

# Aid Matters

Newsletter on Development Assistance in Serbia



Република Србија  
Влада  
Канцеларија за европске интеграције

Republic of Serbia  
Government  
Serbian European Integration Office

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### Did you know?

European Union has allocated 10.49 million Euros for reconstruction of 44 landslides and rehabilitation of 14 bridges affected by the floods.

## U.S. GOVERNMENT COMMITS \$9 MILLION TO STRENGTHEN SERBIA'S ECONOMY AND IMPROVE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

By:



On April 28, 2017, the United States through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), provided \$9 million to support Serbia's EU accession efforts by improving government operations, combating corruption, strengthening the rule of law, and growing Serbia's economy. Since 2001, the United States government through USAID has provided approximately \$748 million in development assistance to Serbia. In partnership with the Serbian government and the Serbian people, this assistance recently has: renovated misdemeanor courts throughout Serbia and reduced problematic case backlogs by up to 80 percent in select courts; introduced e-government in 83 municipalities--making it easier for Serbians to



Ambassador Kyle Scott looks on as Azza El-Abd, USAID Serbia Mission Director, and Jadranka Joksimović, Minister without portfolio responsible for European integration, sign

change their official residences or to register marriages and births; made obtaining construction permits and complying with business inspections easier and more transparent--helping Serbia become one of the ten most improved countries in the World Bank's 2016 Doing Business ranking. Minister Jadranka Joksimović, who approved the additional funding on behalf of the Government of Serbia, said "Serbia is determined to realize its development opportunity and become part of the European Union. To attain this goal Serbia will direct all available resources toward adopting and implementing the EU

Aquis and attaining standards that will make it an equal member state. On this path, financial support and future collaboration with the United States as a partner in development is of utmost importance to Serbia."

## Mapping of Barriers to Youth Entrepreneurship

By:



Presentation of the mapping of barriers to youth entrepreneurship in Serbia done under the umbrella of the German-Serbian Initiative for Sustainable Growth and Employment and conducted by the Center for Advanced Economic Studies (CEVES) was presented on April 25 in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia. The opening speeches were given by H.E. Axel Dittmann, German Ambassador to Serbia, Ana Brnabić, the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, President of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, Marko Čadež, and Director of Center for Advanced Economic Studies, Kori Udovički. The study includes an analysis of reports and documents relevant to youth entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general, as well as over 110 interviews with young entrepreneurs, experts and representatives of governmental and non-governmental sectors. Thus, a picture of the current situation has been obtained that can and should serve as a basis for dialogue between all interested parties, and within which

conclusions and guidelines for practical action into motivating young people to engage in entrepreneurship and providing appropriate support could be defined. Key findings indicate that the inaccessibility and instability of funding sources, non-transparent and often changeable fiscal and para-fiscal system are among the biggest obstacles that youth face with when starting their own business. Lack of information and lack of the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities represent also considerable difficulties which are partly seen as a consequence of formal education because its mechanism does not support the entrepreneurial spirit among youth. Further steps and conclusions on how to motivate more young people to engage in entrepreneurship and how to support them should be developed in a broad consensus.



## The Cooperation between the Netherlands and Serbia

By:



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Strengthening democratic processes, the rule of law, public institutions and civil society has long been a focus area of the Netherlands' foreign policy. One of the longest running programs in this area is the **Matra program for social transformation**, which exists since 1993. Matra program focuses on helping to strengthen civil society organizations, democracy and the rule of law in pre-accession countries, the countries of the Eastern Partnership and countries in the Arab region. Matra makes use of several **different instruments** in order to achieve the ultimate program goal and that is to improve the relationship between the government and citizens. The first is **direct support by the Embassy to projects** of local organizations and the judiciary and public institutions, in order to promote constructive dialogue between these various actors. The main areas of project support are legislation and justice; public administration, public order and the police; and human rights and minorities. In 2016 the Embassy committed total of €679.852 in support of 15 projects, while in 2015 the total commitment was €1,2 mill, including €472.000 for projects that addressed then emerging refugee crisis.

