

TERRITORIAL STRATEGY OF NIŠ AND SVRLJIG, MEROŠINA AND GADŽIN HAN URBAN AREA



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ЗА ЛОКАЛНИ РАЗВОЈ
ПРО+

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NIŠ

Dear citizens,

In the spirit of the challenges of the modern era, but also the potential that it simultaneously brings with it, in front of you is the Territorial strategy of Niš and Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han urban area, which will serve as a guideline for us in the coming period towards the achievement of the set goals of the development of this part of the Republic of Serbia.

The wish of all of us is to develop this region evenly and to lead it through modernisation, improvement of human capital, respect for one's own identity, while respecting all differences. This Strategy, which we did together with our partners from the municipalities of Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han and the Regional Development Agency South, with the support of the European Union through the EU PRO Plus programme, which is implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services, is the foundation for the transformation and new shaping of this region.

Our goal is for the city of Niš to become smarter, greener, more connected and more open to the surrounding rural areas in 2034 and to less developed areas of partner municipalities take on new industrial functions that will revive their economies and reduce urban and environmental pressure on the city of Niš. We want this region to be characterised by modern urban development and infrastructure, economic development, with an emphasis on an innovative economy that needs a highly educated and quality workforce, the development of scientific research and technical-technological capacities with the preservation of natural and cultural-historical heritage, a high level of social well-being, preserved environment and natural potentials. All these are prerequisites for stopping emigration trends, achieving better demographics and improving the quality of life, both in urban and rural areas of our common territory, which should become an environment where young people will recognise the conditions for their own affirmation.

The Territorial strategy of Niš and Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han urban area is an important instrument for planning, preparing and implementing complex tasks of managing urban development, with the aim of improving the quality of life through accessibility to public spaces, improvement of social infrastructure and quality of the environment, improvement of communication and public participation, which are integrated into development objectives and project ideas.

This strategy is our guide to achieving our goals, but the road ahead will not be easy. I am convinced that, with joint commitment and in accordance with our potential, we will make the part of Serbia that includes the city of Niš and the municipalities of Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han a place for a better and higher quality of life for our citizens, as well as for all those who gravitate towards this part of our country.



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1 INTRODUCTION

The European Union programme for local development - EU PRO Plus contributes to a more balanced socio-economic development by strengthening the management of urban and territorial development, supporting economic growth and improving social cohesion in 99 local governments in two regions: Šumadija and Western Serbia and Southern and Eastern Serbia. The European Union (EU) has allocated 40 million euros through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) 2020 to finance this Programme, which is led by the Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia and implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

Relying on the results of three previous development programmes, the Programme in all its activities focuses special attention on good governance, digitalization and innovation, environmental and climate change aspects, as well as gender equality. In addition, as part of its activities, where relevant and possible, EU PRO Plus will contribute to eliminating some of the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The direct beneficiaries of the EU PRO Plus Programme are the Ministry of European Integration, 99 local self-government units (LSG), local government structures, regional development agencies (RDAs), other business support organisations, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and civil society organisations (CSOs), while the final beneficiaries of the programme are residents of 99 cities and municipalities. All programme activities are undertaken in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Serbia, while respecting national policies and priorities, in order to ensure national “ownership” of them and contribute to the development of national capacities. The EU PRO Plus programme is based on the National Priorities for International Assistance of the Republic of Serbia until 2025, which is of key importance for economic and social development and the process of European integration, where it will especially contribute to the preparations for fulfilling the requirements from Chapter 22 of the accession negotiations EU - Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments.

Direct technical assistance was provided with the aim of improving the competences of LSGs to introduce and implement an integrated approach to territorial development, in accordance with EU territorial development policies. In order to implement an integrated and sustainable approach to development planning, the Programme provided support to local governments through the development of territorial strategies. A total of 12 territories - urban areas that include 31 LSGs were selected through the Public Call for submission of applications for the development of territorial strategies.¹ The activities of the Programme included the following: a) support to interdisciplinary working groups formed for the development of strategies, in the form of advisory assistance and the organisation of training and workshops for the development of strategies, b) organisation and facilitation of stakeholder involvement (thematic round tables and workshops with experts and the general public) and citizen participation (survey,

¹ Urban areas of Bor, Kruševac, Leskovac, Loznica, Novi Pazar, Smederevo, Šabac; The urban area of the city of Kragujevac and the municipalities of Aranđelovac, Batočina, Knić, Lapovo, Rača and Topola; The urban area of the city of Zaječar and the municipalities of Boljevac, Knjaževac and Sokobanja, the urban area of the city of Niš and the municipalities of Gadžin Han, Merošina and Svrlijig; The urban area of the city of Pirot and the municipalities of Babušnica, Bela Palanka and Dimitrovgrad and the urban area of the city of Užice and the municipalities of Bajina Bašta, Čajetina, Požega and Priboj.

public forums and public hearings), v) provision of technical support for consolidation of materials and formulation of strategies, g) preparation for the press and printing of strategies, and support for strengthening transparency through the development of a website with a presentation of the strategy development process.

The time horizon foreseen for the realisation of territorial strategies is the year 2034, that is, the period that includes two programme periods of the EU Cohesion Policy.

2 APPROACH AND STEPS IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The goal of the Strategy is to contribute to the sustainable development of the urban area based on encouraging:

- application of an integrated and participatory approach to the development of society and economy, development of the countryside, cultural and architectural heritage, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and strengthening of urban-rural connections;
- transition to clean and fair energy, green and blue investments, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, sustainable and multimodal urban mobility;
- innovative, smart, low-carbon and circular economies, with better use of the potential of digital technologies for innovative purposes;
- strengthening the social component by implementing the European pillar of social rights in the field of employment, education, socioeconomic inclusion and integration, housing, social and health care, culture, sports and recreation, creating a stimulating environment for youth initiatives and activities, and social innovation.

The strategy sets priorities for sustainable and integrated territorial development, contributes to a more efficient pooling of funding sources and more effective use of financial resources and development of connections within and outside the environment.

The reasons for creating the Territorial strategy of the urban area are:

- encouraging sustainable and integrated development of the urban area;
- identifying the key needs of the development of the urban area;
- encouraging the effective use and improvement of urban/territorial capital management;
- the application of EU development governance instruments, which enables the establishment of a framework for sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development of the urban area by connecting the traditional system of spatial and urban planning, the planning system of public policies, the improvement of funding of urban development and the management of local public finances;
- improving the conditions for urban development in accordance with the New EU Cohesion Policy, the Paris Agreement, the EU Urban Agenda, the New Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and other EU documents;
- implementation of the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia until 2030: Measure 5.2.3 Application of EU Cohesion Policy instruments - integrated territorial investments (ITI), within the Package of measures 5.2 - Improvement of public finance management for sustainable and integrated urban development, and measure 5.3.3 Local strategies of integrated urban development within the Package of measures 5.3 - integrated planning of sustainable urban development) within the Urban Development Governance Strategic axis;
- defining the strategic framework for urban development projects;
- encouraging multi-level development governance and application of various management instruments (collaborative, command, hybrid); encouraging a multi-stakeholder

approach (economy, education, science, public and civil sector); improvement of inter-municipal cooperation; encouraging a participatory approach and involvement of local actors; encouraging mixing (blending) funding urban development from different types of funding (domestic and international); strengthening the transparency of decision-making at the level of the urban area;

- improvement of institutional and personnel capacities and governance mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy.

2.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE INTEGRATED APPROACH

Integration is one of the four key elements of the integrated and sustainable territorial development (ISTD) planning approach tested within the EU PRO Plus programme. Integration has two main dimensions: spatial and thematic integration. The spatial dimension of integration, although it is important for all types of urban areas, is especially relevant for those who prepared strategies of integrated territorial investments (ITI), that is, urban areas that cover more than one LSG.

The thematic aspect of the integrated approach is a key characteristic of territorial strategies, which implies an integrated approach among different sectoral policies. Strategies can cover a wide range of policies, from different types of infrastructure, to business support, social measures or environmental investments. The instruments tested in the EU PRO Plus programme apply a multisectoral approach that goes beyond traditional sectoral policies, while supporting place-based and integrated solutions, thus enabling interconnected and cross-sectoral responses to urban challenges.

Within the EU Cohesion Policy 2021-27, the integrated approach is one of the four mandatory elements of territorial strategies, with regulations requiring “a description of an integrated approach to address the identified development needs and potential of the area”². The aforementioned approach and prescribed content of territorial strategies, defined by the new legislation of the European Commission from 2021, determined the legal basis for the adoption of this strategy, namely Articles 49 and 50 of the Law on the Planning System³. Namely, integration is a key dimension of Cohesion Policy in a broader sense, which implies not only integration between different governance levels (vertical) and different spatial levels and areas (territorial), but, most importantly, coordination between different policy areas (horizontal).

The intersectoral approach aims to overcome “silo structures”, i.e. the traditional division of functions according to sectors or policy areas, which is typically present in public administration. There are both horizontal and vertical dimensions of the intersectoral approach: horizontal refers to the relationship between departments in the same administration (e.g. in LSGs), and vertical refers to the relationship between departments in different administrations, state administration departments or other service providers. According to the Handbook of Sustainable Urban Development Strategies of the Joint Research Centre of the European

² See Article 29 of the Common Provisions Regulation: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1060&from=EN>

³ Law on the Planning System of the RS (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 30/2018) <https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon-o-planskom-sistemu-republike-srbije.html>

Commission, cross-sectoral integration can be achieved by: 1) ensuring the consistency of policy-making principles and goals among different policy sectors in public administration, harmonising priorities and time frames; and 2) cooperation between different departments at all levels, in order to jointly create policies⁴.

Just as in EU Cohesion Policy, the strategies developed in the context of EU PRO Plus programme are multi-sectoral, organized under five objectives representing different thematic areas, and therefore require cross-sectoral integration. In practice, this can be supported by strong coordination structures involving stakeholders and other organisations at all stages, thus providing support for the implementation of a cross-sectoral strategy. Supported projects should contribute to the objectives of the strategy and be cross-sectoral. This requires adequate procedures, such as project eligibility and selection criteria, as these will have a major impact on how integrated the projects will be and how they will be linked to the strategy.⁵

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF INVOLVEMENT OF PARTNERS

In the dynamic environment of sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development, the creation and implementation of effective strategies is of key importance for ensuring the prosperity and sustainability of cities and wider urban areas. The territorial strategy traces the path for development, including various sectors such as: infrastructure, economy, environment, social protection services, etc. However, the complexity of contemporary challenges requires a collaborative approach that goes beyond LSGs. The involvement of partners - different levels of government, non-profit organisations, private companies, social groups, universities, institutes, development and research organisations, plays a key role in shaping and implementing a successful territorial strategy.

Partners in territorial strategy:

The development and implementation of a territorial strategy has enormous benefits as it involves different perspectives, expertise and resources brought by different partners. The comprehensive territorial strategy includes the following types of partners:

- **Administration:** Local (municipal, city) and national administration bodies are decisive partners because of their regulatory powers, funding resources and policy-making competences. Their participation ensures alignment with broader development goals and effective coordination of efforts.
- **Non-profit organisations:** Civil society organisations often work closely with communities, addressing social and environmental challenges. Their knowledge of the environment can help identify the specific needs, concerns and priorities of the local population.
- **Private Enterprises:** Private sector participation is vital to infrastructure development, innovation and economic growth. Partnerships with businesses can lead to investment in real estate, transportation, energy and technology, driving progress in urban areas.

4 Fioretti C, Pertoldi M, Busti M and Van Heerden S (2020) Handbook of Sustainable Urban Development Strategies, <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC118841>

5 Pertoldi M, Fioretti C, Guzzo F, Testori G, De Bruijn M, Ferry M, Kah S, Servillo L A and Windisch S (2022) Handbook of Territorial and Local Development Strategies. <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC130788>

- **Academic and research institutions:** Universities and research organisations contribute to intellectual capital by conducting studies, analysing data and proposing evidence-based solutions. Their research can lead to the formulation of a strategy based on sound principles.
- **Community groups and citizens:** Local people and community organisations ensure that the real needs of citizens are taken into account, thus creating the basis for strategies to be developed on local knowledge. The participation of local residents fosters a sense of ownership, ensures inclusiveness and increases the likelihood of successful implementation of strategies.
- **International organisations:** Cooperation with international organisations and cities enables learning from examples from the best world practices, access to finance and exchange of experiences. These partnerships can facilitate knowledge sharing and cross-border cooperation.

The inclusion of partners in territorial strategies has several advantages, it will improve the quality of strategy development and support its effective implementation. Therefore, partnership and participation are important prerequisites for developing a territorial strategy within the EU's Cohesion policy. Also, the New European Bauhaus initiative emphasises the added value of combining local knowledge with an interdisciplinary approach in achieving creative solutions to social problems - solutions that are inclusive, sustainable and beautiful.

Involving partners in the strategy development phase will help in:

- **Problem identification:** Partners contribute their expertise to comprehensively assess development challenges and opportunities. This joint effort provides a more “nuanced” understanding of the urban area.
- **Data collection and analysis:** Academic and research institutions, along with non-governmental organisations, can help collect and analyze data to identify trends, gaps and potential solutions.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Community groups, NGOs, government and public organisations work together to engage citizens - in meetings, workshops and research. This participatory approach ensures that the strategy is aligned with the needs of those it serves.
- **Establishing a strategic vision:** Collaborative workshops involving different actors enable the creation of a common vision for the development of the urban area. This process ensures that the strategy reflects diverse views.
- **Formulation of solutions:** Drawing knowledge from different sectors, private companies, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions contribute to the proposal of innovative solutions with their ideas.

Equally important is the involvement of partners in the phase of implementing the territorial strategy. This often presents a challenge because it is easier to give an opinion or provide data than to engage in concrete activities. A common pitfall in the development of a territorial strategy is to expect activities from partners who were not involved in the development of the strategy and who do not feel engaged. Or vice versa, partners who engaged resources and knowledge in the strategy development phase were not later involved in the implementation

of activities, which leads to disappointment. The territorial strategies of the EU PRO Plus programme pay special attention to this.

