



Ministry of European Integration
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

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EU
PRO+

QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT

Jul - Sep 2024



UNOPS

Implementing partner
in 99 cities and municipalities in Serbia

Overall objective:	To contribute to socio-economic development, prosperity and social cohesion of Serbian society
Purpose:	To decrease socio-economic disparities in two regions within Serbia
Budget:	40 million euros
Donor:	The European Union
Start date:	1 January 2021
End date:	31 December 2025
Programme area:	The Regions of Šumadija and Western Serbia and the Southern and Eastern Serbia
Implementing partner:	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
Report date:	11 October 2024
Period covered:	1 July – 30 September 2024
Prepared by:	UNOPS

Acronyms

BSO	Business Support Organisation
CLLD	Community LED Local Development territorial development instrument
CFP	Call for Proposals
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEU	Delegation of the European Union
EU	European Union
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GAU	Grant Administration Unit
GG	Good Governance
GMT	Grant Management Team
GSA	Grant Support Agreement
HOC	Head of Cooperation of the EU delegation
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investment
ISTD	Integrated Sustainable Territorial Development
LAG	Local Action Group
LSG	Local Self-Government
MLEVSA	Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs
MPALSG	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self Government
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MEI	Ministry of European Integration
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SCTM	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SUD	Sustainable Urban Development
URBACT	Urban Development Network Programme



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1. SUMMARY

During the third quarter of 2024, the **European Union for Local Development Programme - EU PRO Plus** intensified work on the implementation of integrated projects deriving from territorial strategies, while finalising activities related to economic growth and social inclusion and cohesion. The forty projects completed during the quarter contribute to a total of 259 completed projects or 84% of the 308 supported projects, with 5 projects cancelled (1.7%) while 44 projects (14.3%) are under implementation.

Within **efforts to activate the potentials and resources of supported territories** and help solve common problems and promote the joint work of larger cities and smaller municipalities, the implementation of 18 integrated projects in total value of over 12 million Euros, initiated in the previous quarter is progressing well. These projects set the grounds for provision of direct benefits to around 350,000 people and indirectly more than 1.5 million inhabitants of the territories to improve the quality of urban areas, conditions for education and environmental protection through improved energy efficiency of public buildings, better waste management, activate and develop the tourist potential while preserving the cultural and historical heritage, and through their initiatives will introduce digitization and innovations, taking into account social inclusion and vulnerable groups. The territories are developing and implementing public procurement processes and initiating works and provision of services for these complex projects.

The EU PRO Plus support to **integrated and sustainable territorial development (ISTD) approach** is also supported by continued capacity building efforts. The territories are supported by the Programme to establish Project Coordination Units (PCU) envisaged by the territorial strategies, and the first PCU was established by the City of Loznica. An exchange with the peers at the local, regional and national levels was facilitated through a study visit to Saxony in Germany for representatives of the seven cities which benefited from support in developing Sustainable Urban Development Plans and the representatives of the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) in September 2024. The focus of the visit was urban renewal and investments in urban restructuring and the conversion of industrial areas.

The Programme continues to contribute to the **improvement of the business and investment climate** through strengthening of competitiveness and creating conditions for economic growth, through implementation of economic infrastructure projects. With finalisation of eight projects during the quarter, the first potential investments and jobs creation are on the verge of materialising. The equipped industrial zone in Mionica created conditions for the expected 5 million euros investments and over 500 new jobs; Over 180 new work spaces created in the newly built 1,000 square metres Smart City Centre in Novi Pazar should enable creation of 100 new jobs in the IT industry. Furthermore, tourism development is boosted in Kraljevo's Mataruška Spa with the new water supply system, and in Knjaževac with construction of the Rehabilitation centre "Rgošte". Finally, the technical documentation for projects contributing to the economic growth in Loznica, Kosjerić, and Bajina Bašta create conditions for implementation of priority projects for these local governments.

Within efforts to create **opportunities for women and youth entrepreneurs**, the Programme support to start-ups has directly contributed to creation of an additional 26 jobs contributing to the total number of 58 jobs created through this support, of which 35 or 60% are occupied by women. With the supported start-ups working in the least developed municipalities the social impact of this intervention is even more significant.

The EU PRO Plus **support to strengthen social services was delivered successfully**, contributing to enhancement of social cohesion and reduction of social disparities of the two regions. The

intervention, implemented through 20 projects awarded to civil society organisations and local self-governments, facilitated better access to education, health and social care services for citizens and improved the quality of their provision, reaching over 8,400 direct beneficiaries (of 62% female) out of which over 7,700 people belong to vulnerable and marginalised groups, including 363 people with disabilities. Furthermore, it is estimated that over 23,700 people (of which 54% women) benefited indirectly from the intervention.

The Programme's support to **improved services provided by local self-governments through social infrastructure** has been finalised, with conclusion of the last two of the 37 supported projects. In Bujanovac, the completion of hydro and electrical installations for the waste transfer station has supported the local administration and public utility company with the necessary preconditions for further development of the transfer station and its connection to the regional landfill "Meteris" in Vranje. Similarly, in Sjenica, the completion of works and procurement of furniture and containers for the temporary storage of animal by-products have established the foundation for sustainable animal by-product management in compliance with EU regulations and practices.

With the completion of construction of the bridge in Vrnjačka Banja, and finalisation of the works on the bridge in Rača, Programme support in **rehabilitation of flood-affected communities** is being concluded.

The Programme proactively **managed risks and addressed issues** throughout the quarter, with the greatest challenges remaining with implementation of public procurement processes for economic infrastructure, and integrated projects. While implementation of activities is predominantly on track, delays are recorded with implementation of several projects, which are closely monitored and supported by the Programme technical personnel. Looking ahead, the key challenge for the Programme remains controlling the implementation timeframe and securing successful finalisation of the supported projects.

The Programme continues investing efforts in the **visibility of its interventions**, focusing on promoting ongoing and completed activities through high-level visits and multimedia promotion. Seven high-level field visits were conducted while the extensive coordination efforts resulted in the preparation of 13 briefing documents, media content and successful collaboration with key stakeholders. Eleven press releases were issued, generating 445 positive media reports (195 in national media). Two digital newsletters were distributed to over 3,500 partners. So far, 108 projects out of 283 implemented by the Programme have been promoted through various communication channels.

This Report provides review of progress and performance, update on management and coordination issues, review of assumptions and risks, quality and sustainability considerations, insight into the key outputs for the next reporting period, and lessons learned. A number of annexes give the readers opportunity to get in depth knowledge of some specific actions taken by the Programme.

QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT

2.1 Review of project progress

2.1.1 Policy and Programme Context

In September 2024, the Government of Serbia (GoS) passed [the Proposal of the Law on the Establishment and Functioning of the Cohesion Policy Management System](#), currently in the adoption procedure. The Law establishes a system for managing and controlling the implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy and defines procedures for preparing relevant documents in line with the policy objectives and Serbia's EU accession obligations. It regulates the goals and principles of the Cohesion Policy, funding for implementation actions, strategic frameworks, and programme preparation procedures. Additionally, it outlines responsibilities for managing and controlling relevant programmes, covering implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, visibility, and public information about results.