### Matra Projects in Serbia

To improve the good governance, Matra support is granted for monitoring and enhancing implementation of the Whistleblower Law by the NGO Whistleblower. The organization Transparency Serbia is supported for their project on the effects of implementation of the Law on Public Enterprises. CRTA implemented a project aiming at establishing an effective mechanism for increasing citizens' understanding of parliamentary and independent institutions' oversight roles, and civil society engagement in exerting the pressure on the parliament to ensure the proper follow up and implementation of its own and independent institutions' recommendations. The Embassy also supported the Office of the Republic Public Prosecutor for Organized Crime in their efforts to strengthen the capacities of the office to conduct investigations in a more efficient manner through the use of a highly efficient and specialized case management system. Other examples of projects in the legislation and justice area include the project of Lawyers' Committee YUCOM 'Access to Justice for All' that focuses on regulating the free legal aid; and the work of the Judges Forum in the field of civil procedure code and its application. In order to support LGBT rights in Serbia, the support was granted for the project implemented by LABRIS and the Ministry of Interior Affairs that aimed at empowering

LGBT victims to report hate crime, build the capacities of the police to deal with these cases and establish mechanisms that would help strengthen the trust of LGBT citizens in law enforcement. In the area of gender equality and combating domestic violence, the Novi Sad-based Center for Youth Work is supported for their project 'You, Me and Gender Equality'; as well as the activities of the International Aid Network aimed at strengthening the public prosecution service. Among the Matra projects there are those that promote freedom of expression – offline and online. One such project is implemented by the SHARE Foundation and it provides research, advocacy and consultancy to online media and CSOs facing digital attacks and pressure. The second MATRA instrument implemented in Serbia concerns the **support for**

**government-to-government projects** with the goal to promote knowledge transfer on the rule of law between Dutch government bodies and their counterparts in Serbia. The involvement of Dutch civil society organizations in these activities is a basic requirement. This instrument is managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is part of a regional program aimed at strengthening public institutions in the Western Balkans. The third segment of MATRA program is the **Rule of Law Trainings for Civil Servants**. The courses provided within this program take place in the Netherlands and aim to strengthen public institutions. The courses re-start this year and will provide education in the following topics: Administration of justice; Integrity of civil servants; Public (European) procurement; Human rights and minorities; Decentralization and participation; Media freedom; Public finance management; and Detention and alternative sanctions. The Netherlands also provides support through the **Human Rights Fund** for the projects that help achieve results set in the human rights strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called Justice and Respect for All. In Serbia the focus is on supporting local initiatives of the civil society organizations in the areas of equal rights for LGBT, gender equality, and freedom of expression. Apart from the projects of local organizations supported by the Embassy, the Netherlands also contributes to two projects of international organizations – the project of the OSCE to support the establishment of a national support system for victims and witnesses of crime, in order to ensure the effective protection of their human rights in criminal proceedings; and the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Justice Sector Reform of the World Bank.



## KfW has signed Loan Agreements with EPS and EMS

By:



KfW

End of February, beginning of March KfW has signed Loan Agreements with EPS and EMS,

respectively. The Funds of the volume of EUR 45 million related to the Agreement with EPS will be used for the modernization of the ash transport by the replacement of the thin slurry by a thick slurry technology in the largest EPS power plant – TENT A. Once implemented, the project will contribute to

better air quality in Obrenovac and the surroundings through fly ash reduction and reduction of ground water pollution. The representatives of EMS and KfW have signed a package of loan agreements of EUR 15 million, as well as the donation from the WBIF (Western Balkan Investment Framework) of EUR 6.5 million for the second section of the "Trans-Balkan Corridor"-Kragujevac- Kraljevo. The aim of the project is to raise the transmission network in central and western Serbia to the 400 kV voltage level, since the transmission network voltage of 220 kV in these parts of Serbia is at the end of its life span.