The roles that partners can play in implementing the strategy are as follows:

- **Support through resources:** Partners play a key role in providing the financial resources necessary for the successful implementation of various aspects of the strategy of sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development. National and local governments, their agencies and companies, private companies and international organisations allocate funds that enable the implementation of infrastructure projects, community programmes and sustainable initiatives. These resources are of vital importance for the improvement of the traffic system, the improvement of water and sewage systems, the promotion of the use of renewable energy sources and economic growth within the wider urban area.
- **Technology and Innovation:** Partners, including academic institutions and private companies, bring their expertise in technology and innovation to the fore. To face the urgent challenges of urban development, they propose innovative solutions. The application of “smart city” technology enables the optimization of city services, and solutions that include renewable energy reduce carbon emissions. Digital management platforms and data analysis systems, for example GIS, improve operational efficiency. This infusion of innovation helps create a sustainable and thriving urban area.
- **Community participation:** Partners actively engage with local communities to ensure that the strategy of sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development is adapted to the specific needs and aspirations of residents. This participation process not only encourages a sense of ownership (over the process and decisions) and inclusiveness, but also helps in the realization of targeted social and environmental projects and improves, for example, environmental awareness, waste reduction or the introduction of new green areas. Civil society organisations and advocacy groups can collaborate with the public sector to advocate for policy changes that are consistent with the strategy of sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development, thereby ensuring that the principles of the strategy are incorporated into the legal framework.
- **Data-driven decision-making:** Academic institutions and research groups contribute to the implementation of the strategy by collecting, analysing and using data. This data-driven approach guides the decision-making process and allows all stakeholders to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions. Data analysis provides insight into the effectiveness of various initiatives, helping urban planners and policy makers to adapt and improve strategies in real time. This analytical approach ensures that the territorial strategy remains relevant and responds to the needs of a changing and evolving urban area.
- **Capacity building and collaboration:** Partners work together to build capacity among stakeholders involved in implementing the strategy. This takes place through training programmes, workshops and knowledge exchange initiatives aimed at improving the competencies of public administration employees, local community leaders and other key participants. This capacity building effort ensures that those responsible for

implementing the strategy have the understanding, knowledge and skills to apply the various instruments necessary for successful implementation. Furthermore, cross-sectoral collaboration among partners fosters a culture of collaborative problem-solving, drawing on the strengths of different actors to address complex urban challenges and promote inclusive development.

The wider urban area is a complex milieu that requires a collaborative approach to create lasting positive change. The involvement of partners in the preparation and implementation of the territorial strategy enriches that process with different views, resources and expertise. By encouraging the establishment of partnerships between the administration, non-profit organisations, private companies, academia and research institutions and various community groups, urban areas in the EU PRO Plus programme have the opportunity to develop and implement high-quality territorial strategies that will lead to a sustainable and inclusive transformation of urban areas.

2.3 APPROACH TO STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

In the development of the Strategy, a participatory and integrated approach was applied, taking into account the spatial dimension of urban and territorial development and the organisation of the process, which ensures coordination and cooperation.

The strategy starts from the topics contained in international and national policies of integrated and sustainable urban and territorial development, which are adapted to the local context of urban and territorial development in the Republic of Serbia. This was achieved by applying a participatory approach through public dialogue and inter and transdisciplinary cooperation of a wide range of actors from different sectors, professional fields and levels of administration. The applied participatory procedure is characterised by diversity (represented institutions/ participants, levels of administration, policies, disciplines, etc.), interaction using methods of consultation and active participation, and the existence of mechanisms for selection (prioritization). The purpose is to:

- identify the key needs of urban and territorial development and improve the use of urban/territorial capital;
- defines a strategic framework (for the time horizon until 2034, ie two programme periods of the European Union's Cohesion policy), which is based on management instruments and oriented towards efficient and effective implementation;
- enable an open and flexible approach to urban and territorial development governance topics in the local context, taking into account the administrative, legal, institutional framework, capacities, etc.;
- enable inter- and transdisciplinary discussion on cross-cutting urban development topics in order to overcome the limitations of the sectoral approach;
- ensure the participation of interested actors in solving key problems and challenges, identifying areas of intervention and prioritising urban development projects, as well as to enable the optimal combination of resources.

The formulation of the Strategy was carried out in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 52/2021) through the application of the principle of gender perspective in planning and adoption of public policies in the areas of planning, traffic and infrastructure (Article 40 of the Law). The integration of the gender perspective in the process of creating the Strategy is supported by a participatory approach and communication as instruments for the representation of various interests within the local community that concern daily work, economic habits, social and cultural practices, as well as the need to access public purposes.

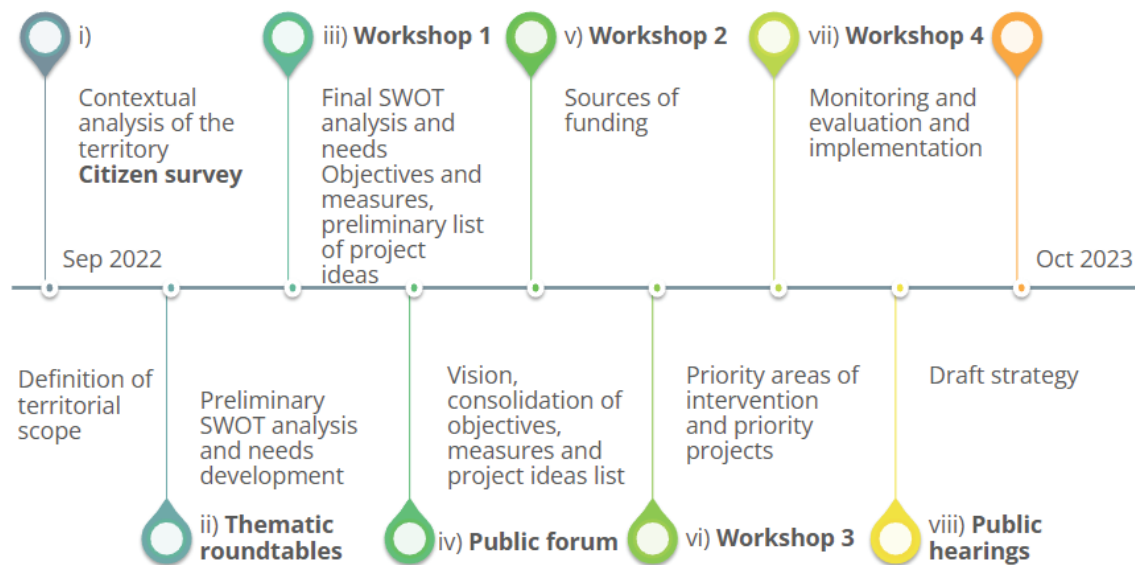
The organisation of the Strategy drafting process implies the coordination of cooperation between different sectors and levels of administration, facilitated communication with the participants of the planning process, the establishment of networks of administration and actors in the covered urban area and with the environment, as well as the involvement of the local economy, representatives of public institutions, education and science, and other relevant actors in planning and implementation of urban development programmes and projects.

2.4 STEPS IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The process of developing the Strategy was initiated in 2022. The formal procedure was started by signing the LSG partnership declaration for the application. This was followed by the adoption of the Decision on joining the development of the Strategy, which was followed by the Decision on the formation of the Council for the Development of the Urban Area, the Decision on the formation of a working group for the development of the strategy and the signing of the partnership agreement between LSGs. After the establishment of the institutional framework, the strategy development process began. The task was to assess needs, formulate vision, objectives and measures, and to map areas of intervention and strategic projects within an intersectoral, transparent and participatory environment with actors from different sectors.

The steps in the process of creating the Strategy were as follows (Graphic representation 1):

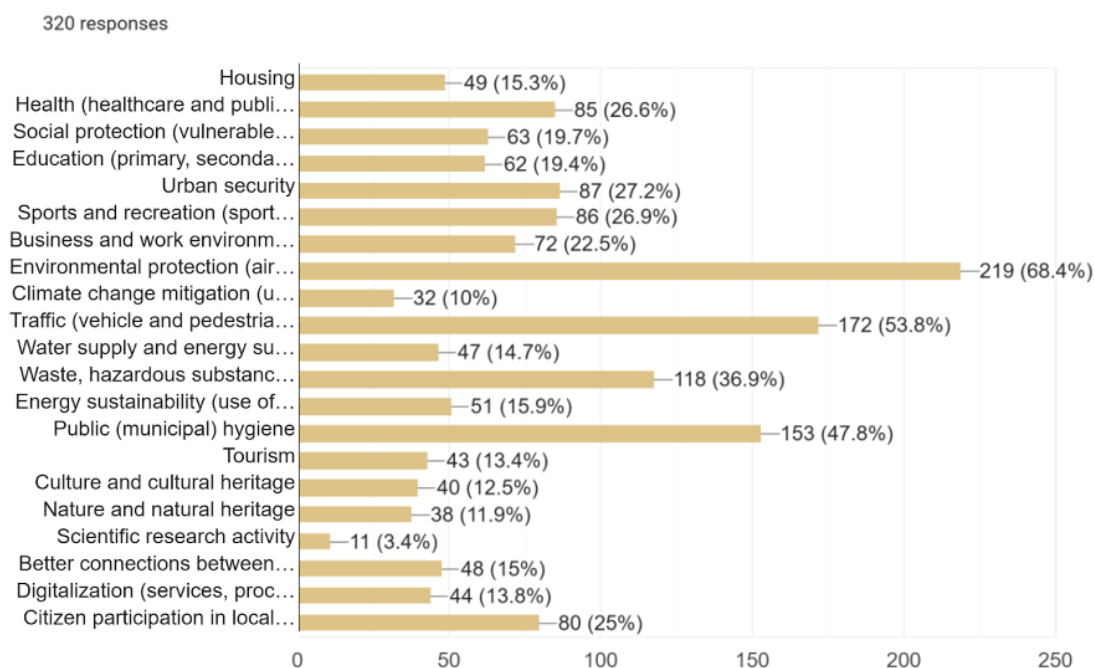
- 1) Contextual analysis by thematic areas;
- 2) SWOT analysis through identification of key problems of urban and territorial development and assessment of needs;
- 3) Vision, objectives and measures;
- 4) Sources of funding;
- 5) Priority areas of intervention and strategic projects;
- 6) Monitoring, evaluation, implementation of strategies and governance mechanisms.

Graphic representation: 1 Steps in the strategy development process

In the first step, a contextual analysis was made by thematic areas: a) Society (demography, social inclusion and social protection services, social and health infrastructure, education); b) Economy (general economic trends, labor market, business environment, tourism and culture); c) Urban environment (quality of urban structures and public spaces, quality of urban environment, exposure to environmental risks and climate risks, primary infrastructure, infrastructure for mobility and internet connectivity, urban transport, urban development governance). The analysis of the situation was followed by an online survey of citizens during December 2022, the results of which were separately presented at the thematic round tables (Appendix 1).

Appendix 1: Citizen survey results (source of data: City of Niš and the municipalities of Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han)

6. In which of the following areas should local government take action? (list five)

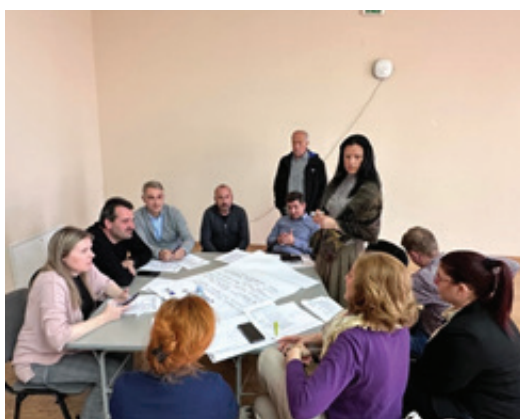


After this step, a preliminary SWOT analysis was prepared, which was presented, discussed and supplemented at the thematic round tables. Thematic round tables were held on the following topics: 1) Economic development (innovative, smart, low-carbon and circular economy); 2) Energy (clean and fair), green and blue investments; mitigating and adapting to climate change, preventing and managing risks; 3) Sustainable and multimodal urban mobility; 4) Social wellbeing - employment, education, housing, social and health care, culture, socio-economic inclusion and integration, social innovation; 5) Urban renewal and regeneration (urban structures, public spaces, etc.), development of landscape, cultural and architectural heritage, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and strengthening of urban-rural ties; and 6) Urban and territorial development governance. At the same time, the first ideas for projects and priority areas of intervention began to be recorded at the thematic round tables, for which the mapping technique was used.



Pictures 1 and 2: *Thematic round tables, preliminary SWOT and contextual analysis, Oficirski dom, Niš, 6 and 7 February 2023.*

In the next step, after inputting all the participants' comments and consolidating the material, a final SWOT analysis was prepared with a needs assessment, as well as a proposal of objectives and measures, which was discussed and verified at the first workshop with members of the Development Council and Working Group



Pictures 3 and 4: *Workshop with members of the Council for Development and the Working Group - proposal of objectives and measures, Oficirski dom, Niš, 13 April 2023.*

The summarised results were presented at the Citizens' Forum, which followed. On that occasion, the participants of the forum gave proposals for the formulation of the vision of the development of the urban area, supplementation and reformulation of measures and

objectives. At the forum, the proposal of the area of intervention was discussed and additional proposals of ideas for projects were given. The meeting opened with an exhibition of children's drawings by elementary school students on the topic "My city/territory in the future", and the participants evaluated the children's works. At the end of the forum, the best children's works were awarded with awards and commemorative books.



Figures 5, 6 and 7: *Citizens' Forum: the formulation of the vision of the development of the urban area, supplementation and reformulation of measures and objectives, and the exhibition of children's drawings by elementary school students on the topic "My city/territory in the future", Oficirski dom, Niš, 19 May 2023.*

At the next workshop on sources of funding for urban and territorial development, national and international sources of funding for urban and territorial development in Serbia were presented in detail. The participants of the workshop pointed to some other national funding sources, and expressed their satisfaction with the latest review of the possibilities for using various funds, donations, loans, etc. The prepared material in a broader version was delivered to all local and regional partners of the EU PRO Plus programme in all 99 LSGs.

At the third workshop in a row, mapped priority areas of intervention and consolidated strategic projects were presented. Here, too, after discussion with local partners, the materials were corrected and supplemented.



Pictures 8 and 9: *Workshop priority areas of intervention and strategic projects, Oficirski dom, Niš, 20 July 2023.*

The last in a series of workshops was held on the topic of monitoring, evaluation, strategy implementation and governance mechanisms. It took place with a lively discussion on the necessary development of institutional capacities and considering the possibility of establishing a project coordination unit.

The prepared material of the Draft Strategy was presented at a public hearing, which took place in the form of a presentation and discussion, and submission of suggestions and objections by the public. After correcting the draft strategy in relation to the submitted suggestions and remarks, the material was sent to the assembly for adoption.