In September 2024, the Ministry of Environmental Protection launched a consultation process for the [Draft Environmental Protection Strategy - Green Agenda of the Republic of Serbia for 2024-2033](#), including the Action Plan and the Report on the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment. Consultations will be conducted until 3 October 2024. The strategy aligns with the Sofia Declaration, signed by Serbia in November 2020, serving as an umbrella public policy document in the environmental field. It focuses on five areas: i) Climate change and decarbonisation; ii) Circular economy; iii) Reduction of environmental pollution; iv) Protection of biodiversity and ecosystems; and v) Sustainable food systems and rural development.

In July 2024, two new funding opportunities were opened for territories supported by EU PRO Plus under the [EIT Community New European Bauhaus](#). The [Co-create NEB call](#) seeks citizen-generated solutions to challenges in urban and rural areas, supporting projects that help communities re-imagine communal spaces, enhance nature, and foster a sense of belonging. Eight projects will be selected, with applications due by 26 September 2024, offering a maximum funding of 45,000 EUR per project and a minimum co-funding rate of 25%. The [Connect NEB call](#), open until 10 October 2024, supports initiatives addressing local challenges and facilitates knowledge exchange, funding up to eight projects with a maximum of 15,000 EUR per project and a minimum co-funding rate of 20%.

In June 2024, the GoS adopted the [Law ratifying the Agreement between Serbia and the EU on participation in the EU Programme "Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values."](#) This is the largest programme for promoting and protecting Union values, with an estimated budget of 1.5 billion Euros for distribution from 2021 to 2027. The funding will support the non-profit sector in four key areas: civic activism, equality, combating violence, and upholding EU rights and values.

In July 2024, the GoS adopted the [Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan to 2030](#), with a vision extending to 2050. This strategic document outlines goals and timelines for the energy transition. Policies are organised into five key dimensions: decarbonisation (including greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy), energy efficiency, energy security, internal energy market, and research, innovation, and competitiveness.

Also in July 2024, the GoS adopted the [National Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2024-2028](#) to systematically prevent and combat corruption. The document targets high-risk areas, including police, health, education, local government, construction, political financing, taxes and customs, public procurement, privatisation, and public enterprises, with whistleblower protection and lobbying also addressed.

During the third quarter of 2024, the Ministry of Economy (MoE) launched [several public calls](#) to support entrepreneurship. The first call, valued at 30 million dinars, supports women's entrepreneurship in rural

areas with grants covering 100% of investment costs for equipment and materials (300,000 to 500,000 dinars), open until 10 October 2024. The second call allocates 10 million dinars for traditional and artistic crafts, covering 100% of costs (80,000 to 300,000 dinars), and is open until 12 September 2024. The third call for young entrepreneurs and startups is temporarily suspended due to high demand, with 100 million dinars available and grants covering 30-50% of investments, open until 31 December 2024. The fourth call provides 160 million dinars for processing capacities in hunting, fishing, and beverage production, with grants covering up to 30% of costs, open until 31 December 2024. The fifth call supports women entrepreneurs and single mothers with 100 million dinars, offering grants covering up to 55% of investments, also open until 31 December 2024. The sixth call has 50 million dinars for employers in dual education to cover student wages, open until 11 October 2024. Finally, the seventh call supports the processing industry with 600 million dinars, temporarily suspended due to high interest; it offers grants up to 50% of investment costs and is open until 31 May 2025 or until funds are exhausted.

On 15 July 2024, the MoE announced a [public call for projects under the 2024 Business Infrastructure Development Support Program](#), with a total budget of 771 million dinars. This program features two main measures: Measure 1 funds infrastructure projects that enhance business zones and connect them to surrounding areas, while Measure 2 aims to improve infrastructure capacities for tourism and other economic activities. Local government units can submit project applications, with the Ministry potentially covering up to 100% of project costs. Projects must align with the program's goals and local urban planning, with evaluation criteria including feasibility, sustainability, investor intent, and anticipated effects such as job creation. The application deadline was set for 22 July 2024, with detailed documentation required for submission.

2.1.2 Progress towards achieving objectives

The Programme made significant progress in socio-economic development this quarter, with territorial strategies yielding positive results in the targeted regions. The available statistical data show that national GDP increased by 3.8% in 2023 compared to 2.6% in 2022. Data on regional GDP for 2023 is not yet available, however, a significant decrease in the number of unemployed of 17.3% was registered in Q2 2024 compared to the same period in previous year. This trend was especially significant for the region of Sumadija and West Serbia where the decrease in unemployment was more than 24.5%. Number of registered business entities in these two regions increased by 3,000 or 1.7% in 2024 compared to 2023.

The EU PRO Plus supported 12 programme territories with developed territorial strategies in finding partners for [INTERREG Europe](#) restricted call for project proposals which resulted that five supported territories and six application¹ were approved in August 2024. The partners from Serbia will receive 415.000 EUR of the EU funding in total. The call was designed with the aim to enable adding up to two new partners from seven additional countries as discovery partners. The participation in such partnerships will contribute to improvement of policies identified in territorial strategies, thus will improve individual knowledge of local partners through collaboration with peers from EU on highly relevant and innovative topics, building up on the capacity building activities provided through EU PRO Plus.

A comprehensive assessment of the initiative to strengthen social services² confirms its positive impact on the Programme's Result 3 objectives with over 8,400 direct beneficiaries out of which over 7,700 people coming from excluded groups benefiting from the 28 social services, including innovative and integrated services, which were established and/ or improved. The increase in beneficiaries from vulnerable groups,

¹ [MaaSolutions - City of Leskovac](#), [LOTTI - City of Kragujevac](#), [COMMIT - Regional Development Agency of Šumadija and Pomoravlje \(REDASP\)](#), [EMBRACER - Regional Development Organisation of Sandžak \(SEDA\)](#), [FutureECOS - Regional Development Agency JUG](#) and [Tourism4SDG - Municipality of Sokobanja](#).

² The Report on Activity for Strengthening Social Services is available in Annex III Attn 3.2 www.euproplus.org.rs

along with documented improvements in service delivery, confirms that the initiative has enhanced social cohesion and reduced disparities across the two targeted regions.

2.1.3 Results and Activities

Result 1: Improved development planning in targeted municipalities and introduction of the ITI concept

In September 2024, the study visit to Germany completed the planned cycle of visits. This tailored approach provided insights and examples related to integrated sustainable territorial development, offering applicable solutions for Serbia. Based on the gained experience, the cities will be able to apply different approaches on valorisation and promotion of their significant socialist building heritage as well to identify and explore potential dissonant heritage. On the other hand, they can rely on the examples from Germany to consider combination of public investments, various sources of funding and local regulations in resolving mutual challenges such as inaccessible waterfronts, degraded and contaminated areas. Finally, the insight into results of designing large scale transformation processes gained in Germany may inspire similar interventions in Serbia. The established governance arrangements for implementing territorial strategies lay the foundation for sustainable strategic planning, enabling more efficient policy implementation and better resource utilisation.

