transit asbestos-cement pipelines in Sjenica – approved unanimously
- Improvement of the wood processing industry in Medveđa through restoration of the Termovent factory – full project documentation should be distributed to all PSC members and the decision will be made by 5 November
- Reserve list of infrastructure projects, Bujanovac Faculty, Competitiveness Study of 25 municipalities – should be developed further and delivered to the PSC members for further consideration and electronic voting.

Agenda item 7: Any other business

- **Ognjen Mirić** thanked everyone for participation and said the next meeting would be held in Nova Varoš.
- **Slobodan Drašković** officially closed the meeting.

II List of participants

| | Name | Institution/Organisation | Function |
|--|----------------|--|--------------------|
| PROGRAMME STEERING COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS¹ | | | |
| 1. | Ana Stanković | DEU | Project Manager |
| 2. | Branko Puzić | Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy | Junior Advisor |
| 3. | Isabel Perich | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) | Director, Serbia |
| 4. | Martin Kern | DEU | Head of Operations |
| 5. | Milan Petrović | Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection | |
| 6. | Milica Rodić | Coordination Body for Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa | Director's Advisor |

¹ The entire list is in alphabetical order.



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| 7. | Ognjen Mirić | The Serbian European Integration Office | Deputy Director |
| 8. | Petar Vasilev | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) | National Programme Officer |
| 9. | Sandra Hadžagić | OSDUA | Advisor |
| 10. | Tanja Milojković | Ministry of Regional Development and Local Self-Government | Sector for European Integration, International Cooperation, and Projects |
| 11. | Žarko Malinović | Ministry of Finance and Economy | State Secretary Cabinet Member |
| 12. | Ivana Maksić | SKGO | Projects Monitoring Associate |
| PROGRAMME STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS | | | |
| 13. | Aca Jovanović | Bojnik Municipality | Deputy Mayor |
| 14. | Aleksandra Čupović | Ministry for Construction and Urbanism | Counsellor |
| 15. | Andrijana Arsić | Medveđa Municipality | Practitioner |
| 16. | Bajram Aljović | Tutin Municipality | Executive for LED |
| 17. | Biljana Nikolić | CDA Lebane | Coordinator |
| 18. | Bojan Milenković | Roma Association Prokuplje | Associate |
| 19. | Bojana Veličkov | City of Vranje | Deputy Mayor |
| 20. | Branko Budimir | The Serbian European Integration Office | Sector for Planning, Programming, Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds and Development Aid |
| 21. | Dejan Simić | Medveđa Municipality | KLER |
| 22. | Dejan Živković | Roma Association Prokuplje | President |
| 23. | Demirović Danijela | CA Elan | Coordinator |
| 24. | Dobrila Sudimac Mratniković | Centre for Development of Jablnica and Pčinja Districts | Expert for Regional Development and Strategic Planning |
| 25. | Dragana Šašić | Municipality | Mayor's Assistant |
| 26. | Eric Manton | OSCE | Head of South Serbia |
| 27. | Faruk Suljević | Novi Pazar Municipality | Mayor's Assistant |
| 28. | Fazila Azemović | LED office Bujanovac | Manager |
| 29. | Goran Marković | Municipality | Mayor's Assistant |
| 30. | Goran Mladenović | Vladičin Han Municipality | President |
| 31. | Gordana Kitanović | Blace Municipality | Grant Manager |
| 32. | Hazbo Mujović | Sjenica Municipality | Mayor |
| 33. | Ilir Sadriu | Preševo Municipality | LED office manager |
| 34. | Janko Ukmar | Biogen company | Manager |