After its adoption, the important task of implementing the Strategy awaits the city and professional institutions in the field of urban and territorial development. Similar to international experiences, this Urban area territorial strategy aims to establish more effective and efficient funding of urban and territorial development.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE TERRITORY

Urban areas in the Republic of Serbia are defined through the system of urban centres in the Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035 and the report on the strategic environmental impact assessment of the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035. Cities - centres of urban areas that can establish urban areas for the purposes of testing the application of the mechanism of integrated territorial investments (ITI) are defined by the Guidelines for applicants within the Public Call for submitting applications for the development of territorial strategies within the EU PRO Plus programme through two sets of criteria:

Basic criteria

- a) That the local self-government units (LSGs) are classified as an urban area - an integration centre of more than 100,000 inhabitants, or an urban area - an integration centre of more than 40,000 inhabitants as defined in the system of urban centres in the Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to in 2035 and the report on the strategic environmental impact assessment of the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035,
and in the case of the wider territory:
- b) They fulfill the condition of spatial continuity of the territory,
- c) Ensure partnership with at least three (3) LSGs, which is confirmed by signing the application partnership statement and the partnership agreement between the LSGs, and
- d) Ensure partnership with the Regional Development Agency (RDA) covering the territory in question.

Additional criteria

- a) Capacities of the applicant to apply instruments of territorial development,
 - 1) Existence of internal institutional capacities, i.e. capacities for urban planning within the department, institute or public enterprise of the LSG; local offices for economic development or other similar capacities; departments/institutions for social and environmental issues, etc.
 - 2) Experience in similar actions - in implementing participatory processes, applying new methods and innovative approaches in urban development and related projects funded by the EU
- b) Socio-economic and spatial characteristics
 - 1) in the case of a narrower territory: industrial/business and commercial zones and brownfield locations: illegally built and undeveloped peripheral city zones (areas of uncontrolled expansion of urban settlements) and degradation of rural areas; endangered urban structures and central city zones; parts of urban settlements with a concentration of social problems - social inclusion and poverty reduction; settlements or parts of settlements exposed to problems of environmental protection and climate change; spatial entities with cultural and architectural heritage, important features

of the cultural and historical development of an urban settlement/group of urban settlements and

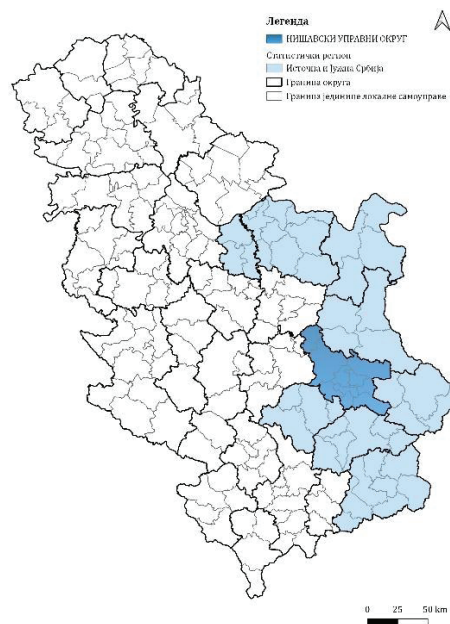
2) in the case of a wider territory: common characteristics – important infrastructure corridors, geography, morphology, industrial capacities; endogenous potential; common needs, problems and challenges and common development plans and initiatives.

c) Experience in partnerships (in the case of a wider territory)

1) Relevant partnerships established for the implementation of similar or related initiatives in the previous period, which can represent the foundations for the establishment of governance mechanisms that will ensure the implementation of the territorial strategy.

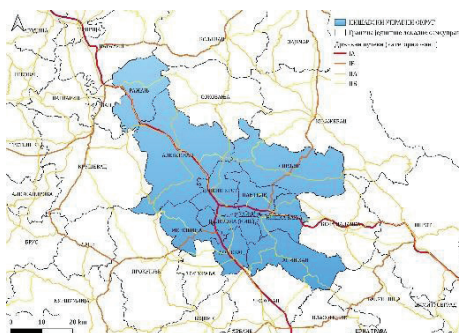
4 TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

The territory of the City of Niš, which includes the city itself and the city municipalities of Medijana, Niška Banja, Palilula, Pantelejš and Crveni Krst and the territories of the municipalities of Gadžin Han, Merošina and Svrlijig have a total area of 1,611 km² (hereinafter: Urban area). This territory is located within the statistical region of South and East Serbia. In the north, it borders the Pomoravlje region, in the northeast with Zaječar, in the east with Pirot, in the south with Jablanica, in the southwest with Toplica and in the west with Rasina region (Graphic representation 2).



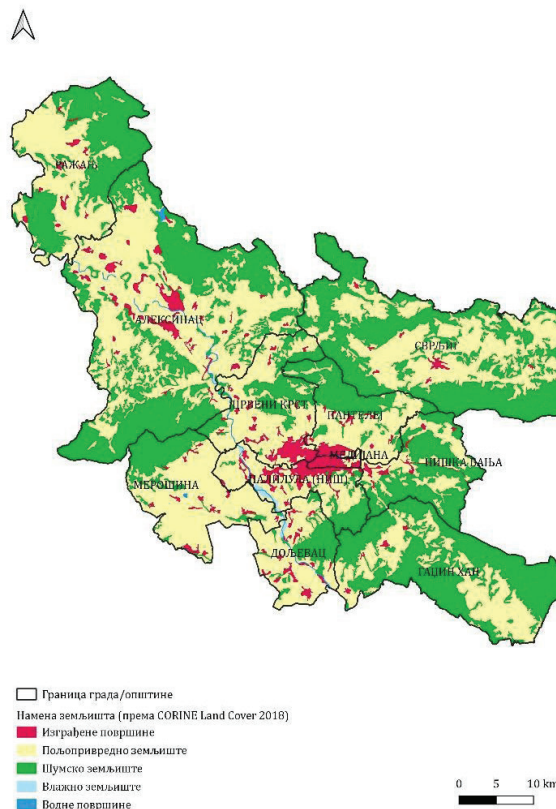
Graphic representation 2: Position of the Urban Area (source of spatial data: Republic Geodetic Authority, GeoSrbija, 2023)

The urban area has an extremely favorable geo-strategic position and distinct multimodality of traffic, and is one of the most significant development zones in Serbia and this part of Europe. Corridor X passes through its middle and eastern part (international road E-75 is one of the most important road routes in Europe), its branch towards Bulgaria (highway E-80 Niš - Dimitrovgrad - Gradina - Sofia), as well as the state road of I order no. 25 Zaječar - Niš - Prokuplje - Priština in the east-west direction. (Graphic representation 3).



Graphic representation 3: Traffic connectivity of the urban area (source of spatial data: Map of state roads, PE "Roads of Serbia", 2022; Register of spatial units)

The area is lowered along a large number of faults. The most significant is the Morava - Vardar fault, which South Morava inherited. Also, the Niš - Aleksinac valley is dominant, which is surrounded by medium-high mountains. Also important are the Zaplanje and Svrlijig valley, as well as Dobrič, which extends in the lower part of the Toplica basin. The complex regional differentiation of this area is reflected in the fact that the territory where the LSGs of Niš, Aleksinac and Ražanj are located belongs to the Southern Pomoravlje, the territories of the LSGs Doljevac and Merošina are located in Dobrič, i.e. in Toplica, Gadžin Han in Zaplanje, while Svrlijig covers the territory of Balkan Serbia (Graphic representation 4).



Graphic representation 4: Land use (spatial data source: Copernicus Land Monitoring Service, 2022; Republic Geodetic Authority, 2020)

Agricultural land is extremely diverse. To the greatest extent, it covers the lowland areas in the Niš valley. Areas suitable for intensive agricultural and vegetable production are relatively modestly represented on the fertile lands of the valley sides of South Morava, Nišava and Toplica. The fertile alluvial plain of Morava, Nišava and Toplica provides excellent conditions for growing grain and corn, as well as industrial, vegetable and forage crops. Most of the arable areas have a mediocre production and economic potential, except for the basins in the composite river valleys, which are characterized by extremely fertile soil. On the steep and gently sloping sides of Svrlijški Timok, Moravica, Nišava and Toplica, there are perfect microclimatic, pedological and configurational conditions for growing vines and a centuries-old tradition in the production of quality wines. Agricultural land includes the largest part of the urban area (65.3%), the territory of LSG Merošina has the largest share of agricultural land (76.1%), and LSG Svrlijig the lowest (59.6%).⁶

⁶ Regional spatial plan for the area of Nišava, Toplica and Pirot administrative districts, "Official Gazette of RS, No. 1/2013.

The total area under forests is 72,581.32 ha. Forests from the territory of the Nišava administrative district are included in the Morava and Rasina forest areas. The forests are mainly spread over the peripheral mountains of the Niš and Aleksinac valleys, with predominantly mountain beech: Suva planina, Seličevica, Mali and Veliki Jastrebac, Svrlijig mountains, Bukovik and others. The forest fund is a natural resource that is poorly used. The urban area's forest cover is 21.05%, which is below the national average (29.1%). All LSGs have lower forest coverage than the average of the Republic, the lowest LSG Merošina 17% and Niš below 20%.⁷

The rivers of this area belong to the Black Sea Basin and to the greatest extent part of the South Morava River Basin. The bed of South Morava is full of sediment due to intense erosion in the upper part of the basin and in the Grdelica gorge. South Morava is a torrential river, which is indicated by large differences in flow; the difference between the maximum and minimum ever recorded flow is as much as 1 : 7240, which is not recorded on any other river in Serbia. The only river that does not belong to the South Morava basin and flows through the Urban area is the Svrlijski Timok. There are two smaller reservoirs located in the municipality of Merošina.

The most important protected natural assets are the Nature park Sićevo Gorge and the Special nature reserves Suva planina and Jelašnica Gorge, while the areas of Seličevica, Svrlijig Mountains and Jastrebac are planned for protection. A large part of the Urban area is covered by ecologically significant areas and planned IBA areas.⁸

In the period 1991–2002 the urban area recorded stagnation and a slight decline in the number of inhabitants, and in the last decade, 2002-2011 year, there was a noticeable population decline. According to the 2011 census, there were 293,078 inhabitants in the Urban area. According to the first results of the 2022 census, the number of inhabitants decreased by 14,387 (total 278,691), or 5%. The highest index of population change was recorded in Merošina (74.7%) and Svrlijig (52.5%). The largest LSG Niš with 260,237 inhabitants in 2011, recorded a decrease of 10,421 (4%) inhabitants in 2022, which is the first decrease in the last 30 years. Other LSGs recorded a dramatic decline in the number of inhabitants (Gadžin Han 30% and Svrlijig 24%) and relatively less in Merošina LSG (15%).

According to the draft of the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035 (2023), the urban area of Niš is classified as an agglomeration - a morphologically and spatially-functionally connected urban centre with significant functional capacity, good traffic connections, but with an endangered demographic capacity, whose direct influential areas have more than 500,000 inhabitants. Better quality infrastructure is necessary, as well as the expansion of the range of services, and the emphasis must be on the economy, which needs a highly educated and high-quality workforce, along with the development of scientific research and technical-technological capacities. The agglomeration of Niš is located on the South Morava and Nišava primary development zone. Other urban settlements (Svrlijig, Merošina and Gadžin Han) are classified as urban centres of rural areas. The network of settlements in the Urban area is formed by 173 settlements. The dominance of Niš as an urban centre, the ratio of sizes of urban settlements, the structure and spatial distribution of rural settlements indicate large imbalances in the settlement network of the area.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023.

In the Urban area, 6 immovable cultural properties (ICP) of exceptional importance are located in Niš: Mediana (Brzi Brod locality), Čegar, Early Byzantine tomb with frescoes, Čele-kula, Bubanj Monument Park and Concentration Camp.⁹ Of exceptional importance are 6 ICP: Niš Fortress, Latin Church, Humska Čuka, District Office Building (Zgrada starog Načelstva), Building of the Pasteur Institute (Niš) and Church of St. Ascension (Gadžin Han).¹⁰

In addition to the intra-regional imbalance, the economy of the Urban Area is burdened by a number of problems that are largely the result of the process of transitional recession and changes in the wider environment. They arose from the insufficiently competitive, untransformed existing economic structure, the slowness of the transition process in the restructuring and privatization of public and state enterprises. Among them, the relatively low level of economic activity, the slowness of structural changes, the slowdown of economic growth, especially during the global crisis, significant spatial disparities in the development and distribution of economic capacities, the low level of investment, high unemployment, lagging behind in the application of innovations and new technologies, general conditions that do not provide sufficient support for the stronger development of SMEs, inefficiency in the use of material inputs, environmental degradation and endangerment. Key problems of economic development are also depopulation, unfavorable age, migration, and educational structure of the population (except in the Niš Local Government Area), as well as insufficient infrastructural equipment of economic locations. Agriculture is characterised by lower average yields compared to the average of the Republic of Serbia. The natural preconditions for the development of fruit growing are great. Fruit production is for the most part extensive and intended for consumption on the farm, although recently there has been a trend of raising larger commercial fruit plantations. Vegetable production is developed in fertile river valleys. One of the most significant problems in vegetable growing is production on small land areas, due to small and fragmented holdings. Despite the rich tradition and excellent natural prerequisites, livestock production is characterised by a small number of heads in rearing and low production results. In the urban area, there are several larger economic and industrial zones in Niš, while smaller industrial sites are located in other urban settlements as well as in a smaller number of rural settlements. Niš is one of the most important industrial centres in Serbia, known for its electronic, tobacco, textile, mechanical and food industries. The largest privatised companies are “Duvanska Industrija Niš” (which was bought by Philip Morris Corporation in 2003), “Niš-Expres”, “Nitex” - today “Benetton” (deals with the textile industry), “Elektronska Industrija Niš”, “Mašinska Industrija Niš” (privatised in 2005).