Activity 1.1 Enhancing national capacity to introduce integrated territorial development

The scope and methodology of the study on the national model for Integrated Sustainable Territorial Development (ISTD) were discussed with the Ministry for European Integration (MEI), and the content and deadlines for the study have been agreed upon. The final study will summarise the relevant activities and outputs of the EU PRO Plus Programme and make recommendations for Serbia's national ISTD model.

The study visit to Germany conducted in September 2024 was designed for seven medium-sized towns implementing integrated Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) strategies, including Šabac, Loznica, Novi Pazar, Smederevo, Bor, Kruševac, and Leskovac, as well as representatives from the MEI and the Ministry of Economy. This approach integrates all three levels of governance, consistent with the principles of previous study visits. The visit provided a comprehensive overview of Germany's successful transformation process, achieved through significant investments in urban restructuring and the conversion of industrial areas. Additionally, the peer exchange between Serbian participants and their German counterparts offered firsthand insights into project implementation funded by both EU and other financial resources.

Activity 1.2 Improving capacities of municipalities and regional development agencies to introduce concepts of integrated territorial planning

As part of supporting the implementation of territorial strategies, the Programme offers ongoing guidance in establishing Project Coordination Units (PCUs). Based on feedback from local decision-makers and regional development agencies, guidelines for establishing PCUs have been developed, detailing the duties of PCU members for all supported territories. The approach for implementing Module IV of the Capacity Building (CB) Plan has also been defined, providing comprehensive support to established PCUs.

In August 2024, the City of Loznica became the first supported territory to formally establish a PCU. The layouts of all twelve territorial strategies have been finalised, including bibliographical references. These completed strategies have been submitted to the supported territories, and their publication on local websites is underway. The strategies are also available on the [Programme website](#).

Activity 1.3 Implementing activities contributing to socio-economic growth deriving from integrated territorial planning strategies

Implementation of the 18 integrated projects is underway. Action and procurement plans were developed for all projects, and the preparation of documentation for public procurement of works and services is underway. Thus far 36 procurement processes were published, of which 13 contracts were signed under ten projects.

In Šabac, the first tender process was unsuccessful due to offers exceeding the projected budget. Šabac has since revised the budget and re-tendered the construction of a gym for primary schools Vuk Karadžić and "Sveti Sava," as well as the pre-school institution "Naše dete," with a new bid submission deadline of 15 October 2024.

In Topola, the complex CREST project, managed by the Regional Economic Development Agency for Šumadija and Pomoravlje (REDASP), has encountered setbacks. Delays in the reconstruction of the King's Vinery, part of the GIZ project "EU for Cultural Heritage and Tourism," hindered the preparation of tender documentation for complementary works. After several meetings with REDASP, the Topola municipality, and the designer, the approach and scope of work have been agreed upon, with a tender package expected by mid-October. The tender for the memorial complex Petrovi dvori in Rača has closed successfully, and nine bidders are being evaluated. Tenders in Aranđelovac and Knić are pending detailed design and documentation preparation.

In Zaječar, the ISTD project "Magic of Eastern Serbia," in partnership with Knjaževac, Sokobanja, and Boljevac, has successfully published tenders for works across all partnering local self-governments (LSGs) except Zaječar, which is still in the tender preparation phase. The Sokobanja tender is under evaluation, while deadlines for Boljevac and Knjaževac tenders have been extended to October.

In Užice, the project by the Regional Development Agency (RDA) Zlatibor, focused on developing a unique identity study for urban areas in the Užice ITI territory, has completed four procurements, including the critical study development. This achievement has reached the first payment milestone following an initial conference.

Two procurements have been finalised and advertised within the implementation of the ITI project in Pirot in reference to the improvement of the Educational Ecosystem in the Urban Area of the City of Pirot and the Municipalities of Dimitrovgrad, Babušnica and Bela Palanka. Both procurements relate to soft measures while the procurement of infrastructure works is in preparation with Babušnica most prepared for the public procurement.

In Niš, three procurements, two of which relate to co-creation workshops and the third related to territorial marketing, have been finalised and advertised within the implementation of Active protection of the cultural heritage "Tabula Peutingeriana" project. The preparation of the execution design for the atelier to be reconstructed within the Niš fortress is in progress, while the Institute for protection of cultural heritage is reviewing the technical documentation for the procurement of works on the "kazamats".

In Loznica, the Programme has supported the definition of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Master Plan for the Viskoza Factory, with procurement preparation underway. Complex procurement packages for studies are also being developed in Kragujevac for a mechanical workshop at the Military Technical Institute, in Kruševac for the reconstruction of the mediaeval town Lazarev Grad, and in Novi Pazar for a traffic study. Procurements are expected by mid October 2024.

In Kragujevac, Regional Economic Development Agency for Šumadija and Pomoravlje (REDASP) has commenced the Sumadija CONNECT Project. Technical documentation and ToR for the Works on the reconstruction of The Building of the Second technical schools has been updated and reviewed. The updated assessment showed that the budgeted amount is underestimated. However, the publishing of the procurement is pending until the formal agreement with the City of Kragujevac that covers the www.euproplus.org.rs

additional co-funding is signed. The procurement for External expertise for study analysis of cultural goods and External expertise for cultural-historic heritage valorization plan has been closed and is in the process of contracting.

In Užice, there was a need for a change in design in order to be able to publish the procurement for works on reconstruction of the roof of the National Theater. The procurement for the new design has been finalised and the action plan updated.

In Novi Pazar, the procurement for works on the Recycling Center has been published with the deadline for bids on 11 October 2024.

Result 2: Enhanced economic growth in targeted municipalities

Eight of the awarded 20 economic infrastructure projects have finalised all activities during the quarter, and have already begun yielding results, fostering local economic growth and new employment opportunities.

In Mionica, the completion of the water supply system has reduced water loss from dilapidated asbestos pipes by 60%. New pumps at the Orlovine water intake now ensure a stable supply for 10,000 residents and businesses in the old industrial zone, facilitating the establishment of a new zone. The German company Auto-Cabel, the largest investor in the area, plans to invest over 5 million Euros to expand operations, potentially creating 568 jobs over three years once a stable water supply, sewage, and electricity are available. Additionally, two cycles of German language training were completed, preparing future Auto-Cabel employees for vocational training in Germany.

In Novi Pazar, the Smart City Centre's completion, equipped with over 1,000 square metres of office space, has created 180 workspaces for the IT industry, expecting to host over 100 new employees. The building currently houses 15 entities that secured workspaces through a competitive process, with another 50 new employees anticipated upon obtaining the usage permit.