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| 35 | Jelena Milovanović | Prokuplje Municipality | Centre for legal assistance |
| 36 | Jelena Popović | Tourist Organization of Medveđa | Technical Secretary |
| 37 | Jelena Spasić | Ministry of Regional Development and Local Self-Government | Sector for European Integration, International Cooperation, and Projects |
| 38 | Jovan Čorbić | Raška Municipality | Mayor |
| 39 | Jovica Džinović | Kuršumlija Municipality | Deputy |
| 40 | Ljubiša Blobatić | Prokuplje Municipality | Member of the City Assembly |
| 41 | Maida Jusufović | Sjenica Municipality | LED Office |
| 42 | Marinko Đorđević | Vlasotince Municipality | LED office coordinator |
| 43 | Milan Petrović | Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection | Adviser to the Minister |
| 44 | Milan Stojanović | Association of women RUŽA | Member |
| 45 | Milivoje Rakić | Blace Municipality | Department for urbanism |
| 46 | Milka Kaplanović | Ivanjica Municipality | LED Office coordinator |
| 47 | Milorad Mladenović | City of Leskovac | Mayor's Assistant |
| 48 | Milorad Nikolić | Trgovište Municipality | LED Office manager |
| 49 | Mijodrag Nedeljković | Strela d.o.o. | Owner |
| 50 | Miodrag Stošić | City of Vranje | LED office |
| 51 | Mirjana Knežević | Ministry for Energy, Development and Environmental Protection | Assistant |
| 52 | Mirjana Rakočević | Medveđa Municipality | Tourism Officer |
| 53 | Mustafa Fatlum | Preševo Municipality | Mayor's Office Manager |
| 54 | Mustafa Ragmi | Preševo Municipality | Mayor |
| 55 | Nagip Arifi | Bujanovac Municipality | Mayor |
| 56 | Nataša Stefanović | Medveđa Municipality | Practitioner/Translator |
| 57 | Predrag Stošić | Association of women RUŽA | Project manager |
| 58 | Radosav Jordanović | Trgovište Municipality | Mayor |
| 59 | Radoslav Mihajlović | Prokuplje Municipality | President of the City Assembly |
| 60 | Rašo Sekulić | Ivanjica Municipality | Deputy Mayor |
| 61 | Rok Aubelj | Art A Design Company | Engineer |
| 62 | Saša Vasilović | Priboj Municipality | President of the City Assembly |
| 63 | Slobodan Drašković | Medveđa Municipality | Mayor |
| 64 | Slobodan Kocić | City of Leskovac | Mayor |
| 65 | Slobodanka Pavlović | Association of women RUŽA | President of the Association |

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|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 66 | Srđan Perić | Lebane Municipality | Deputy Mayor |
| 67 | Sunčica Nestorović | Kuršumlija Municipality | LED office |
| 68 | Svetislav Paunović | PBILD | Safer Cities Project Coordinator |
| 69 | Svetlana Četković | Medveđa Municipality | Procurement officer |
| 70 | Violeta Stanković | Educational Centre Leskovac | Project Manager |
| 71 | Vlada Vlajković | CRRR Zitoradja | President |
| 72 | Vladan Marinković | Jablanica District | Executive |
| 73 | Vladimir Jovanović | Bojnik Municipality | LED office |
| 74 | Vladimir Kocić | Vlasotince Municipality | Member of the City Assembly |
| 75 | Živko Stoilčev | Bosilegrad Municipality | Department for Urbanism |
| 76 | Zoran Miletić | Medveđa Municipality | Practitioner |
| 77 | Zoran Milić | Surdulica Municipality | Mayor's Deputy |
| EU PROGRES | | | |
| 78 | Graeme Tyndall | EU PROGRES | Programme Manager |
| 79 | Marko Vujačić | EU PROGRES | Deputy Programme Manager |
| 80 | Dušan Čukić | EU PROGRES | Technical Programme Specialist |
| 81 | Dragan Mladenović | EU PROGRES | Component 1 Manager |
| 82 | Dobrivoje Stančić | EU PROGRES | Component 2 Manager |
| 83 | Dejan Drobnjak | EU PROGRES | Component 4 Manager |
| 84 | Nermin Hasanović | EU PROGRES | Head of Office for South West Serbia |
| 85 | Radule Ristović | EU PROGRES | Senior Coordinator South Serbia |

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