Various natural and created potentials of the region and convenient traffic-geographic position with access to Corridor X are the main factors in the development of urban, cultural, spa, road touring, business, mountain, rural and other types of tourism and recreation. Niš is a city tourist centre of international and distinct national importance with a year-round offer and a leader in the gravitating secondary tourist area. Niška Banja is a primary spa centre of significant national and prospective international importance with a year-round offer. Suva planina

⁹ List of immovable cultural assets of exceptional importance, Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, https://heritage.gov.rs/latinica/nepokretna_kulturna_dobra.php

¹⁰ List of immovable cultural assets of great importance, Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, https://heritage.gov.rs/latinica/nepokretna_kulturna_dobra.php

and Jastrebac are classified as other mountain places of regional and prospective national significance, with a predominantly summer offer.¹¹ The existing tourist and recreational offer, considering the potential, is not sufficiently developed and affirmed, and even less organised and connected, both among LSGs in the Urban area, and with the primary tourist destinations in the surroundings (Kopaonik, Stara planina and Vlasina - Krajište¹²). Most of the accommodation capacities are concentrated in Niš and Niška Banja, which have so far established themselves as important carriers of the tourist offer. The potential for the development of rural tourism has been activated sporadically, by local initiatives, without major support from LSGs, and this type of tourism is insufficiently motivated and organisationally connected with spa, hunting and other types of tourism.

¹¹ Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023.

¹² Ibid.

5 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

5.1 SOCIETY

5.1.1 Demographics

According to the 2011 census, there were 293,078 inhabitants in the Urban area. According to the first results of the 2022 Census, the number decreased by 14,387 inhabitants (278,691 in total), i.e. by 5% (Table 1).

Table 1: *The number of inhabitants of the urban area and the index of changes in the number of inhabitants for the period 1991-2011.*

Name of LSG	1991 year	2002 year	2011 year	2022 year	Index of population change 1991-2021
Niš	248.086	250.518	260.237	249.816	100,7
Gadžin Han	12.990	10.464	8.389	5.934	45,7
Merošina	16.139	14.812	13.968	12.050	74,7
Svrljig	20.740	17.284	14.249	10.891	52,5
Urban area	297.955	293.078	296.843	278.691	93,2

The urban area is characterised by negative demographic characteristics. The largest LSG Niš with 260,237 inhabitants in 2011 (together with the city municipalities of Medijana, Pantelejš, Niška Banja, Palilula and Crveni Krst) recorded a decrease of 10,421 inhabitants (4%) in 2022, which is the first decrease in the last 30 years. Other LSGs recorded a dramatic decrease in the number of inhabitants (Gadžin Han 30% and Svrljig 24%), i.e. relatively less in Merošina LSG (15%).

The age structure of the region's population is very unfavorable, slightly less favorable than the demographic trends in the whole of Serbia - almost 25% of the population is over 60 years old (the national average is 22.5%). In the rural LSGs of Svrljig and Gadžin Han, the participation of the population over 60 years old is as much as 36–45%. The population aging index is extremely high, on the basis of which it can be concluded that this area, like the entire Republic after all, is in the phase of "complete aging of the population". The urban population is somewhat more vital, with an aging index of 0.86. The index is also very unfavorable, but the situation is extremely alarming among the rural population, whose aging index is as much as 1.5 on average and is higher than the national average (Republic of Serbia 1.41; Central Serbia 1.26).

In rural LSGs, the majority of the population has primary education or no complete primary education. LSG Svrljig has the largest share of the population without complete primary education, as much as 27.06%. Percentage wise, the highest number of highly educated people is in LSG Niš (15.35%), and the smallest in LSG Gadžin Han, only 0.17%. The most dominant is the population with secondary education (49.38%).

The population most often migrates to Niš, where almost all the economy and public services are concentrated. The largest number of the active population who perform an occupation go to work in Niš (55.7%), while 29% perform their occupation within their LSG, where the average is drawn by LSG Niš. A small percentage of workers are abroad (0.05%). As for pupils and students, the situation is almost identical. Slightly more than half of pupils and students (51.66%) migrate to other LSGs of the Nišava region, primarily to Niš. In most rural settlements of the Nišava region, there is only a four-year primary school, so students from those areas migrate to municipal centres at the age of 15. LSG Gadžin Han is characterised by the migration of pupils and students within other LSGs of their area, as much as 66.19%. As a university city, Niš attracts the largest number of students.

The degree of urbanization is 56.6%, which is slightly above the national average (56.4%), and is classified as a medium urbanised area. In the last decade, this ratio has shifted slightly in favor of the urban population. The urban population is extremely spatially unevenly distributed, as almost 90% of the urban population in the Urban Area is concentrated in the urban settlement of Niš. Only in the local government of Niš, the urban population is more numerous than the rural population, and it accounts for approximately 75% of the total population. On the other hand, the other LSGs are of a distinctly rural character, with the participation of the rural population ranging from 70% in LSG Svrlijig to 100% in LSG Gadžin Han and Merošina. The population density of the Urban Area in 2022 is 173 inhabitant/km² and varies from 418 inhabitant/km² in LSG Niš up to 62 inhabitant/km² in LSG Merošina, 22 inhabitant/km² in LSG Svrlijig and 18 inhabitant/km² in LSG Gadžin Han. Dispersion of the rural population and the small population size of the settlements, which predominantly belong to the broken morphological type, are typical for the Urban area.

Members of 26 ethnic groups live in LSG Niš. The most numerous and visible ethnic minority group is the Roma. The number of permanently employed Roma is increasing. After starting several “municipal waste management” companies, a number of Roma found permanent employment with decent income in these companies. On the territory of LSG Svrlijig there is a negligible number of people of other nationalities, so there are no national minorities as a group. There is a part of the urban settlement where the Roma ethnic group is mainly inhabited. Compared to the past, the position of this ethnic group is much better today in terms of employment and social inclusion. In LSG Merošina, the only significant national minority, Roma, make up 5.27% of the total population of LSG.

5.1.2 Social inclusion and social protection

Average salary of inhabitants

The average wage at the level of the Urban Area is below the national average, although it records a trend of continuous growth in all LSGs.

In terms of average salary, only LSG Niš stands out, which in 2021 amounted to RSD 63,239, or 96% of the average salary in the Republic. The average salary in other LSGs for 2022 ranges from 48,023 RSD in LSG Merošina (73% of the average salary in the Republic) to 46,726 RSD in LSG Svrlijig and 46,727 RSD in LSG Gadžin Han (71% of the average salary in the Republic).¹³

¹³ Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia, RZS, 2022

There are no settlements/zones that stand out in terms of employee earnings, nor zones with pronounced social problems.

Social protection services

In the territory of LSG Niš, 2.24% of the population uses financial social assistance. The decrease in the number of beneficiaries of financial social assistance in 2019 is evident. The number of beneficiaries of the basic allowance for care and assistance of another person increases compared to previous years and amounts to 537. The option of child allowance is used by 22.01% of the population, while 10.8% use the option of increased child allowance. According to data from 2019, there were a total of 40,067 beneficiaries of social assistance, or 15.66% of the population. The share of women beneficiaries is 51.9%, and men 48.1%.

According to the data of the Centre for Social Work Svrljig, the right to material support and social assistance is exercised by 3,313 persons, of which 1,641 beneficiaries of financial social assistance, 105 beneficiaries of the allowance for assistance and care of another person, 30 beneficiaries of the increased allowance for assistance and care of another person and 1,535 beneficiaries one-time financial assistance. In 2019, the number decreased to 2,524 users with different participation of age groups: 46% adults (26-64), 31% seniors (65 and over), 18% children (0-17) and 5% youth (18-25). Special attention is devoted to helping 57 families of single parents, who, in addition to financial donations and meals in the soup kitchen, regularly receive packages through the Svrljig Red Cross. The number of victims of domestic violence (56 registered persons) has been increasing since 2017.¹⁴

In 2020, the Merošina Centre for Social Work had 3,898 users. The largest number of beneficiaries is in the group of adults, 3,116, followed by minors, 782. The largest number of beneficiaries are entitled to financial social assistance. Within the framework of the Red Cross, there is also a soup kitchen that provides and delivers 640 meals a day, which is close to 5% of the population of Merošina LSG. The users of the soup kitchen are mainly Roma (65-70%).

According to the records of the Centre for Social Work, in 2020 there are 82 beneficiaries of financial social assistance, 46 beneficiaries of the allowance for the help and care of another person, 28 beneficiaries of residential institutions, 28 beneficiaries of one-time assistance, 15 children in foster care, 9 foster families and 6 elderly persons in the Gadžin Han LSG in 2020 placed in homes for the elderly.

Endangered zones

Part of the urban settlement of Niš, the settlement of 12 February has been without electricity for a long time. Also, the vast majority of this settlement are users of social services (social and one-time assistance). In the Roma settlement "Beograd mala", Moravska Street 11, thefts, burglaries and similar acts were recorded. In the neighborhood of Stočni trg, ul. Ivan Milutinović, due to the increased number of reported cases for various crimes, a police station was formed two years ago. In the settlement "Crvena zvezda" poverty is pronounced, a large part of the inhabitants are users of social services.

In the Svrljig and Merošina Local Government Area, there are no areas that are unsafe, nor those where certain groups of the population do not feel welcome.

¹⁴ Development plan of the municipality of Svrljig 2021-2028, 2021.

5.1.3 Housing

Housing offer

In LSG Niš, the demand for apartments is higher than for houses, that is, the demand for apartments exceeds the supply. The overpopulation of the centre of the urban settlement and the insufficient development of housing in the peripheral urban areas are evident. In 2017, Niš accounted for 2.1% of the total value of completed construction works in the Republic of Serbia, and 3.5% of the value of residential construction. The total number of completed apartments in 2017 in Niš was 579 (14,080 apartments in Serbia). The number of built apartments per 1,000 inhabitants is 2.03, which is higher in comparison to the Nišava region (by 1.7), but not in comparison to Serbia. The number of built apartments increased by as much as 313 more in 2018, and the number of built apartments per 1,000 inhabitants was 3.5.¹⁵ About 2.6% of the inhabitants of Niš live mainly in the substandard Roma settlements of Gypsy Mahala with Stočni trg, Beogradska Mahala and Crvena Zvezda, in conditions that represent a kind of hundreds-of-year-old ghetto for a certain minority population. According to the data, the trend of building apartments is on the rise, but there is a small number of apartments that are affordable to a large number of citizens due to the price, i.e. 80 percent of apartments are sold in cash, and only 20 percent through bank credit lines. The current construction trend is the construction of individual residential buildings. For the construction of larger residential complexes, it is necessary to develop larger areas of urban construction land through planning documents (brownfield investments - Bubanjki Heroji Barracks, Panteleji Barracks - Ardijska Mahala settlement). The average amount of living space per inhabitant in the territory of the LSG Niš per inhabitant is 23.80 m². According to the data of the last competition for the purchase and lease of apartments built by PE City Housing Agency Niš at the Majakovski location in Niš, the demand was in the ratio of 3 to 1 for the purchase of apartments, while the interest in renting apartments was in the ratio of 5 to 1, which indicates that the demand for affordable apartments is big. No detailed analysis was made, but the number of housing units for sustainable housing (number of social housing) is minor compared to the total number of housing units. As part of LSG Niš, PE City Housing Agency Niš deals with the construction of apartments for sustainable housing (social housing). There are also a certain number of projects that are implemented within the competent administrations, and they concern the construction of apartments for refugees and displaced persons.

Only 2 apartments were built in the Svrlijig local authority in 2018, 5 apartments in 2019, 31 in 2020, and 3 apartments in 2021.¹⁶ According to the assessment, the need for social housing exists, but the exact number has not been determined. There are social apartments under the jurisdiction of the LSG - 13 housing units in one building and 4 houses for social housing.

In 2021, 5 apartments were built in Merošina Local Government Area, and 4 apartments are unfinished.¹⁷ There is no data on the current supply and demand of houses and apartments. There are no settlements with excess housing space, if empty/abandoned houses in the countryside are not considered. Also, there are no settlements with a pronounced lack of

¹⁵ Development plan of the city of Niš for the period 2021-2027. year

¹⁶ Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia 2022, RZS, 2022.

¹⁷ Ibid.

housing space. No apartments are built on the territory of LSGs by private entrepreneurs, even in cooperation with LSGs. There is a negligible number of self-directed construction of family houses - less than 10 per year. There is no trend of building individual residential buildings or larger residential complexes either individually by the private sector or in partnership with LSGs. In 2011, there were 5,955 apartments on the territory of LSG Merošina. Most of the apartments are privately owned. About 90% of the population live in their own apartments, while 2.78% live as subtenants. The need for social housing exists mainly among socially disadvantaged Roma families and refugees. Annually, from 5 to 10 people apply to the Centre for Social Work to provide housing. There is no social housing in the territory of the municipality of Merošina.

In 2021, only one apartment was built in LSG Gadžin Han, and two apartments are unfinished.¹⁸

The price of housing

In the local government of Niš, the average price per square meter of residential space for old buildings is from 831 to 1,439 eur/m², while the price of new construction is from 982 to 1,842 eur/m². The price depends both on the location where the apartment is located and on the level of equipment, the quality of the construction of the apartments, the number of floors and the year of construction.

On the territory of LSG Svrljig, three zones have been determined for the determination of property tax, according to communal equipment and public facility equipment, traffic connection with the central parts of the LSG, i.e. with work zones and other contents in the urban settlement. The average price per square meter of real estate for the determination of property tax for the year 2022 in the territory is determined based on the prices realised in the sale of the corresponding real estate in the zones in the period from 01.10.2020. until 30.09.2021. year and for the apartment amounts to RSD 38,617.

In LSG Merošina, the average price per square meter of an apartment is RSD 67,712, which is high compared to average incomes.

In LSG Gadžin Han, the average price is RSD 71,728 per m² and in relation to average incomes, the price is not affordable for the population.

Illegal construction

In the Urban area, the trend of the expansion of settlements and construction areas, as opposed to the compactness of urban settlements, usurpation of agricultural and forest land, especially in the agglomeration of Niš, is manifested. The system of legalising illegal construction is ineffective.

According to the census of 2017, the number of illegal buildings in the local government of Niš is around 50,000. A large number of requests for legalisation were submitted in the period from 2015 to 2022. Until 21 April 2023, 6,787 buildings were legalised.¹⁹

3,538 illegal apartments out of a total of 5,955 apartments were listed on the territory of the Merošina LSG. Most are in the process of legalisation. The trend of illegal apartment construction is decreasing, while the number of legalised residential buildings is increasing.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ <http://www.eservis.ni.rs/ozakonjenjeobjekata/>

2,000 illegal buildings have been registered on the territory of the Gadžin Han Local Government Area, there are more legally built buildings and the trend of legalisation is increasing.

5.1.4 Social standard facilities

Social infrastructure

There are no shelters for adults on the territory of the Nišava region, which is why all LSGs pay for accommodation for people in need. In the Urban area, social infrastructure has been developed only in LSG Niš, while in other LSGs it is based on centres for social work.