In Kraljevo, the Mataruška spa project ensured a stable water supply for a domestic company renovating the Thermal hotel, revitalising tourism and creating 12 jobs, with plans to hire 70 by the end of 2024. The project also included new park furniture and a children's playground, enhancing the spa's offerings for residents and visitors.

In Knjaževac, the completion of infrastructure works at the newly established Rehabilitation and Spa Centre "Rgošte" supports spa tourism development in the area.

Additionally, project designs for upcoming works in Loznica, Kosjerić, and Bajina Bašta have provided the necessary technical groundwork for these investments. Loznica has obtained all documentation for indoor pool construction, while Kosjerić has met the technical requirements for Phase I of the district heating system and completion of the existing system. Bajina Bašta is now prepared to secure funding for constructing a multimedia facility with essential road and communal infrastructure in the sports recreation centre.

In addition to 26 jobs created by self-employment of Women and Youth startups 33 new jobs have been created, out of which 18 are occupied by women. Total number of new jobs is 58, out of which 35 or 60% are occupied by women.

A total of 30 out of 43 startup grant recipients completed socially responsible activities, benefiting 5,379 people.

Activity 2.1 Developing economic infrastructure and business related services at the local level

In this quarter, eight out of 20 local self-governments (LSGs) completed all activities within their economic infrastructure projects, including three³ out of eight from LOT 1 (focused on equipping economic zones), two⁴ out of five from LOT 2 focused on tourism development, and three⁵ out of seven from LOT 3 focused on preparing technical documentation for economic development.

Of the twelve ongoing projects, eleven have completed all tendering processes and are advancing through various stages of development. The Republic Committee for the Protection of Bidders' Rights resolved complaints regarding tendering processes in Šabac, Preševo, and Užice, enabling these LSGs to commence infrastructure works.

In Bosilegrad, positive developments include investment attraction and infrastructure implementation. The company "Put Slobode" from Požega intends to produce wardrobes in the former textile factory Kobos, contingent on infrastructure improvements, with plans to employ 250 workers within five years. By the end of the quarter, implementation had begun, achieving 25% progress, and the procurement for sewing machines was advertised, with bids opening on 21 October 2024.

In Preševo, after signing a contract with the most favourable bidder, the contractor was officially introduced to the site on 19 August 2024, with a 90-day deadline for completion.

In Mali Zvornik, significant progress was made in establishing paths and viewpoints at Orlovine, along with the procurement of an information kiosk for tourism organisation and equipment for developing tourist products and services. The Programme granted Mali Zvornik a two-month extension until the end of November 2024 to complete all project activities.

However in Kragujevac, the City cancelled the tender for rehabilitating the bridge over the Lepenica River for the second time due to none of the five bidders meeting the required references. One of the bidders filed a complaint to the Republic Committee for the Protection of Bidders' Rights, postponing Kragujevac's intention to re-tender the works for a third time.

Among the seven awarded grants for developing technical documentation, Loznica, Bajina Bašta, and Kosjerić finalised their documentation, while Lajkovac received location conditions, slightly delaying design completion. A two-month extension until the end of November 2024 for Lajkovac was granted. The implementation of projects in Zaječar and Paraćin are lagging, while Surdulica, initially the most advanced, obtained State Design Audit approval for its concept design in mid-September 2024, allowing the designer to draft the building permit design.

During this quarter, the Programme reviewed and processed four⁶ requests for the second milestone payment and determined that no second milestone payment would be needed for Kosjerić, Bajina Bašta, Paraćin, and Čuprija, as the contracted amounts for technical documentation were below budgeted figures. Additionally, Čuprija failed to meet conditions for the second milestone payment within the designated time frame.

Activity 2.2 Enhancing competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises contributing to economic stability of local communities

Out of 43 grants awarded under [Call for Proposal for Support to Women and Youth Start-ups](#) 30 grants have been completed, while 12 remain in implementation and one grantee has cancelled participation due to increased prices of equipment. Under 76 procurement processes more than 200 pieces of new equipment were procured. The 30 startup grantees finalised their corporate social responsibility (CSR)

³Čuprija, Mionica and Novi Pazar

⁴Knjaževac and Kraljevo

⁵Loznica, Kosjerić and Bajina Bašta

⁶ Novi Pazar, Knjaževac, Kraljevo and Šabac

activities, including donations of equipment and supplies to local schools and kindergartens, such as school benches, TV equipment, alongside monetary contributions to humanitarian organisations and cultural events. Startups also organised training sessions in architecture for youth and workshops for primary school children, and contributed to local sports and cultural associations with funds and goods as well as logistical support like carpet and floor cleaning for a social services centre.

Result 3: Improved social infrastructure and social cohesion in targeted municipalities

In September 2024, the Programme conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the results attained under the activity that supported 20 projects in strengthening social services, while reaching over 8,400 direct beneficiaries. Following outline summarises the key results of the intervention, while the full assessment is available as separate report⁷:

- Total of 28 social services were established and/or improved and over 7,700 people from vulnerable groups directly benefited
- The activity was realised in 22 LSGs⁸ with formal participation of 48 actors, including 23 CSOs, 17 LSG representatives, six social protection institutions and two health care centres
- Five new licensed social protection services were established in Bojnik, Lebane, Kraljevo, Kragujevac and Žitorađa, and five existing ones were expanded in Loznica, Kragujevac, Bela Palanka and Tutin, facilitating direct access to the services for 135 new users, primarily children and adults with disabilities and elderly in rural areas
- Two organisations are licensed for provision of social protection services in Kraljevo and Bojnik
- Total of 92 people are accredited for provision of the social protection services in Loznica, Bojnik, Lebane, Kragujevac, Babušnica, Zaječar, Žitorađa and Bela Palanka
- Six innovative and three integrated services were piloted in Kragujevac, Niš, Tutin, Zaječar, Babušnica, Velika Plana, Leskovac, Trstenik, Brus and Prijepolje reaching 331 beneficiaries from disadvantages groups
- Total of 30 social protection experts were certificated for introduction of innovative services in Niš, Velika Plana and Leskovac
- Total of 70 people (91% women) gained temporary or permanent employment as service providers and expert associates in Loznica, Čuprija, Bojnik, Lebane, Kragujevac, Babušnica, Čičevac, Čajetina, Kraljevo, Zaječar, Niš, Novi Pazar, Žitorađa, Bor, Bela Palanka and Tutin
- Health care services in eleven villages of Čuprija and Čičevac were re-established, after being interrupted due to the COVID-19 crisis, reaching over 6,500 residents, mostly elderly people
- Three strategic documents for improvement of social protection services were developed in Zaječar, Prijepolje and Kragujevac, as well as four protocols for crisis responses related to the provision of social services in Velika Plana, Čajetina, Kragujevac and Bor. Four researches on effects of piloted innovative services were conducted in Leskovac, Trstenik, Brus and Prijepolje while in Kragujevac and Zaječar the conducted researches focus on the position of vulnerable and marginalised groups in Kragujevac and Zaječar
- Over 40 organisations and institutions increased their capacities for provision of social services through equipping and/or refurbishing of the premises and by realisation of 35 different capacity building activities for strengthening knowledge and skills of the human resources