## Roma Social Inclusion Coordination Body Established

By:



The Government of the Republic of Serbia established the Coordination Body for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2016 – 2025. This Coordination Body examines all issues and coordinates the work performed by public administration bodies, local self-government units, public companies and all other types of government and local self-government organisations regarding the tasks performed within their scope which are connected to the social inclusion of the Roma community. Dr. Zorana Mihajlović, the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Minister of Construction, Transport, and Infrastructure was appointed as the President of the Coordination Body. As the operational support for the Coordination Body, an Expert Group was established; this Group is responsible for all tasks related to the current issues



concerning the social inclusion of the Roma community. The Chairman of the Expert Group is Mr. Miodrag Poledica, the State Secretary in the Ministry of Construction, Transport, and Infrastructure. Apart from the representatives from the public administration, the Group includes the representatives from the National Council of Roma National Minority and civil society organisations. Representatives from other bodies and organisations can become involved in the performance of specific tasks of the Group, depending on the needs and the topics which are in focus at that time. The expert, administrative and technical support to the Coordination Body is provided by the Ministry of Construction, Transport, and Infrastructure. The Expert Group provides expert support to the Coordination Body following its guidance, meets once per month, assesses the situation of Roma and identifies solutions to challenges.

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### In Brief: Call for Proposals by the Norwegian Embassy - Open Call: Strengthening EU integration in Serbia and Montenegro

Royal Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade launches the Call for Proposals within the bilateral cooperation programme to the Republic of Serbia. Ministries, local governments, public institutions in Serbia and Montenegro and international organisations are eligible to apply for this call for applications which will be open until 1 July 2017.

More information is available at: <https://www.norway.no/en/serbia/norway-serbia/news-events/news2/call-for-proposals/>

## Memorandum of Understanding for the Implementation of the EU-Supported Roma Housing Improvement Program Signed

By:



Belgrade, 10 May 2017 – Deputy Mayor of Belgrade Andreja Mladenović and Manager of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Graeme Tyndall signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the

City of Belgrade and UNOPS, outlining competences for the implementation of the second stage of the EU-funded 'Let's Build a Home Together' Roma housing improvement project. "We are determined to cooperate with our friends from the United Nations and the European Union, who have helped numerous Roma families to get housing and enter the socialisation programme," Andreja Mladenović, Deputy Mayor of Belgrade said and added "This is how we show we care together for the most vulnerable." The EU allocated 1.5 million Euros for this stage of the project, to secure housing solutions for 50 Roma families living in mobile settlements in Belgrade. "The European Union is highly dedicated to housing for the Roma, and finding a solution to the housing problem is also a part of the Serbian European integration path," Nicolas Bizel, Head of Operations I in the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, said. The MoU hammers out the framework for cooperation between City of Belgrade services -



the Secretariat for Social Welfare and Land Development Public Agency - and UNOPS. Within this project, the City of Belgrade is responsible to provide the plot for the construction of the social housing building, all approvals and permits, infrastructure connections and lead beneficiaries' selection process. "One building for 23 families will be constructed through this project, while 27 families will be able to purchase and refurbish rural households,"

Nataša Stanisavljević, City Secretary for Social Welfare, noted. UNOPS will ensure the construction and refurbishing of the social housing units, purchase of village households, conduct consultations with the beneficiary families and organise and implement their resettlement to new homes in line with the international human rights standards. "This project is very important because - while developing and implementing

methodologies for social housing of the most vulnerable social groups - it focused on human rights," Graeme Tyndall stated. During the first stage of the 'Let's Build a Home Together' project, funded by the EU with €3.6 mill, three social housing buildings were constructed for 59 families, village households were purchased for 41 families, whereas ten families were supported in reconstructing their own homes. The second stage of the project kicked off in March 2017 and will go on for two years.