There are the following institutions of social infrastructure in the Niš LSG: Centre for Social Work "Sveti Sava", Gerontological Centre Niš, Home for Children and Youth "Duško Radović", Day Care Centre for Children, Youth and Adults with Mental Disabilities "Mara", Centre for Family Accommodation and Adoption Niš (for Nišava, Pirot, Toplca, Jablanica and Pčinja administrative district), Safe house for women and children victims of domestic violence, Institute for Youth Education Niš. Out of seven institutions, three are facing a lack of space, i.e. the problem that the space does not meet the needs and standards. Institutions that do not have satisfactory spatial conditions are: Centre for Family Accommodation and Adoption in Niš (inadequate area in relation to the number of employees and inaccessible space for people with disabilities); Day care centre for children, youth and adults with mental disabilities "Mara" (due to lack of space, it is impossible to expand capacity and introduce new services for users); Centre for Social Work "Sveti Sava". The Institute for Youth Education has adequate and sufficient space for carrying out its basic activities, but the problem is spatial fragmentation and poorly equipped facilities. There is a lack of homes for the elderly. It is necessary to increase the existing capacity of the shelter.

The basis of the social protection system in the Svrljig LSG is the Centre for Social Work Svrljig. In the course of 2019, there were a total of 46 persons placed in a home institution on the records of the Svrljig CSW. There is no licensed daily service. The greatest need is for the service "Help in the home for the elderly and disabled", but it is no longer provided either as a project or as part of public works due to the lack of a license for this service. The premises of the general Red Cross Shelter in Svrljig were used for 6 users, where there is also a soup kitchen. Help at home for children with developmental disabilities and their families was realised only within the Association of Parents of Children with Developmental Disabilities "Together to the Light" from Svrljig, with funding from the budget of the Svrljig LSG.²⁰

On the territory of LSG Merošina, social protection is carried out through the activities of the Centre for Social Work. Only the Home Help service for the elderly and infirm has been established. Given that Merošina still does not have a Home for the elderly, the largest number of elderly people are accommodated in homes that are located closest to the place of residence of the beneficiary and/or his family. It is necessary to build a facility that would serve as a shelter/home for the elderly. Needs analysis shows the necessity of establishing the Home Help service for children with developmental disabilities, and later the establishment of the Day Care service with advanced programmes. A big problem in the implementation of social protection services is the fact that there is no private or civil sector

²⁰ Development plan of the municipality of Svrljig 2021-2028. year, 2021

in the territory of LSG Merošina with licensed persons to provide social protection services (geriatric housewives, caregivers...).

The main holder and implementer of activities from the scope of social protection in the territory of LSG Gadžin Han is the Centre for Social Work. Citizens association "Niveus Team" provides social services - help at home for the elderly (70 elderly households and 10 geriatric housewives)²¹. Social infrastructure is underdeveloped. There is a need to develop the services of the Counseling Centre for Marriage and Family and "Give us a hand", the construction of a gerontological centre and the arrangement of the Red Cross facility.²²

Health infrastructure

In the urban area, all three levels of health care are provided. Tertiary health care is organised in national institutions in Niš: University Clinical Centre (with over 30 clinics, 1,525 beds²³), Institute for Pulmonary Diseases and Tuberculosis, Institute for Forensic Medicine (for Nišava, Pčinja, Jablanica, Piroć, Zaječar, Toplica, Bor and Rasina administrative districts), Institute for Blood Transfusion in Niš and Institute for Public Health (for Nišava and Toplica administrative districts). Secondary health care is organised in Niš in the following institutions: Institute for Emergency Medicine, Special Hospital for Psychiatric Diseases "Gornja Toplica", Institute for Treatment and Rehabilitation in Niška Banja (350 beds) and Military Hospital (300 beds), as well as in several specialised hospitals in the private sector. There is an obvious lack of secondary health care institutions, such as the general hospital in Niš, which would significantly increase the quantity and quality of health services and release the capacities of tertiary health care. Primary health care is organised through health centres in Niš, Merošina, Svrljig and Gadžin Han, Institute for Health Protection of Workers Niš, Institute for Health Protection of Students Niš, Clinic for Dental Medicine Niš and Pharmacy Institution Niš (for LSGs Niš, Aleksinac, Gadžin Han, Merošina, Ražanj and Svrljig).

In 2018, there were 4.7 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants in the territory of the Niš local government, significantly more than the national average (2.9 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants). For children's health care, there were 1.4 doctors per 1,000 children, slightly lower than the national average (1.5 doctors per 1,000 children). In 21 rural settlements there are health centres or clinics.²⁴ According to the number of inhabitants, health clinics should be planned in the villages of Lalinac and Mramor. There is public transportation from the villages of Lalinac and Mramor to the nearest clinic.

Within the Health Centre "Dr. Ljubinko Đorđević" in Svrljig, according to the current organisational structure, there are 10 rural clinics.²⁵ Territorial coverage of health clinics is satisfactory. Bearing in mind the age structure, the territorial dispersion of the population, as well as the increasing percentage of both acute and chronic diseases, there is a need to open new clinics in the settlements of Drajinac and Niševac. The private sector does not participate

21 Development plan of the municipality of Merošina 2021-2028, 2021.

22 Sustainable Development Strategy of the Municipality of Gadžin Han 2012-2022, 2011.

23 <http://www.kcnis.rs/>

24 In the settlements: Brzi Brod, Jelašnica, Ostrovica, Prva Kutina, Sićevo, Gabrovac, G. Međurovo, D. Međurovo, G. Vrežina, G. Matejevac, Kamenica, Malca, Pasjaca, Belo Polje, G. Toponica, D. Trnava, D. Komoran, Medoševac, Popovac, Supovac, Trupale. According to: Spatial plan of the administrative area of the city of Niš 2021, 2011.

25 In the settlements: Davidovac, Galibabinac, Lalinac, Grbavče, Guševac, Burdimmo, Popšica, Izvor and Lukovo. According to: Svrljig municipality development plan 2021-2028, 2021.

in providing health care for the population in the field of general medicine. There are only 3 dental surgeries and one in the field of laboratory diagnostics (only for certain laboratory services). There is organised public transportation to Niš for the provision of secondary and tertiary health care services. For all patients who, due to the urgency and nature of the disease, need specialised transport, it is organised through the transport service of the organisational unit of the Department for the provision of emergency medical assistance of the Svrljig Health Centre, using special medical vehicles.

Merošina Health Centre provides primary health care to the population of LSGs. The Health Centre provides health care through the ambulatory - polyclinic and dispensary method of work. As part of the health centre, there are 9 health clinics in rural settlements.²⁶ The number of health infrastructure facilities is satisfactory. The existing health clinics, which operate once or twice a week, are in poor condition and need to be renovated in order to provide the population with adequate conditions for primary health care. The private sector does not participate in the provision of health care services. There is no public or specialised transport, except in emergency cases to provide the missing service in the field of health care. The bus lines are not regular, they do not operate in the entire territory of the LSG, and they are very expensive.

The health centre in Gadžin Han provides primary health care services, which includes 7 health clinics in rural settlements.²⁷ The health centre is also an institution of preventive health care, especially for: sensitive groups of citizens, recognition of symptoms of domestic violence, suppression of addictions, assessment of psycho-physical abilities, birth control, etc. There is no need for organised public transportation in order to possibly provide the missing service in the field of health care.

Educational infrastructure

Preschool education is organised in all LSGs. Primary education takes place in 38 eight-year primary schools and 61 school branches in the Urban area. Secondary education takes place in Niš (20 secondary schools) and Svrljig (one secondary school), while the other LSGs do not have secondary schools. Higher education is represented in Niš, where the State University of Niš operates with 14 faculties, the Metropolitan University, the Centre in Niš of the Singidunum University, the Faculty of Applied Sciences in Niš of the “Union - Nikola Tesla” University, the Faculty of Law for Economy and Justice in Niš of the University of the Economy Academy, the Faculty of Legal and Business Studies “Dr. Lazar Vrkatić” in Niš of “Union” University, Faculty of Law, Security and Management “Konstantin Veliki” and the Higher Technical School of Vocational Studies. In addition, the Regional Centre for Professional Development of Education Employees operates in Niš.

Preschool education in the local government of Niš is organised in the public preschool institution “Pčelica” in 28 facilities, of which 25 are in Niš and 3 in the settlements of G. Toponica, G. Matejevac and Deveti Maj. There are 5 private kindergartens in Niš. Preparatory

²⁶ In the settlements of Azbresnica, Balajnac, Batušinac, Devča, Dešilovo, Donja Rasovača, Jugbogdanovac, Krajkovac and Oblačina. According to: Spatial plan of the municipality of Merošina 2024, 2012.

²⁷ In the settlements: Veliki Krčimir, Gornji Barbeš, Grkinja, Donji Dušnik, Ličje, Ravna Dubrava and Z. A smelter. According to: Spatial plan of the municipality of Gadžin Han 2025, 2012.

classes are held in 8 primary schools in Niš and in primary schools in Ostrovica, Sićevo, Suvi Dol, Prva Kutina, Gabrovac, Vukmanovo and Berbatovo.

In LSG Niš, the network of public primary schools consists of 31 eight-year primary schools in 14 settlements²⁸ and 38 school branches in rural settlements²⁹, which meets the needs of the population.

Secondary education takes place in 20 secondary schools founded by the Republic of Serbia. The activity of secondary education and upbringing is carried out in four high schools, 12 professional schools (School of Economics, School of Law and Business, School of Commerce, School of Hospitality and Tourism, School of Medicine “Dr. Milenko Lazić”, School of Mechanical Engineering, School of Electrical Engineering “Nikola Tesla”, School of Electrical Engineering “Mija Stanimirović”, School of Traffic Engineering “12 February”, Construction Technical School “Neimar”, Food and Chemistry School, School of Fashion and Beauty), School of Art and Music, School for Primary and Secondary Education “Carica Jelena” - with a day room for students with special needs - and Special School with student dormitory “Bubanj” - for deaf children, with 22 dormitory beds).

The University of Niš does not train staff in the field of archaeology, which can be considered a shortcoming considering the rich archaeological heritage of the Urban Area.

Preschool education in the Svrljig LSG is organised in the public preschool institution “Poletarac”. In the working year 2022/2023 250 children benefit from the service. Educational work is implemented in 10 groups of full-day stay (children aged 12 months to 6.5 years) and 1 group of half-day stay (children aged 5.5 to 6.5 years) in Svrljig and in 1 group of half-day stay (children aged 3 to 6.5 years) in a separate building of the Elementary School “Dobriša Stambolić” in the village of Drajinac.³⁰

In the Svrljig Local Government Area, there is one primary school “Dobriša Stambolić” with eight-year schools in the settlements of Svrljig, Lalinci and Guševac and 8 school branches in rural settlements³¹, which meets the needs. Secondary Vocational School “Dušan Trivunac Dragoš” has three educational profiles: tourist technician, tourist and hotel technician and gymnasium. As there are companies operating in Svrljig that deal with mechanical processing, textile processing, processing of medicinal plants, production of clothing and footwear, production of furniture and the like, there is a need for training of appropriate educational profiles with the third and fourth degree of professional education: mechanical technicians and related profiles, upholsterers and related profiles, tailors and related profiles, tradesmen and related profiles, masons and other profiles.

28 In the settlements: Niš (18 eight-year primary schools), Brzi Brod, Jelašnica, Niška Banja, Sićevo, Čegar, G. Matejevac, Kamenica, Malča, D. Trnava, Medoševac, Miljkovac, Trupale and Hum. Source: Primary Education - Data on Locations and Facilities, Ministry of Education, 2023.

29 In the settlements of Ostrovica, Prva Kutina, Prosek, Čukljenik, Bubanj, D. Međurovo, G. Međurovo, Krušice, Lalinac, Mramor, Kamenica, Vrelo, G. Vrežina, D. Matejevac, Jasenovik, Knez Selo, Oreovac, Pasjača, Doljevac, Vele Polje, Pasi Poljana, G. Toponica, Deveti Maj, Vrtiste, G. Trnava, G. Komren, D. Studena, Žitoradja, D. Matejevac, Leskovik, Mezgraja, Paligrace, Paljina, Popovac, Rujnik, Sečanica, Supovac and Čamurlija. Source: Ibid.

30 <https://poletarac.edu.rs>

31 In the settlements of Niševac, Drajinac, Prekonoga, Ribare, Crnoljevica, Okruglica, Brenica and Suvi Do. Source: Primary Education - Data on Locations and Facilities, Ministry of Education, 2023.

Preschool education in LSG Merošina is organised in the public preschool institution “Poletarac” in Merošina (mixed educational group on full-day stay and mixed educational group on half-day stay for children aged 3-5.5 years), Balajnac, Jugbogdanovac and D. Rasovača (mixed educational groups on a half-day stay). Half-day preparatory preschool groups are organised in 8 settlements.³²

The LSG Merošina operates one primary primary school in the Merošina settlement, which has four eight-year primary schools in Azbresnica, Balajnac, Jugbogdanovac and Oblačina, which also include four-year classes in nearby villages. This type of organisation achieved full coverage of the entire school population in the rural environment, a rational and functional school network and full professional teaching representation.

Preschool education in LSG Gadžin Han is organised in the public preschool institution “Prva radost” in Gadžin Han (one mixed group at full-day stay from 1.5 to 5.5 years old). There is a lack of facilities for children aged 1-3 in kindergarten. Half-day preparatory preschool groups are organised in 3 settlements (Gadžin Han, D. Dušnik and Zaplanjska Toponica).³³

There is one primary school in Gadžin Han that has 12 branches in rural settlements³⁴, which meets the needs.

Cultural and scientific infrastructure

The backbone of the network of cultural and scientific institutions in the urban area was formed in the urban settlement of Niš. The network of cultural institutions in Niš consists of the following institutions: National Museum, “Stevan Sremac” National Library, Gallery of Contemporary Fine Arts, Symphony Orchestra, National Theatre, Puppet Theatre, Historical Archive, Niš Cultural Centre, Children’s Cultural Centre and Children’s Library. The National Museum is entrusted with the management of the Ćele Kula, Mediana, Memorial Complex “12. februar” and the Synagogue Gallery.³⁵ Institutions founded by the Republic of Serbia also play an important role in the cultural life of the urban area: the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Niš, the University Library “Nikola Tesla” and the Student Cultural Centre in Niš. The University of Niš and other higher education institutions, as well as the Clinical Centre in Niš, form the backbone of the development of science and cooperation between science and the economy in the Urban area and with Niš and neighboring areas.

