



EU AND SERBIA AT WORK

FACT SHEET

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE DANUBE SERBIA REGION (SEDDSR)

Socio-economic Development of the Danube Serbia Region (SEDDSR), a four year project funded by the European Union and co-funded and implemented by the Austrian Development Agency, provides valuable assistance in enabling socio-economic development for the Danube Serbia Region and Serbia as a whole. The project key areas of interest are tourism promotion, private sector's investment promotion, development of new employment opportunities and increasing the attractiveness of the Danube Serbia Region to foreign investors through infrastructure development.

The geographic area covered by the project - 11 districts (82 cities & municipalities) in the immediate hinterland of the River Danube: West Bačka, South Bačka, Srem, Mačva, Belgrade, Central Banat, South Banat, Podunavlje, Braničevo, Bor and Zaječar. SEDDSR has a variety of beneficiaries including municipalities, CSOs, chambers of commerce, regional development agencies, etc.

The project has a total budget of €19.5 million of combined funds from the IPA 2011 programme and the Republic of Austria's assistance programme (€1 million). Some €3.3 million was spent on 17 projects through the Grant Scheme. The project invested €6.5 million in revitalisation of the Golubac Fortress and €4.5 million in construction of Veliko Gradiste water supply system.

- It is supporting promotion of the Danube Serbia Region as an attractive investment and touristic destination that should lead to economic growth and new job creation.
- Through its grant scheme SEDDSR supported 17 projects in municipalities of the Region, in tourism, environment, food-processing and handicrafts.
- Assistance in preparation of 13 selected infrastructure projects will help municipalities in finding investments for infrastructure development.
- Revitalisation of the XIV century Golubac Fortress and construction of Veliko Gradiste water supply system would be a huge contribution to tourism development of the Danube Serbia Region and Serbia as a whole.

SUCCESS STORY: Knowledge to Everyone

The Innovative System for Knowledge and Skills Improvement – Knowledge to Everyone project is financed through the project; with the budget of €263,000 it is implemented in Vojvodina in cooperation with six renowned partner institutions. The project's aim is to create new employment opportunities in Vojvodina, especially in the field of tourism, food processing and handicrafts. The project provides innovative skills development opportunities in order to close the gap between labour market demands and the available workforce lacking adequate qualifications. To provide sustainability of professional development, the project is establishing a distance learning system, where recorded courses and teaching materials are available to all unemployed persons free of charge. Trainings started in March 2014 and covered curricula for chefs, bakers, confectioners, or souvenir and crafts artists, but also marketing, finance and management skills.





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“It is unbelievable that something like this is available in Serbia, completely free of charge. We only regret the time went by so fast, and three months of course rather felt like three days”, say Vinka Pantelic, food processing technician and Gordana Grubac, textile engineer.

The project plans to train 290 unemployed persons in the first phase. In the second phase, the representatives of 30 organizations and small enterprises from the sector of tourism as well as 300 unemployed persons will attend the training programs via the distance learning system, which, after completion of the project will remain available for future use.

By its expected end date in June 2016, the project aims are:

- completion of the reconstruction of the Golubac Fortress and construction of Veliko Gradiste water supply system is scheduled for the spring 2016;
- important Danube Serbia Region development documents Territorial Marketing Strategy and Destination Marketing Plan, both created with support of SEDDSR will be completed and presented to the public in 2015;
- finalisation of all 17 projects funded through SEDDSR grants is expected in 2015.

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