⁷ The Report on Activity for Strengthening Social Services is available in Annex III Attn 3.2

⁸ Babušnica, Bela Palanka, Bojnik, Bor, Brus, Čajetina, Čičevac, Čuprija, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Lebane, Leskovac, Loznica, Negotin, Niš, Novi Pazar, Prijepolje, Trstenik, Tutin, Velika Plana, Zaječar and Žitorađa

With the finalisation of activities within the two local infrastructure grants in Bujanovac and Sjenica, all 37 local infrastructure grants supported through the Programme have been completed. In Bujanovac, the completion of hydro and electrical installations, along with the cleaning of the transfer station, has provided the local administration and public utility company (PUC) with the necessary preconditions for further development of the transfer station and its connection to the regional landfill "Meteris" in Vranje. Similarly, in Sjenica, the completion of works and procurement of furniture and containers for the temporary storage of animal by-products have established the foundation for sustainable animal by-product management in compliance with EU regulations and practices.

Additionally, the constructed bridge in Vrnjacka Banja enables uninterrupted communication of citizens, and reduces the flood-related risks for the community.

Activity 3.1 Developing and improving infrastructure which contributes to enhanced quality of life

In Bujanovac, hydro and electrical installations at the transfer station were completed, and waste management issues were resolved allowing technical acceptance at the end of September 2024. Savings from the project led to an Annex for landfill cleaning works. Financial verification and narrative reporting were completed, enabling Bujanovac to receive the second tranche of Programme funding. An action plan for operationalising the transfer station, outlining timelines and resources, was handed over to the LSG for further planning.

In Sjenica, all contracted works on the facility and accompanying documentation were finalised during the reporting period, alongside the procurement of furniture and two containers for animal product disposal, instead of the initially planned four due to insufficient project funds. The LSG will now focus on project closure activities in the coming period.

Activity 3.2 Supporting public institutions, including the social protection institutions, to enhance social services and preparedness for emergencies

Following the closure of five remaining grants, the activity supporting 20 projects for strengthening social services was successfully concluded. The Programme prepared the Report on Activity which offers a comprehensive overview of the implementation and results achieved. Additionally, the Report includes insights into lessons learned, key findings, and recommendations based on the experiences gained, relevant for planning future interventions of a similar nature.

Activity 3.3 Support to COVID-19 related prevention and response activities

The activity is completed in earlier reporting periods.

Activity 3.4 Support in rehabilitation of the flood-caused damages

The construction of the bridge over Mala Reka in Vrnjačka Banja municipality, completed on 23 July 2024 was technically commissioned and handed over on 20 August 2024 for operation and maintenance.

Works on the bridge over the Krčmara River in Rača municipality, despite reaching 80% completion, faced further delays due to discrepancies between project documentation and on-site conditions. The contractor is struggling to secure adequate materials for road construction, slightly delaying the scheduled completion set for 15 September to 10 October 2024.

The Programme granted a time extension to contractor "HPS", the company providing supervision services for the works on the bridge contracted by UNOPS and for riverbed regulation works contracted by Rača municipality, which are also experiencing delays.

2.2 Management

2.2.1 Governance

The Programme Steering Committee (PSC) members actively supported and guided the implementation of the Programme during the quarter. Discussions with the EU Delegation (EUD) to Serbia, the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) about the successor Programme continued with several meetings taking place during the quarter.

The next PSC meeting is planned for December 2024.

2.2.2 Coordination

The Programme showcased its activities promoting integrated sustainable territorial development (ISTD) and urban greenery projects at a conference [on the Green Cities Serbia project, titled “Enhancing Urban Greening for a Sustainable Future in Serbia”](#) hosted by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands.

As a result of the Programme's efforts in supporting the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) to identify partnerships for [INTERREG Europe](#), six partners from five supported territories were approved under the restricted call for project proposals. This call allowed previously approved EU projects to add up to two new partners from seven additional countries. The topics covered by these six projects aim to enhance policies within supported territorial strategies and contribute to capacity-building processes based on the Programme's results. The Programme assisted MEI in matching approved EU partners with supported territories, motivating local stakeholders to apply, linking respective territorial strategies and related policies, and discussing potential strategy topics with EU partners.

Comprehensive coordination activities were conducted to organise high-level DEU visits to the field, including consultations with DEU representatives. This included three two-day visits from the DEU Head of Cooperation, involving intensive collaboration with other EU-funded projects, such as GIZ's “EU for Cultural Heritage and Tourism,” UNDP's ReLoad project, and UNOPS's EU SHAI programme. Regular cooperation and coordination with the EU Info Centre, or European House, continued regarding the media promotion of EU-funded projects and the DEU field visit.

2.2.3 Human Resources

In line with the UNOPS performance management process, during the third quarter of 2024, all EU PRO Plus personnel have undergone the mid-year performance evaluation, discussing the progress towards the set goals for the year with the supervisors.

Several learning activities took place during the quarter. The Project Manager completed Project Management Excellence Training organised at the UNOPS regional level. All EU PRO Plus personnel completed the mandatory Cybersecurity Awareness Training, which raises awareness of cybersecurity risks and reporting requirements, especially in light of the increasing cyber risk generally. Moreover, one personnel member completed the Aspiring People Leaders Certification, aimed at equipping colleagues who do not yet supervise others formally with some of the essential tools needed to positively impact the organisation and become a people leader one day. Finally, one personnel member also completed oneUNOPS Collect Course, critical for educating colleagues on how to use the oneUNOPS Collect platform, one of the two platforms comprising the Health, safety, social and environmental management (HSSE) module, and how it can be used for data collection with usage & integration of its embedded HSSE forms.

2.2.4 Procurement and Grants

During the third quarter of 2024, 26 Grant Support Agreements (GSAs) were administratively closed, contributing to a total of 228. Currently there are 45 GSAs under implementation for which fifteen amendments were issued, and an additional 40 GSAs are undergoing the administrative closure procedure. The Programme's financial delivery through the grants mechanism was achieved with 22 payment requests processed.

Procurement processes conducted during the quarter supported implementation of the activities - procurement of services for the study visit to Germany and various smaller procurement processes relating to procurement of printing services for the 2025 calendar and promotional and visibility activities.

2.2.5 Finance

The following are the main financial indicators⁹:

- The total delivery of the EU PRO Plus as of 30 September 2024 was 30,766,497.43 Euros or 72.20% of the Programme budget.
- The delivery in Q3 2024 was 3,692,538.73 Euros.
- The forecast delivery for the next reporting period is 6,091,578.51 Euros.

The fifth tranche in the amount of 3,974,726.13 Euros was transferred to the Programme on 10 September 2024.