LSG Svrlijig currently owns one cultural institution - the Centre for Tourism, Culture and Sports, which mainly covers and satisfies all the cultural needs of the population. This centre includes the “Gordana Todorović” National Library (with a collection of over 20,000 books and a developed publishing house) and the National Museum Collection (with a collection of 2,800 inventoried artifacts and exhibits).³⁶ The centre is engaged in both publishing and educational activities - the advanced department of the lower music school “Vladimir Đorđević” from Aleksinac, various sections and courses. It also organises numerous events, the “Ars Timacum” Art Colony, Bagpipe Assembly and others.³⁷ A museum, exhibition space, galleries, etc. are needed.

32 In the settlements of Merošina, Azbresnica, Krajkovac, Kovanluk, Baličevac, Devča, Jugbogdanovac and Batušinac. <http://poletaracpu.edu.rs>

33 <https://prvaradost.rs>

34 In the settlements of Dragovlje, Grkinja, Dukat, Mali Vrtop, Mali Krčimir, Veliki Krčimir, Sopotnica, Toponica, Ličje, D.Dušnik, G.Barbeš and Taskovići. Source: Primary Education - Data on Locations and Facilities, Ministry of Education, 2023.

35 <https://narodnimuzejnis.rs>

36 <https://kcsvrljig.rs>

37 Development plan of the municipality of Svrlijig 2021-2028, 2021.

LSG Merošina is the founder of the Merošina National Library, which is the only cultural institution in the LSG. In addition to library services, it deals with culture, tradition, organisation of cultural and artistic programmes, events and other contents. The library building is in the final stage of reconstruction.³⁸ Of the 27 inhabited places in the municipality, 20 have a building/facility that once served as a centre of culture. Currently, only 2 buildings are used, because the others are ruined. There is no engagement of the private sector in the field of culture and science.

The “Branko Miljković” National Library is the most important cultural facility in the Gadžin Han LSG. It has a library of over 25,000 books. This institution is the main host of all cultural events (it has a 400-seat hall) and meets the cultural needs of the population. It organises cultural manifestations: Miljković’s poetry festivities; Yugoslav colony of art amateurs 17 water mills and others.³⁹

Sports infrastructure

In the urban area, the development of sports infrastructure is unsatisfactory.

The Čair Hall of the Physical Culture Facility of the “Čair” Sports centre is the only closed facility on the territory of the Niš. It has a capacity of 4,000 visitors, which is insufficient in relation to the population of the LSG, the Urban area and the Nišava area. Hall Čair is used for holding various events, fairs, concerts and similar manifestations, not exclusively for sports activities. There is an evident lack of open and closed sports facilities on the territory of LSG Niš, both for conducting training and competition activities of sports organisations from the territory of the City of Niš, and for meeting the needs of citizens for sports and recreation. There are not enough appointments for the implementation of recreational activities for citizens and the private sector in the swimming complex, bowling alley and fitness hall of the Physical Culture Facility of the “Čair” sports centre. Regarding the implementation of the competitive activities of the Association for School Sports of the Niš LSG, there is a noticeable lack of adequate halls and facilities for the implementation of all programme activities. It is necessary to develop infrastructure that would be primarily intended for the recreational activities of the residents in order to awaken people’s awareness of recreation. It is necessary to rehabilitate and put into operation the sports and recreational complexes “Rovče”, “Kula”, “Vrtop”, the fields of Elementary School “Dušan Radović”, as well as a large number of inter-block fields. The mini sports complex on Bojanine vode should be arranged for the year-round implementation of recreational activities with an emphasis on the ski track. The resort “Divljana” has both accommodation and sports facilities, the arrangement of which would significantly improve the offer for the implementation of preparations for sports organisations (sports camps) and the implementation of extracurricular activities of all elementary schools from the LSG, the Urban Area and the whole of Southeast Serbia.

On the territory of LSG Svrlijig there is a modernly equipped bathing complex “Pastirište” (since 2015) which is managed by the Centre for Tourism, Culture and Sports.⁴⁰ The biggest lack of sports infrastructure on the territory of LSG Svrlijig is the absence of a sports hall. Although

38 www.juznevesti.com

39 <http://gadzinhan.rs/preduzeca-i-ustanove/biblioteka>

40 Development plan of the municipality of Svrlijig 2021-2028, 2021.

such a building began to be built at the end of the 20th century, it was never completed. In the future, all resources and efforts must be invested in the final completion of this sports and recreational facility. In addition to this, there are also missing paths for running, walking, indoor swimming pools, etc. The private sector does not meet part of the needs for sports and recreation. 17 sports clubs (soccer, handball, table tennis, karate, basketball, etc.) are united in the Svrlijig LSG Sports Association.⁴¹

On the territory of LSG Merošina, there is one sports hall located in Elementary School "Jastrebački partizani" in Merošina and a balloon or sports hall in the elementary school in Oblačina. Stadiums and sports fields exist in almost every populated place and they are used exclusively by football clubs of the Football Association of Merošina. Sports content is extremely modest. Inadequate equipment of sports halls, insufficient number of indoor and outdoor sports spaces is reason enough that there are not enough sports activities in Merošina. There are no sports associations or clubs that would encourage children to play sports, nor is there any interest from the private sector to invest in sports. There are no sports clubs from the Nišava region that would be interested in expanding their activities in Merošina.

There is a lack of sports facilities in LSG Gadžin Han. Within the Sports Association of the municipality of Gadžin Han, there is a football school and the "Zaplanjac" football club, which gathers around one hundred members in various categories. During the year, a number of sports manifestations of a tournament character are held.⁴² In addition, there are five more football clubs/associations in rural settlements, as well as 4 associations for other sports (table tennis, basketball, hiking).⁴³

5.2 ECONOMY

5.2.1 General economic trends and the labor market

Employment

In the Urban area, there was a trend of slight growth in employment in three LSGs and stagnation in one LSG and a trend of decreasing the number of unemployed persons.

In LSG Niš, registered employees according to the municipality of residence have a trend of slow growth. In 2021, 88,007 people were employed, with an almost equal gender structure of employees, with 15% of employees aged 15-29 and a number of 348 employees/1000 inhabitants, compared to 2020 with 85,041 employees (with 14.7% of employees aged 15-29 years and with the number of 334 employees/1000 inhabitants) and 2019 with 83,728 employees (with 14.9% of employees aged 15-29 and the number of 327 employees/1000 inhabitants).⁴⁴

Registered employees according to municipality of work by sector of activity show different trends in the period 2019-2021 year. In 2021, the majority of people were employed in the processing industry with 23,267 people (26.5%) with a slight growth trend in absolute terms,

⁴¹ Development plan of the municipality of Svrlijig 2021-2028, 2021.

⁴² Sustainable Development Strategy of the Municipality of Gadžin Han 2012-2022, 2011.

⁴³ <http://gadzinhan.rs/vazni-linkovi/udruzenja-gradjana/>

⁴⁴ Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia 2022, 2021, 2020, RZS

but the same share compared to 2020 and 2019. They are followed by those employed in wholesale and retail trade with 14,538 persons (16.6%), healthcare with 7,922 persons (9%) and education with 7,386 persons (8.4%) in 2021, with the same trend compared to the previous two years. There were 3,990 (4.5%) employees in professional, scientific and technical activities and 4,170 (4.7%) in information and communications in 2021, with a growing trend in absolute values and percentage participation.

The opposite trend is shown by those employed in transport and storage with 5,128 persons (5.8%) and in accommodation and catering services with 3,503 persons (4%) with a decrease in absolute values and percentage participation. The share of employees in construction (3,430 persons, 4%) stagnated in the period 2019-2020 year, although there is a slight growth in absolute values.⁴⁵

Registered employment (annual average in 2020), according to the data of NES - Niš Branch, at the level of LSG Niš is 84,630 persons, compared to 2019 with 82,197 employed persons), of which:

- 68,130 or 80.5% employed in legal entities (companies, cooperatives, institutions and other organisations), while 65,632 or 79.8% were employed in 2019,
- 16,419 or 19.4% are entrepreneurs, self-employed persons and their employees (16,477 or 20.1% in 2019), and
- 81 or 0.1% are registered individual farmers (89 or 1.1% in 2019).

In 2021, there were 22,446 unemployed persons or 89 unemployed/1000 inhabitants. (of which 56.3% are women), which represents a decrease compared to 2020 when there were 24,647 unemployed persons or 97 unemployed persons/1000 inhabitants and 2019 with 23,358 unemployed persons or 91 unemployed/1000 inhabitants, but with a slightly less favorable share of women compared to 54.8% in 2020 and 52.9% in 2019. In 2021, 18.7% have no qualifications and 67.7% of those seeking employment for the first time are unemployed.⁴⁶ According to age groups in 2021, the highest unemployment is in the 30-54 age group - as much as 54% (57% of women and 51% of men), +55 years 26% and 15-29 years 20%.

Bearing in mind the intensive investment activity in recent years, the number of unemployed has decreased significantly compared to the previous decade, almost doubling in the period 2011-2021 (in 2011, there were 43,779 unemployed persons on the labor market).

In LSG Svrljig, registered employees according to the municipality of residence have a trend of stagnation. In 2021, 2,864 people were employed, of which 58.5% were men and 41.5% were women, with 14.4% of employees aged 15-29 and a number of 242 jobs per 1,000 inhabitants, compared to 2020 with 2,862 employees (with 15% of employees aged 15-29 and with a realised number of 237 employees/1000 inhabitants) and 2019 with 2,833 employees (with 15.1% of employees aged 15-29 and an achieved number of 230 employees/1000 inhabitants).

Registered employees according to municipality of work by sector of activity show different trends in the period 2019-2021 year. In 2021, the majority of people were employed in the processing industry (46.9%) and wholesale and retail trade (14.2%), with a slight upward

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

trend in absolute amounts and percentage participation compared to 2020 and 2019. The share of employees in healthcare has stagnated (4.8%) compared to the previous two years. The opposite trend is shown by employees in education (6.9%), state administration (5.6%), construction (4%), transport and storage (3.8%) and accommodation and food services (3.2%) with a decrease in absolute values and percentage participation.

At the end of December 2021, there were 1,355 unemployed persons or 115 unemployed/1000 inhabitants (of which 51.6% are women), which represents a decrease compared to 2020 when there were 1,551 unemployed persons or 128 unemployed/1000 inhabitants (of which 52.5% are women), but an increase compared to 2019 with 1,200 unemployed or 97 unemployed/1,000 inhabitants (of which 50.2% are women). In 2021, there are 32.5% of unemployed persons without qualifications and 35.4% of those seeking employment for the first time.⁴⁷

In LSG Merošina, registered employees according to the municipality of residence have a slight growth trend. In 2021, 3,304 people were employed, of which 59.5% were men and 40.5% were women, with 23.3% of employees aged 15-29 and a number of 263 jobs per 1,000 inhabitants, compared to 2020 with 3,162 employees (with 23.6% of employees aged 15-29 and the achieved number of 249 employees/1000 inhabitants) and 2019 with 3,041 employees (with 24% of employees aged 15-29 and the achieved number of 237 employees/1000 inhabitants).

Registered employees according to municipality of work by sector of activity show different trends in the period 2019-2021. year. In 2021, the majority of people were employed in the processing industry (38.8%) and wholesale and retail trade (14.6%), with a slight growth trend in absolute amounts and percentage participation compared to 2020 and 2019. The share of employees in education (9.5%), health (6.5%), state administration (5.6%) and professional, scientific and technical activities (2.3%) stagnated compared to the previous two years. The opposite trend is shown by employees in construction (5.8%), transport and storage (4.5%) and accommodation and food services (1.8%) with a decrease in absolute values and percentage participation.

In 2021, there were 1,343 unemployed persons or 107 unemployed/1000 inhabitants (of which 49% are women), which represents a decrease compared to 2020 when there were 1,581 unemployed persons or 124 unemployed/1000 inhabitants and 2019 with 1,614 unemployed persons or 126 unemployed/1000 inhabitants, but with a slightly less favorable share of women compared to 46.4% in 2020 and 47.2% in 2019. In 2021, 44.3% have no qualifications and 64.9% of those seeking employment for the first time are unemployed.⁴⁸ There is no qualified workforce that meets the needs of economic trends. The main causes of unemployment are insufficient qualifications (the largest number of unemployed is only with primary education).

In LSG Gadžin Han, registered employees according to the municipality of residence have a minimal growth trend. In 2021, 1,699 people were employed, of which 65% were men and 35% were women, with 16.2% of employees aged 15-29 and a number of 272 employees/1000 inhabitants, compared to 2020 with 1,672 employees (with 15.8% of employees aged 15-29 years and with a realised number of 258 employees/1000 inhabitants) and 2019 with

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

1,647 employees (with 16.6% of employees aged 15-29 and an achieved number of 247 employees/1000 inhabitants).

Registered employees according to municipality of work by sector of activity show different trends in the period 2019-2021 year. In 2021, most people were employed in the processing industry (37.4%), with a slight growth trend in absolute amounts and percentage participation compared to 2020 and 2019. Employment in healthcare (10%), construction (8.9%), state administration (7.6%) and accommodation and food services (1.7%) has a similar trend. The share of employees in education (7.8%) and professional, scientific and technical activities (2.9%) has stagnated compared to the previous two years. The opposite trend is shown by employees in transport and storage (1.8%) and wholesale and retail trade (11.8%) with a decrease in absolute values and percentage participation.

In 2021, there were 667 unemployed persons or 107 unemployed/1000 inhabitants (of which 43.9% are women), which represents a decrease compared to 2020, when there were 971 unemployed persons or 150 unemployed persons/1000 inhabitants and 2019 with 908 unemployed persons or 136 unemployed/1000 inhabitants, and with an unchanged share of women compared to 44% in 2020 and 42.7% in 2019. In 2021, 36% have no qualifications and 71.4% of those seeking employment for the first time are unemployed.⁴⁹

Employee mobility

In LSG Niš, there is organised public passenger transport on 15 urban and 35 suburban lines for the needs of daily trips. All settlements are covered by a network of lines. The JGPP study on the territory of the city of Niš, which was prepared by the Faculty of Technical Sciences from Novi Sad and Traffic & Transport Solutions d.o.o., Novi Sad (2019), conducted research into the characteristics of passengers and trips, on the basis of which the gender structure of public transport users was determined (Table 2).