# EU and Serbia at Work Projects Fair Held in Zrenjanin

By:  The EU projects fair titled "EU and Serbia at Work", featuring the most prominent EU-funded projects in Vojvodina, was held in Zrenjanin within the traditional manifestation European Village. The EU projects fair featured some thirty EU-funded projects worth a few hundred million euros in total. The fair was marked by Romania's tenth anniversary in the EU and excellent cooperation between Serbia and said EU Member established through cross-border projects. This is why the Embassy of Romania was invited to co-host this year's fair, together with the EU Delegation to Serbia, the Serbian European Integration Office and the City of Zrenjanin. The EU projects fair "EU and Serbia at Work" and the manifestation European Village were officially launched by Jadranka Joksimovic Minister without portfolio in charge of European integration, Oskar Benedikt Acting Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia, Cedomir Janjic the Mayor of Zrenjanin,




and Milan Cezek of the European Affairs Fund of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The visitors of the Fair had a chance to see numerous cross-border cooperation projects implemented with Romania and successfully managed by the SEIO aimed at strengthening cooperation in the field of tourism, flood prevention and empowering entrepreneurs from municipalities in Backa region. At the stand which presented the Support for Flood Relief programme and future plans in this area, it was said that the EU had invested substantial funds to support flood relief efforts and would continue to support municipalities in Vojvodina within the next phase of the programme. Ahead of EU fair launch ceremony, the Assembly of the City of Zrenjanin hosted the debate "European values, benefits and challenges of EU membership – Romania's experience. Also, the citizens of Zrenjanin had a chance to attend two exhibitions about the EU: Ever Closer Union.

## Upcoming Events

- ⇒ May 25 - 27 - Project "Culture for Europe, Europe for Culture" - CBC Programme Serbia-Montenegro, IPA I - Library "Vuk Karadžić Prijepolje" - Art Festival "Lim River - the Watermark of Polimje Towns"
- ⇒ Jun 8 - Project „Beekeeping without borders" - CBC Programme Serbia-Montenegro, IPA I - Municipality of Arilje - Ceremony for the delivery of beehives and swarms to the selected final beneficiaries for starting beekeeping
- ⇒ June 15 - The new EU projects fair - "EU and Serbia at Work", featuring the most prominent EU-funded projects in the South of Serbia will be held in Pirot

## Construction of 200 Apartments Financed through the RHP Starts in 9 Towns in Serbia

By:  Regional Housing Programme On 17 March in Sremska Mitrovica, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia hosted an event to mark the start of construction on a multi-apartment building which will provide housing for 40 refugee families. The total project cost is estimated at €700 000, and the works should be finalised within a year. Construction works have already been launched also in Krusevac, Prokuplje, Paracin and Vrsac, and shall soon start in Bajina Basta, Sabac, Kikinda and Sid. All these construction projects are part of the second sub-project approved by the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors in favour of Serbia. In total, this sub-project covers 870 housing solutions: 250 village houses, 200 apartments, 120 prefabricated houses and 300 packages of building materials throughout the country. Its total cost is estimated at €13 mill, 88% of which is financed from the RHP Fund resources while the national contri-



bution covers 12% or €1.5 mill. First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic stressed that in the last three years, Serbia has been allocated €87 mill in RHP grants. Commissioner Vladimir Cucic added that many other RHP projects are ongoing in Serbia, and that by the end of 2017, an additional 2000 most vulnerable beneficiary families will receive a durable housing solution thanks to the RHP, in addition to over 700 families which had already moved into new homes by end 2016. The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) was set up to provide durable housing solutions to vulnerable refugees and displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The main donor is the European Union which has pledged €232 mill to the Programme. The other donors are the U.S., Germany, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Turkey, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Hungary.

## About Aid Matters Newsletter

Aid Matters Newsletter on development assistance to Serbia is developed by the Sector for Planning, Programming, Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds and Development Assistance of the Office for the EU Integrations of the Republic of Serbia.

The newsletter aims at improving communication between stakeholders and exchange of information relevant to development assistance activities in the Republic of Serbia.



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