2. RISKS AND ISSUES

During the quarter, the Programme proactively managed risks and issues. Below is a summary of the current issues and risks affecting the Programme:

- **City of Kragujevac is facing significant delays in implementation of the economic infrastructure project due to several unsuccessful public procurement processes for works.** The second tender for the reconstruction of the bridge in the FAS zone failed to secure a contract, prompting the City of Kragujevac to announce a third re-tender. However, one of the five bidders has contested this decision, and the Republic Committee is now evaluating the claim. Although the legal resolution period is 30 days, it could extend to three months if supporting documentation is required, as seen in the Šabac project. Such delays may hinder the next procurement, risking failure to complete it by the end of 2024. If this risk materialises, Kragujevac could lose the funds for bridge rehabilitation, necessitating a reallocation to another project on the reserve list.
- **Ćuprija has been unable to realise the funds from the second Programme instalment due to a failure to make timely payments to the Contractor and secure co-funding within the agreed timeframe.** Despite completing all works on the transformer station to ensure electricity supply for potential investors in the Minel industrial zone, Ćuprija did not secure the necessary co-funding or pay the Contractor in time to facilitate the second instalment request. Following an official notice, the Programme met with Ćuprija representatives, who agreed to ensure timely payment before the project's closure.
- **Despite progress in economic infrastructure projects, seven projects may require extensions due to delays in tendering processes or the issuance of location conditions for design development.** The Programme will monitor progress closely and address time extension requests individually to facilitate the completion of all project activities.

⁹ While these figures provide quality insight into the Programme's spending, the final figures are only provided in the Programme's financial reports.

- **Due to the absence of the Mayor of Loznica during the quarter, coordination has suffered, leading to delays in both grants awarded under the ISTD scheme.** None of the 16 planned public procurement procedures for September were published, prompting the Programme to send an official letter to the Mayor. If Loznica fails to provide a recovery plan and initiate the publishing of tenders for key activities, it may not complete all planned activities within the grant timeframe. The Programme supports the Project grant team through daily communication to help initiate these activities.

3. SUSTAINABILITY: Social, Environmental, Economic, National Capacity

With the completion of the activity for strengthening services, the Programme conducted a follow-up to assess the status of newly established and expanded social services requiring further monitoring. Most projects have secured institutional and financial sustainability or are actively progressing toward this goal.

In Žitorađa, the child companion service was restarted with the new school year, following the Municipal Assembly's approval for budget allocation. In Loznica, the CSO continued expanding home care services for elderly residents in rural areas, supported by a two million dinar allocation from the local self-government (LSG). In Zaječar, a Draft Strategy for Social Policy Development has been created, recognising the outreach work service, laying the groundwork for the service's viability. Although there is a delay in adopting the Strategy due to LSG procedures, it is expected by the end of 2024, with the lead CSO continuing to fund the service through its social entrepreneurship activities.

In Kraljevo, local elections previously delayed the adoption of decisions necessary for institutional and financial support for service provision, resulting in the interruption of the Day Care Centre service for people with autism after the Programme's support ended. However, all procedural issues with the City of Kraljevo are now resolved, and the CSO expects to restart service provision in October 2024, supported by EU PRO Plus. A detailed overview of the sustainability of this intervention is available in the Report on the Activity for Strengthening Social Services.

In Bujanovac and Sjenica, two finalised local infrastructure projects were conceptualised as sustainable, but further work is needed for full sustainability. The Bujanovac project established the necessary infrastructure and action plan for the transfer station, but its operation depends on the completion of the Metres regional waste disposal site in Vranje, expected by the end of 2027. Once operational, the transfer station will improve air quality and waste management for over 43,000 residents.

The Programme also established infrastructure conditions for an animal by-product (ABP) collection facility serving two neighbouring municipalities, located near Sjenica. Six workshops on ABP management were facilitated, and a 30 kW solar power plant will supply renewable energy to ensure sustainability. However, the facility requires licensing from the Veterinary Administration, which is contingent on obtaining a specialised vehicle for ABP collection, pending budget availability from the LSGs. Sjenica has applied for this vehicle through a public call from the Japanese embassy. Once operational, the facility is expected to reduce illegal ABP disposal by 90% and support certification for SMEs in the food processing industry, benefiting over 10,000 direct users.

Economic infrastructure projects have already demonstrated sustainability. The Šabac project continues to generate jobs through investments in three factories constructed by the Chinese company Minth, despite not being completed. Similarly, the Novi Pazar Smart City Centre is beginning to welcome new tenants, fostering creative businesses and individual entrepreneurs. Mionica has also ensured the sustainability of

its water supply system, now recording no loss in the network, a significant improvement from the previous 60% loss rate.

4. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES:

Good governance, Gender equality, Social inclusion, Environment and climate change and Digitalisation

The implementation of [18 projects under the Public Call for proposals for integrated projects, derived from 12 territorial strategies](#) supported by the Programme, follows a co-creative process as required by the call criteria. This involves various stakeholders in developing proposals through consultations, workshops, and public forums to evaluate project outcomes and impacts, focusing on opportunities and obstacles for new governance practices in sustainable urban development.

During the reporting period, all 12 grantees, awarded with 18 integrated projects in total, underwent Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) assessment, as well as Capacity Assessment, prior to signing GSA. The average SEA risk rating of the assessed grantees was Medium Capacity and capacity-strengthening implementation plans were agreed. In mid September, first reassessment was conducted, and six grantees were rated as Full Capacity. Remaining six grantees are closely monitored and will be reassessed within set deadlines.

The study visit to Germany in September included participants from seven local self-governments (LSGs) implementing Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) strategies, alongside representatives from the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) and the Ministry of Economy (MoE). Out of 21 participants, 15 were women, making up over 70% of the group. Participants explored various aspects of urban development, including gender equality, urban safety in Berlin, and structural changes in Lusatia. A visit to Cottbus, specifically to the [Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning's Competence Centre for Regional Development](#), provided insights into the challenges faced by small and medium-sized German towns. Researchers highlighted the importance of considering both quantitative development indicators and the subjective perceptions of affected populations, including gender-segregated data, in decision-making.

In line with good governance principles, the Programme requires grantees involved in social services to establish agreements governing the ownership and use of equipment acquired for service provision. The City of Novi Pazar signed a donation agreement with the Centre for Social Work to confirm the official handover of equipment for family counselling services. Similarly, the Municipality of Bela Palanka signed an agreement with a partner civil society organisation (CSO), ensuring the LSG retains ownership of equipment transferred for the child companion service.

An action plan developed within the Bujanovac LIP project outlines management processes for the public utility company "Komunalac," which will oversee the transfer station. The Public Utility Company "Vrelo" must expand its services to manage the newly established animal by-product (ABP) facility. A decision on establishing this new service is in draft form, and PUC "Vrelo" needs to register officially to provide it.