Table 2: *Structure of public transport and gender structure of users in LSG Niš*

Gender Structure	City subsystem		Suburban subsystem		The whole system	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male	1.943	49,54	690	47,46	2.633	48,98
Female	1.979	50,46	764	52,54	2.743	51,02
TOTAL	3.992	100,00	1.454	100,0	5.376	100,00

In LSG Svrlijig, there is organised local city transport that serves to transport workers from rural areas to urban settlements.

In LSG Merošina, there is no organised public transportation that meets the needs of daily trips to and from work. There is only intercity transport, and considering that a large number of workers from the territory of Merošina LSG are employed in labor-intensive factories (Jura, Leoni...) that organise their own transport for their workers, the remaining number of

⁴⁹ Ibid.

passengers is insufficient for economically profitable bus lines, which causes high prices and a small number of intercity lines.

There is organised transportation in Gadžin Han LSG, but it is not adequate.

5.2.2 Economy and business environment

Business entities

In 2019, the number of companies decreased compared to 2018, and in 2020, there was a slight increase compared to 2019 in Niš and stagnation in other LSGs. The number of entrepreneurs is increasing in the period 2018-2020 in all 4 LSGs (Table 3).

Table 3: *Number of economic entities in the Urban area*

LSG	Gadžin Han	Merošina	Svrlijig	Niš
Number of companies	80	84	125	3.538
Number of entrepreneurs	337	295	383	9.941
Number of newly established companies	2	5	4	298
Number of newly established entrepreneurs	44	37	34	1.132
Number of closed companies	7	3	4	269
The number of entrepreneurs who have gone out of business	36	17	29	1.054

In the structure of industrial production of LSG Niš, the tobacco industry, the production of electrical equipment and food products dominate, and the production of chemicals and chemical products, basic metals, metal products and motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers are also represented. The largest companies are “Duvanska Industrija Niš”, “Niš-Express”, “Benneton”, “Elektronska Industrija Niš” and “Mašinska Industrija Niš”. Despite the complex macroeconomic environment, crisis and unpredictable economic factors, investment activity in Niš can be rated as satisfactory. The most important domestic investors are in the field of food industry, production of metal products, construction, auto industry, electrical industry and recycling of electrical and electronic waste. The largest part of domestic investments was realised in brownfield locations (7), and smaller in greenfield locations (5). The most significant foreign investors are in the field of tobacco and textile industry, electrical industry, auto parts and equipment, metal, IT and food industry. Most of the foreign investments were realised in greenfield (8) compared to brownfield locations (4).⁵⁰

Until the 80s of the 20th century, the LSG Svrlijig had intensive industrial development in the fields of mechanical engineering, electricity, textile, wood processing, leather industry and construction. During the period of sanctions and transition, a large number of these companies weakened considerably, and in the end, the vast majority of these factories went bankrupt. On the other hand, there was the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in private

⁵⁰ Development plan of the city of Niš for the period 2021-2027.

ownership. In addition to numerous economic and other difficulties, the number of registered small businesses and entrepreneurs in Svrlijig is not negligible.

The economy of LSG Merošina is not developed, and the most important economic branches that represent the strategic basis of development are: agriculture, food production (fruit processing, mill-bakery industry), trade, metal products industry, Styrofoam processing industry and gas processing industry. The industry of recycled products has been launched, so work should be done to intensify this type of processing of secondary raw materials, which can be a significant source of income. There is only one direct foreign investment in Merošina - the company Ergomade, which produces school and office furniture and employs about 80 workers.

The economic development of LSG Gadžin Han is based on the development of SMEs and entrepreneurship in the field of agriculture, tourism and processing activities. The average growth of SMEs is five to eight new companies per year. "Elektroindustrija ELID" - cable factory and "RESOR" - utility equipment factory form the backbone of the economy and they employ about 100 workers. There were no direct foreign investments in LSG Gadžin Han. An important branch of the economy is agriculture - farming, animal husbandry, vegetable and fruit growing.⁵¹

Economic zones, innovative and business industrial structure

The spatial plan of the administrative area of the city of Niš 2021 (2011) and the General Urban Plan of Niš 2010-2025 (2010) planned work zones in the urban settlement of Niš - in the north of the construction area between highway E-75 and state road IIA no. 158, Work zone "North" (storage complex on the way to the airport, MSP complex); Industrial zone "North" (right side on the road to the airport); and on the western part of the construction area along state road IIA no. 259, Working zone "Niš - West". Larger work zones are also planned along the state road IIA no. 158 in Čamurlija, Toponica and Bušnje and along the state road IIA no. 259 in Palinac, Suvi Dol and Malča.

Science and technology park Niš (NTP) supports innovative startup companies and gathers 57 member companies, of which 38 member companies operate within the NTP Niš building, namely 22 startups and 18 technology development companies, while 17 are virtual members. The announcement of the expansion of the park's capacity and the construction of a new building of the Science and Technology Park, which will increase the capacity by three times, will create the conditions for nearly 100 companies to work in Niš in NTP and to employ nearly 1200 young engineers.⁵²

In the urban settlement of Svrlijig, several industrial-business zones with a total area of about 160 hectares are planned: 1) in the southwest, between the main settlement road (state road IB order no. 35) and the railway line; 2) on the east, limited by the main residential road (state road IIA order no. 222) and the planned bypass of state road I order 25; 3) in the west, between Svrlijski Timok and the railway, i.e. the main residential road (state road IIA order no. 222).⁵³

Along both sides of the IB state road No. 35 Niš - Priština, on the Maramorsko brdo - Merošina stretch, the largest number of business buildings are dispersedly located in the urban

⁵¹ Strategy of the development of MSPP Gadžin Han 2020-2025, 2019.

⁵² <https://ntp.rs/aktuelnosti/u-okviru-posete-predsednica-vlade-republike-srbije-ana-brnabic-najavila-izgradnju-nove-zgrade-naucno-tehnoloskog-parka-nis/>

⁵³ Spatial plan of the municipality of Svrlijig 2025, 2012.

settlement of Merošina and the rural settlement of Aleksandrovo (near the highway Belgrade - Skopje). It is planned to form a very large work and several business zones along DP order IB number 35 Niš - Priština and near the planned highway E-80, section Niš - Merdare. In the working zone, the construction of business-production activities (which will primarily be based on the development of the agricultural-processing industry) and the development of small and medium-sized industrial-craft facilities (facilities for the processing of agricultural products, cold stores, dryers, mills, purchase stations and the like, warehouses and warehouses of materials and industrial raw materials, wholesale and retail trade, gas stations, garages, workshops, craft centres, SMEs, hospitality facilities, plants for the production of renewable energy sources).⁵⁴ Built commercial facilities are provided with the use of complete infrastructure. A smaller part of the capacity of all work zones is filled by domestic companies, and there is great interest in the other part thanks to the favorable location and the possibility of connecting to the infrastructure.

In the urban settlement of Gadžin Han, 4 work zones are planned. The working zone "South" is located next to the municipal road in the direction of Babušnica, on the edge of the construction area, separated by a protective zone from other purposes, partially built with the facilities of the companies MD Trade doo, Belkal Han doo and Mlinpekmilk doo. The working zone "North" is located next to the state road IIA number 224, on the edge of the construction area, separated by a protective zone from other purposes, a small part of the zone is used for the facilities of the company "Zateks" d.o.o. Two smaller working zones are the planned zone "West" (next to the state road IIA order number 225, on the edge of the construction area, separated from other purposes) and the existing zone "Centre" (in the centre of the settlement, built with the facilities of the company "Resor DOO").⁵⁵ The work zone in the Toponica settlement is planned on the northern peripheral part of the construction area, next to the state road IIA order number 225.⁵⁶ In order to attract new investments, which would promote the development of the economy, in 2019, LSG Gadžin Han made a decision to acquire real estate land for the benefit of public property, in order to realise three industrial zones - work zone "North" Gadžin Han, work zone "South" Gadžin Han and work zone "Toponica" Toponica. Infrastructurally, the working zone "North" of Gadžin Han has been arranged.⁵⁷

5.2.3 Tourism and culture

Tourist infrastructure

In the urban area, the primary city tourist centre of international and national importance with a year-round offer is Niš, which is the centre of the secondary tourist area as a whole of existing and potential integrated offers of national and regional importance with natural and cultural values and with the summer and the winter offer. The secondary tourist area includes the cultural area of Niš of national, prospective and international importance. The primary spa centre of distinct national and prospective international importance with a year-round offer is Niška Banja. Jastrebac and Suva planina are classified as other mountain places

⁵⁴ Plan of general regulation of Merošina, 2015.

⁵⁵ General Regulation Plan Gadžin Han, 2012; Amendments to the PGR, 2022.

⁵⁶ Spatial plan of the municipality of Gadžin Han 2025, 2012, Schematic view for the settlement of Toponica

⁵⁷ Gadžin Han MSME Development Strategy 2020-2025, 2019.

of regional and prospective national importance, with a predominantly summer offer.⁵⁸ The existing tourist and recreational offer, considering the potential, is not sufficiently developed and affirmed, and even less organised and connected, both among LSGs in the Urban area, and with the primary tourist destinations in the surroundings (Kopaonik, Stara planina and Vlasina - Krajište⁵⁹) and the planned cultural route “Routes of the Roman Emperors” (with the site of Mediana from the Roman period and other cultural heritage - Niš fortress and Čelekula in the Urban area).⁶⁰ The establishment of a regional tourist organisation is necessary to connect the tourist offer.

In LSG Niš, the development of cultural-manifestation (Niš and culture paths), health (Niška Banja), sports-recreational, city (Niš), congress (Niš and Niška Banja), transit, ecological-educational, rural and special interest tourism is planned.⁶¹

On the territory of the LSG Niš, a total of 28 hotels (1,662 beds) are categorised, of which: 1 5-star hotel (116 beds), 7 4-star hotels (693 beds), 13 3-star hotels (616 beds), 4 2-star hotels (128 beds) and 3 1-star hotels (109 beds). Other registered accommodation facilities without a defined category include 60 facilities with 2,632 beds.

In the period January-December 2021, there was an increase in tourist traffic and the recovery of the tourism sector after the drop in the number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays in 2020. In 2019, the number of tourists was 134,942, in 2020, 46,445 tourists, and in 2021, 69,382 tourists. The number of overnight stays in 2019 was 229,678, in 2020 92,638, and in 2021 163,053, which is 29% less compared to 2019, and 76% more compared to 2020. The international airport “Konstantin Veliki” also made a significant contribution to the development of tourist activity in the city.

There is no Tourist Organisation on the territory of LSG Svrljig. The tourism organisation is carried out by the Centre for Tourism, Culture and Sports. Recently, a system for monitoring tourist visits was introduced through the E-tourist portal, and there is no relevant data on the number and length of overnight stays by tourists, growth, decline, etc. There are currently five registered rural tourist households and at least as many more in the process of categorization, and three catering facilities with overnight accommodation. A little more than 100 beds are available in total. It has been noted that in the last few years more and more registered agricultural households are entering the categorization process, as well as that private individuals are increasingly buying rural households and adapting them in order to engage in tourism in the future. Natural tourist attractions are the Svrljig Gorge, Samar Cave Complex, Prekonoška Cave, Pandiralo Abyss, Svrljig Mountains, etc. Other attractive places are the “Pastirište” bathing complex, the natural pool in Popšica, churches and monasteries, etc.

LSG Merošina has formed a Tourism Organisation. After 2020, the number of tourists is increasing, although the number of overnight stays by domestic and foreign visitors is still small. Records are not kept up-to-date, but in the past few years the average overnight stay is

⁵⁸ Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Master plan of the cultural and historical route Route of the Roman Emperors, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, 2007.

⁶¹ Spatial plan of the administrative area of the city of Niš 2021, 2011.

approximately 1000, which is statistically negligible. The tourism potential of the municipality of Merošina is heterogeneous, which is why it has the conditions to develop sports and recreational, health, event, hunting, fishing and rural tourism. The most important tourist attractions of the municipality of Merošina are: Oblačina Lake, Krajковаčko lake, Mali Jastrebac, the Kulina archaeological site, the “Tatkova zemunica” landscape of outstanding features, and the monastery of St. Jovan. The most represented foreign tourists are Italians, who achieve the highest number of continuous overnight stays. Italian tourists are most attracted to partridge hunting, which is very common in this area. Hunting takes place in cooperation with the “Mali Jastrebac” hunting association, which is actively involved in the organisation of hunting tourism. Mali Jastrebac is suitable for the development of sport hunting (rabbit, partridge, quail, pheasant and other small game), hiking and nature activities. The offer of accommodation facilities and catering facilities is still very modest and insufficient. LSG and TO Merošina encourage the development of private accommodation capacities, in order to strengthen entrepreneurship in tourism and contribute to the increase of employment, especially of women and young people. On the territory of the LSG, there is Garni Hotel “Oblačinsko Jezero” next to the landscaped beach on Oblačina Lake and the overnight stay Markov Konak. The access roads to Oblačina Lake have been arranged and several sports courts for tennis, basketball and football and two swimming pools are available. By bringing clean water from the neighboring artificial Krajkovac lake, the plant and animal world of the lake was revitalised. Oblačina Lake offers the opportunity to practice various sports, water sports, fishing and other forms of recreation. Krajkovac lake is an artificial reservoir created after the construction of a dam on the Krajkovac river, on the eastern slope of the Jastrebac mountain, some 2.5 km northwest of the village of Krajkovac. The surface of the lake is about 1 km² and is surrounded by a preserved natural landscape.

In the Gadžin Han Local Government Area, the most important natural tourist potentials are: Babička gora, Seličevica and the Suva Planina Special Nature Reserve, the spring “Vrelo” in the village of Gornji Dušnik, the karst surfaces of Valožje and the mountain ridge of Trem; and cultural and historical: Dragutin Matić Memorial House, churches and temples on Suva Planina, the oldest of which is the Church of the Holy Ascension in Veliki Krčimir, old “han” in the village of Ličje and old water mills in Gornji Dušnik. Events are organised that nurture the tradition, gastronomy of this region, old crafts and folk art, hunting and hiking. Oscillations in the movement of the number of tourists are significant and are mainly related to the dates of regional manifestations such as: Miljković’s poetic festivities, Yugoslav colony of art amateurs - 17 watermills, Zaplanje fest, Days of Zaplanje, The Great Assumption, Vidovdanski Sabor, South Morava Onion Days in Zaplanska Toponica, manifestation of national character “SUVA TRAIL”, as well as the most massive mountaineering manifestation in the Balkans - Winter climb to Trem.