During the quarter, Golubac Council adopted a decision to form a museum in a building reconstructed and equipped with Programme funds through the LIP Call. Additionally, Loznica adopted governance measures for completed economic infrastructure projects, Kraljevo implemented promotion measures, and Knjaževac decided to temporarily entrust the governance of Rgošte spa to the Agency for Development instead of the initially proposed company "Stara Planina."

5. COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY

A total of seven field visits were successfully conducted, including four two-day field visits: the EU Deputy Ambassador and 12 Deputy Heads of Missions (DHoMs) to western Serbia on 10 and 11 September, covering four LSG and projects and three two-day field visits for the EU Delegation Head of Cooperation (HoC) from 31 July to 14 August, involving 12 local self-governments and 24 projects, 16 of which were implemented under EU PRO Plus and its predecessor, EU PRO. These visits were coordinated with the EU SHAI project, GIZ projects, and the UNDP-implemented ReLoad project. Furthermore, a visit to the Niš ITI project within the Niš Fortress was organised for the DEU Head of Delegation and the Minister of European Integration, along with four mayors from participating local self-governments on 27 September during EU Opportunity Week.

Comprehensive coordination activities were undertaken for all visits including the preparation of thirteen detailed briefing documents and project overviews, which covered high-level field visits, support for Bujanovac, Bosilegrad, and Dimitrovgrad, and a briefing note for the Friends of South-Western Serbia meeting at DEU's request. A project list for the MEI project on the digitalisation of national heritage was also developed. Additionally, support was provided for the organisation of the UNOPS ECR director's visit to Serbia, including a presentation of successful UNOPS projects in education for senior representatives from the Ministry of Education of Montenegro. The communications team prepared briefing documents for the UN Cooperation Framework Evaluation field visits to UNOPS-implemented projects.

Eleven press releases were developed, five of which promoted the closure of economic infrastructure projects in Kraljevo and Knjaževac, completion of bridge construction in Vrnjačka Banja, and the start of works in Preševo and Mali Zvornik. These activities, along with high-level visits, generated 445 positive media reports (195 in national media).¹⁰ However, media coverage was limited as DEU visits were not open to the press thus, EU PRO Plus created content for the EUD website and social media to document these project visits.

Two digital editions of the Programme Newsletter were distributed to over 3,500 partners: [EU PRO+ Newsletter #7 - "The Good, The Best, and The Integrated"](#) and [EU PRO+ Newsletter #8 - "Summer Chronicles: Solar Boost and Development Waves."](#)

Following the Programme's lifecycle, visibility efforts are increasingly focused on organising project visits and developing success stories. To date, 20 [Programme video stories](#) have been created, and an innovative [online questionnaire](#) has been shared with SME beneficiaries to document their journeys. A total of 108 projects (38%) have been promoted through media, official visits, press releases, and success stories.

The [municipal profiles](#) are updated¹¹ and procurement of visibility materials (stickers and certificates) successfully completed in September. Other Programme support included preparation of SME Grant support report, development of [legacy fact sheet for Industrial Zones](#), and support to the ISTD projects in developing communication and visibility activities and tenders, including establishing ITI project communication plan model to be piloted within the project Šumadija CONNECT.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

The LSGs should plan the expenditure of their co-funding in the project budget more efficiently. For implementation of integrated projects, the LSGs planned the expenditure of their co-funding in the project

¹⁰ Annex IV Attn.4.1._EU PRO Plus Overview of Communication Activities_Overview of Media Coverage- Q3 2024

¹¹ Available statistical data related to the population, number of active entrepreneurs and enterprises.

budget within their budget lines for the payment of soft activities and other costs unrelated to construction works. This means that, once they transfer the co-funding on the sub-account they cannot use it for payment of works and they thus have issues with dynamics of expenditure and consequently meeting the conditions for the transfer of the second tranche of the Programme co-funding. It is important to instruct the LSGs to plan their co-funding for the payment of works which would allow them to reach the threshold sooner rather than later during the project implementation.

Support to startups in extremely underdevelopment areas require more technical support due to low capacities. Startups that work in extremely underdeveloped areas experienced more difficulties in implementing and administering the grants due to low capacity as well as lack of basic support services in their area. Provision of technical assistance in implementation of grants together with grant monitoring is essential for the successful implementation of these grants.

7. NEXT REPORTING PERIOD¹²

The following are the key milestones for the upcoming period:

Result 1. Improved development planning in targeted municipalities and introduction of the ITI concept

- Activity 1.1 Finalisation of the Draft Study on ISTD
- Activity 1.1 Prepared and Conducted training - Coordinating the implementation of Integrated Territorial Instruments (ITIs): learning from practice for MEI
- Activity 1.2 Establishment of the remaining 11 Project Coordination Units (PCUs)
- Activity 1.2 Finalised approach on training module IV of CB Plan - establishment of PCU, training on integrated projects and investment programmes
- Activity 1.3. Monitoring implementation of 18 integrated projects

Result 2. Enhanced economic growth in targeted municipalities

- Activity 2.1 Monitoring implementation of the remaining 12 economic infrastructure projects
- Activity 2.1 Support transfer of the second milestone payment for at least six grantees.
- Activity 2.1. Close monitoring of the procurement process for Kragujevac grant

Result 3. Improved social infrastructure and social cohesion in targeted municipalities

- Activity 3.1 Development of a report on the Programme support to local infrastructure projects
- Activity 3.4 Monitor of the finalisation of the works on the bridge in Rača municipality.

Programme Communications

- Organisation of Calendar Competition
- Newsletter #9
- Production of success stories
- Production of thematic Legacy Fact Sheets

LFM – progress against indicators

Legend

	Activity completed, outputs delivered in accordance with the set targets
	Activity progressing in accordance with the plan
	Activity progresses with manageable delay
	Activity is critical

¹² EU PRO Plus Work Plan for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2023 is available in Annex V, Attachment 5.1.
www.euproplus.org.rs

Objectively verifiable indicators	Objectively Verifiable Indicators - Target	Progress during the reporting period
Overall Objective: To contribute to socio-economic development, prosperity and social cohesion of Serbian society	WB Doing Business Report score 74	Not available. The WB discontinued publishing of the Doing Business Report.
	Global Competitiveness Index Rank 69	The World Economic Forum paused comparative country rankings on the Global Competitiveness Index during the turbulent times of COVID-19 pandemic.
SO1. To decrease socio-economic disparities of two regions within Serbia	Šumadija and Western Serbia Region GDP and number of unemployed - 20% / 101,760	The share of Šumadija and Western Serbia Region in the national GDP decreased by 0.3% to 18.4% in 2022 compared to 2021. Number of unemployed in the Western Serbia Region in the second quarter of 2024 was 66,100 which is a significant decrease of 24.5% compared to 87,600 in the second quarter of 2023.
	South-East Serbia Region GDP and number of unemployed - 14.2% / 83,712	The share of the South-East Serbia Region in the national GDP decreased by 0,1 % to 15.2% in 2022 compared to 2021. Number of unemployed in the South-East Serbia Region was 76,100 persons in the second quarter of 2024, which is a decrease by 9.7% compared to 84,300 in the second quarter of 2023.
RESULT 1 Improved development planning in targeted municipalities and introduction of the ITI concept		
Result 1. Improved development planning in targeted municipalities and introduction of the Integrated and Sustainable Territorial Development (ISTD) concept	OC 1.1 The number of adopted Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) and Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) strategies and the number of LSGs covered with these Strategies (Corresponds with IPA PF 2.11) - At least 15 strategies which include at least 35 LSGs	All 12 supported strategies including 31 LSGs are adopted by all 31 local assemblies
	OC 1.2 Implementation of at least 80 percent adopted SUD and ITI Strategies initiated with at least three different funding sources -	18 projects under the call for integrated projects awarded including 11 territories.

	at least 12 (mid 2024)	
Result 2 Enhanced economic growth in targeted municipalities	OC 2.1 Number of jobs created or facilitated - At least 300 (2023)	A total of 332 new jobs have been created out of which 177 (53.3%) are occupied by women. Total of 274 new jobs have been created by supported MSEs grantees, out of which 142 (52%) new jobs are occupied by women. Total of 58 new jobs have been created by supported Women and Youth Startups, out of which 35 (60%) new jobs are occupied by women.
	OC 2.2 Number of start-ups and MSEs that benefited - 500 (2023)	A total of 512 MSEs are supported through activities implemented by 16 BSOs. Total of 113 MSEs have been supported by direct grants. Further, 30 grants have been implemented by Women and Youth startups in extremely underdeveloped municipalities and 12 more are in implementation.
	OC 2.3 Number and financial value of initiated investments in industry and services facilitated - At least six investments valued at least 25 million euros (mid of 2024)	8 of 20 awarded EIP completed. Šabac project facilitated over 25 million Euros of investment on the territory of the zone, which is subject to infrastructure equipping through the project
Result 3: Improved social infrastructure and social cohesion in targeted municipalities	OC 3.1 Number of persons benefiting from improved public facilities/ services - at least 65,000 (2023)	Over 280,000 persons benefited from the improved conditions in cultural, educational, sports and health infrastructure in 37 completed projects, among them 2 in Q3 2024.
	OC 3.2 Number of introduced or improved social services provided by CSOs and/or LSGs - at least 15	The activity is successfully completed. Total of 28 social services have been established or improved in 22 LSG facilitating better access to education, health and social care services for over 7,700 disadvantaged citizens.
	OC 3.3 Number of persons benefiting from enhanced health care services related to COVID-19 prevention and recovery - at least 300,000 (2022)	The activity is successfully completed. Supported 23 medical centres to enhance services related to COVID-19 prevention and recovery, facilitating provision of over 2,645,000 medical services related to COVID-19. Additionally, 5000 disinfection devices, 60,000 L disinfection liquid and 41 triage

		containers were delivered.
Activity 1.1 Enhancing national capacity to introduce integrated territorial development	Number of persons at the national level trained - 40 (middle 2023)	42 persons at the national level trained thus far.
	Proposals for regulators and procedural framework to enable preparation of the EU model for territorial planning - in place (end of 2024)	The Comparative Study on EU member states prepared. The outline of the Study on national model for ISTD is prepared and its development is underway.
	Monitoring, reporting and evaluation approaches related to ISTD model - in place (2022)	The objectives framework indicator set for monitoring, reporting and evaluation of territorial strategies developed.
	Number of tools developed or enhanced - at least one (2022)	A revised Concept Note on the potential IT tool and ISTD networking platform testing beta version is developed
Activity 1.2 Improving capacities of municipalities and regional development agencies to introduce concepts of integrated territorial planning	Number of LSGs and RDAs benefiting from interventions - at least 80 percent (middle 2023)	85,9 percent of the LSGs and RDAs benefiting from the capacity building process (85 LSGs and 11 RDAs participated in the training activities within Module I, Module II and Module III of Capacity Building Programme - 1416 persons in total)
	Population covered by SUD and ITI Strategies - at least 2 million (end of 2022)	The territories supported for development of territorial strategies are inhabited by approximately 1,6 million people.
Activity 1.3 Implementing activities contributing to socio-economic growth deriving from integrated territorial planning strategies	Number of integrated projects deriving from the ISTD strategies, whose implementation is supported - at least 15 (mid 2024)	A total of 18 integrated projects deriving from the ISTD strategies are awarded
RESULT 2 Enhanced economic growth in targeted municipalities		
Activity 2.1 Developing economic infrastructure and businesses related services at the local level	Number of supported economic infrastructure projects - 20 (2024)	Of 20 awarded LSGs in support of economic development 8 finalised activities and 12 are still under implementation
Activity 2.2 Enhancing competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises contributing to economic stability of local communities	Number of supported start-ups, entrepreneurs and enterprises - 100 (2022)	The activity is successfully completed. 113 MSEs were supported to procure new equipment and services.
	Number of supported youth and women entrepreneurs - at least 50 (2022)	A total of 30 startup grants completed and 13 remain under implementation.
	Number of supported BSO projects - 10 (2022)	The activity is successfully completed. Sixteen BSO projects were supported, and activities

		implemented by them completed.
RESULT 3		
Improved social infrastructure and social cohesion in targeted municipalities		
Activity 3.1 Developing and improving infrastructure which contributes to enhanced quality of life	Number of social infrastructure projects implemented -at least 30 (2022)	All 37 LIP projects completed all activities (2 in Q3), among them 35 LIPs closed
Activity 3.2 Supporting public institutions, including the social protection institutions, to enhance social services and preparedness for emergencies	Number of CSO projects related to social services supported - 20 (2023)	The activity is successfully completed. All 20 projects for strengthening social services successfully completed implementation, with 28 social services being established and/or improved in 22 LSGs.
Activity 3.3 Support to COVID-19 related prevention and response activities	Number of medical centres supported to enhance services related to COVID-19 prevention and recovery - at least 20 (2022)	The activity is successfully completed. Supported 23 medical centres to enhance services related to COVID-19 prevention and recovery.
Activity 3.4 Support in rehabilitation of flood-caused damage	Number of infrastructure projects related to rehabilitation of flood-caused damages implemented - up to 3 (2024)	The works on the construction of the bridge in Vrnjačka Banja are completed and handed over, while works on the bridge in Rača still ongoing.

ANNEXES

Annex I Improved Development Planning

Annex I_Attn 1_Study Visit Report Germany

Annex III Improved Social Infrastructure and Social Cohesion

Annex III_Attn 1_EU PRO Plus_Q22024_LIP Status

Annex IV Communications

Annex IV_Attn 1 EU PRO Plus Overview of Communications Activities for Q3 of 2024

Annex V Programme Management

Annex V_Attn 1 EU PRO Plus Work Plan for Q4 of 2024