Cultural heritage

In the Urban area, there are 6 immovable cultural properties (ICP) of exceptional importance in the Niš Local Government Area: Medijana (Brzi brod locality), Čegar, Early Byzantine tomb with frescoes, Ćele-kula, Spomenik Park Bubanj and Camp.⁶² Of exceptional importance are 6

⁶² List of immovable cultural assets of exceptional importance, Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, https://heritage.gov.rs/latinica/nepokretna_kulturna_dobra.php

ICP: Niš Fortress, Latin Church, Humska Čuka, District Office Building, Building of the Pasteur Institute (Niš) and Church of St. Ascension (in Gadžin Han).⁶³

Another 89 ICPs are protected in the Urban area. 78 ICPs are protected in Niš: 75 cultural monuments, two spatial cultural-historical units and one archaeological site. Seven ICPs are protected in Svrlijig, one ICP in Merošina and three ICPs in Gadžin Han.⁶⁴ Nine elements of Serbia's intangible cultural heritage are represented, two of which are related to the Urban Area - Belmuž.⁶⁵ (surroundings of Svrlijig and Niš) and playing the bagpipes (surroundings of Niš and Svrlijig, Zaplanje)⁶⁶.

The industrial and modern architectural heritage has not been valorised and protected. The industrial heritage was not used as a potential for development.

5.3 URBAN ENVIRONMENT

5.3.1 Historical overview of the spatial and urban development of the city

The position of Niš in the Morava-Vardar Valley, through which the shortest routes from Western and Central Europe to the Middle East lead, had a significant impact on the historical past. The wider area of Niš was inhabited as early as the early Bronze Age by the Dardanians, and later by the Celts, who are believed to have given it the name NAISSUS. The name NIZ, NISSA originates from the 2nd century. It is assumed that the first defensive walls were built then. In the 3rd century, Niš became a Roman castrum. A square redoubt with round towers at the corners was built to defend the bridge on Nišava, towards which Niš began to develop. In the second half of the 18th century, Niš experienced prosperity again, becoming a large town developed on two banks of the river, divided into Serbian and Turkish parts, in the centre with a shopping bazaar street and a bridge over Nišava in front of Stambol gate. After the Second Serbian Uprising, Niš developed as a settlement with 30 settlements (mahala), 13 large and 6 small mosques and 1,507 shops. It had 4 military barracks, 1 prison, 2 churches and 1 synagogue. The city began to develop industrially with the construction of the railway in 1884. It developed rapidly at the beginning of the 20th century, when a new regulatory plan was drawn up (in 1907, known as the Andonović Plan), thanks to which Niš acquired the contours of a modern city.

The current organisation of space, especially the traffic network of the central part of Niš, is largely the result of extensive regulatory works planned and carried out in the last years of the 19th century, immediately after liberation from the Turks. The first regulation plan of Niš - Winter's plan from 1879 (Winter's project for the regulation of the town of Niš) was the basis for the

63 List of immovable cultural assets of great importance, Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, https://heritage.gov.rs/latinica/nepokretna_kulturna_dobra.php

64 Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Niš, <http://www.zzsknis.rs/nepokretna-kulturna-dobra-podela-po-opstinama>.

65 Belmuž is an everyday and ritual dish, made from young sheep's cheese and corn flour, which represents the unique heritage of the herding communities in the area of eastern Serbia. This shepherd's dish is part of the usual practice, primarily related to St. George's Day. Its preparation from the milk obtained after the ritual milking of sheep on Đurđavdan, the first of that year, is an obligatory part of the celebration of the holiday and the festive table. The preparation and use of this dish is part of traditional craft knowledge and skills, but also social customs, rituals and festive events.

66 List of elements of intangible cultural heritage of the Republic of Serbia, Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, <https://nkns.rs/cyr/elementi-nkns?page=5>

demolition of many Turkish “udžerice”, the opening of wide streets, squares, the construction of bridges, public fountains, as well as the construction of public buildings. Intensive construction and regulatory activity at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries led to the creation of a new regulatory plan - Andonović's plan from 1907, which was the basis for the development of Niš until the 30s of the 20th century. With minor corrections, this plan retains the already formed street network from Winter's plan, but also significantly expands the construction area, introduces the built railway and plans new settlements. The general regulation plan of Niška Banja, prepared by architects D. Miroslavljević and P. Liller, was brought in 1933. The general regulatory plan of the city of Niš, adopted by the Ministry of Construction in 1939, although it was created according to the then most modern principles of urbanism, did not experience significant realization due to the outbreak of World War II. In the post-war period, preparations began for the new General Urban Plan of Niš, which in the first phase was managed by the architect J. Kortus, and then the architect M. Mitrović and was adopted in 1953. Significant features of this plan are the expansion of the construction area, the resolution of the Niš railway junction and the expansion of space for new central functions in the northern part of the urban settlement, along with the relocation of military complexes. The general urban plan (GUP) of Niš and Niška Banja “Niš 2000” (1973) included an area of 17,548 ha and covered the territory of Niš and 24 suburban settlements. GUP Niš 1995-2010 included Niš, Niška Banja, 11 suburban and 7 rural settlements on an area of 15,036 ha. GUP Niš 2010-2025 included Niš with 40 suburban and rural settlements in an area of 266.8 km². The entire Niš valley is an area where the city's main functions of housing, work, public services (social activities), as well as all supporting functions in the field of traffic, infrastructure and communal activities are dispersedly located.

The first historical data when Svrljig town is mentioned dates from the beginning of the new era. In 29 BC, the Romans conquered the Thracians and, in the spirit of their language, they changed the Thracian name of the Timakhos river to Timakus and named the fortress they built after him - Timakus Maius (today's “Svrljiški grad”). The Turks occupied Svrljig in 1386 and during Turkish rule it had an important military and administrative-judicial function. In that period, the city and town on Pazarište, northwest of the fortifications, developed. Around 1459, the Turks began to settle their population and build Isferik, rebuilding and building towers, mosques, etc. After liberation from the Turks and annexation to the Principality of Serbia, Svrljig became a county seat. Until 1931, two municipalities functioned in the area of today's Svrljig - Svrljig and Derven.

In the Roman period, road routes connecting the important Roman cities of Naissus (Niš), Scupul (Skoplje) and Justiniana Prima (Caričin grad) passed through Merošina. During the Byzantine era, the caravan route to Dubrovnik passed through this area. The name “Merošina” dates back to the Middle Ages from the word “meropšina”, which means ruler's, manorial land cultivated by “merops” (singular “meropach”) - dependent peasants in medieval Serbia. During the time of the Turks, the Kiriji road passed through the planned area and several settlements were developed, in which there are still several old towers and churches. After World War II, new public facilities were built, industrial plants were opened, cooperative activity related to agriculture was strengthened and Oblačina Lake is arranged. In the 1980s, under the influence of development trends from Niš, warehouses and production facilities were built on the plateau along the South Morava.

Three main phases can be distinguished in the settlement development of Gadžin Han so far: rural, transitional (mixed) and initial urban settlement phase. The rural settlement phase, the longest in duration, begins with the earliest traces of settlement found in the area of today's Gadžin Han and ends in 1878, when Zaplanje was liberated from the Turks. In addition to agricultural production, craftsmanship had greater economic importance. After the construction of the han (known as "Gadžin" han) next to the road to Niš, a physiognomic part was formed over time - Gadžin Han, today's centre of the settlement. The transitional (mixed) settlement phase covers the period from 1878 to the beginning of the 60s of the 20th century. During this development phase, population and economic strengthening of the settlement occurs. In addition to the intensive development of craft and trade functions, which was most pronounced between the two world wars, other functions (administrative-administrative and cultural-educational functions) also developed more strongly. One of the significant characteristics of this settlement phase is the territorial expansion of the settlement and the spontaneous shaping and arrangement of its central part. The initial urban settlement phase lasted from the beginning of the 60s of the XX century. The basic characteristics of the initial urban phase are: significant population growth of the settlement (the total population increased 1.4 times), the industrialization of the settlement, which began in 1961 with the opening of the "El Plastika" plant from Niš, the increase in the functional capacity of the settlement as a result of the development of the industrial function, but also the strengthening of other external functions (cultural-educational, health, etc.).

5.3.2 Urban area

Network of settlements

According to the draft of the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035 (2023), the urban area of Niš is classified as an agglomeration - a morphologically and spatially-functionally connected urban centre with significant functional capacity, good traffic connections, but with an endangered demographic capacity, whose direct influential areas have more than 500,000 inhabitants. The agglomeration of Niš is located on the South Moravian and Nišava primary development zone. Other urban settlements (Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han) are classified as urban centres of rural areas. The network of settlements in the Urban area is formed by 173 settlements.

In the Niš Local Government Area, the network of settlements, in addition to the urban centre of Niš, is formed by the secondary centre of Niška Banja, four settlement community centres (CZS), 13 villages with a centre (SC) and 51 primary rural settlements. 17 settlements gravitate to the urban centre of Niš: Malča (SC with the settlements of Vrelo, Jasenovik, Oreovac and Pasjača), Hum (SC with the settlements of Leskovik and Rujnik), Trupale (SC with the settlement of Vrtište), Gabrovac (SC with the settlements of Berbatovo and Vukmanovo), Čamurlija, Popovac, Pasi Poljana and Donje Vlase. Niška Banja is gravitated to 8 settlements: Prva Kutina (SC with the settlements of Radikina Bara and Lazarevo selo), Sićevo (SC with the settlements of Ostrovica and Ravni Do), Rautovo and Koritnik. The following settlements gravitate to the community centres of settlements: CZS Gornja Toponica - settlements Supovac (SC with the settlement of Sečanica), Donja Trnava (SC with the settlements of Gornja Trnava and Donja Toponica) and Vele Polje (SC with the settlements of Paligrace, Banja Topilo, Kravlje

and Miljkovac), Berčinac, Paljina and Mezgraja; CZS Gornji Matejevac - the settlements of Kamenica (SC with the settlement of Brenica), Cerje, Knez Selo and Donji Matejevac; CZS Jelašnica - settlements of Donja Studena (SC with the settlements of Čuklenik and Gornja Studena), Kunovica, Bancarevo, Manastir and Prosek; CZS "9. may" - settlements of Krušce (SC with Mramorski potok settlement), Donje Međurovo (SC with Gornje Međurovo, Bujanj and Čokot settlements) and Lalinac. Settlements with specific tourist functions, in addition to the spa town of Niška Banja, are: Banja Topilo, Koritnik, Manastir, Sićevo, Gornja and Donja Studena, Prosek, Cerje, Vele Polje, Miljkovac and Sečanica.⁶⁷

In LSG Svrlijig, the network of settlements, in addition to the urban settlement Svrlijig, is formed by 2 settlement community centres (CZS), 3 villages with a centre (SC) and 32 primary rural settlements. The Svrlijig urban settlement is dominated by 9 primary settlements: Prekonoga, Đurinac, Ribare, Beloinje, Crnoljevica, Merdželat, Željevo, Šljivovik and Drainac. The community centres of the settlements gravitate to: CZS Guševac - settlements Burdimmo and Izvor (SC with settlements Tijovac and Bučum), Okolište, Lukovo, Vlahovo, Manojlica, Periš, Lozan, Gulijan and Okruglica; and CZS Lalinac - settlements Grbavče, Kopajkošra, Slivje, Radmirovac, Davidovac and Galibabinac. Villages with a centre gravitate towards: SC Niševac - Plužina, Mečji Do, Varoš and Palilula settlements; and SC Popšica - Pirkovac, Gojmanovac and Labukovo settlements. Settlements with specific tourist functions are Niševac and Popšica. Fourteen rural settlements are continuously losing their population, so that some are about to be closed down.⁶⁸

In LSG Merošina, the network of settlements, in addition to the urban settlement of Merošina, is formed by 3 settlement community centres (CZS), 2 villages with a centre (SC) and 21 primary rural settlements. The urban settlement Merošina gravitates to the settlements Baličevac, Rožina, Aleksandrovo and Brest. The community centres of the settlements gravitate to: CZS Oblačina - settlements Azbresnica (SC with the settlements of Dudupajce and Jovanovac), Krajkovac (SC with the settlement of Padina), G. Devča, D. Devča, Čubura, Dešilovo, Lepaja, Kovanluk and Biljeg; CZS Jugbogdanovac - settlements of Kostadinovac, G. Rasovača, D. Rasovača, Bučić and Arbanase; and CZS Blajnac - settlements of Batušinac, Mramorsko Brdo and Gradište. CZS Oblačina also has the function of a settlement with specific tourist functions.⁶⁹

In LSG Gadžin Han, the network of settlements, in addition to the urban settlement Gadžin Han, is formed by 2 settlement community centres (CZS), 4 villages with a centre (SC) and 27 primary rural settlements. The urban settlement of Gadžin Han gravitates to the settlements of Grkinja (SC with the settlement of G. Vlase), Taskovići, Marina Kutina, Koprivnica, Jagličje Čagrovac, Duga Poljana, Čelijske, Vilandrica and Krastavče. The community centres of the settlements gravitate to: CZS Donji Dušnik - settlements Ličje (SC with the settlements of G. Dragovlje, Semče, Šebet, Veliki Mali Vrtop), Ravna Dubrava (SC with the settlements of Veliki and Mali Krčmir), Miljkovac, Gare, G. Dušnik, D. Dragovlje, Sopotnica, Kaletinac and Ovsinjinac; and CZS Toponica - settlement G. Barbeš (SC with the settlement D. Barbeš), Novo Selo and Dukat.⁷⁰

67 Spatial plan of the administrative area of the city of Niš 2021, 2011.

68 Spatial plan of the municipality of Svrlijig 2024, 2012.

69 Spatial plan of the municipality of Merošina 2024, 2012.

70 Spatial plan of the municipality of Gadžin Han 2025, 2012.

Main characteristics of urban entities

There are three urban zones in the urban settlement of Niš. The central zone is the zone with the oldest urban heritage in which housing is permeated with numerous central functions. In the middle zone, the dominant type of construction is buildings within the work zone (service-storage, industrial and production complexes, trade and business complexes), as well as family housing (maximum storeys up to P +2+Pk (P - ground floor, Pk - attic)), family housing with activities, multi-family housing is represented on a small scale, and public purposes are represented. Housing predominates in the peripheral zone. Family housing is represented (mostly storeys up to P+1+Pk), with central amenities for public needs and social, cultural and recreational, commercial, catering and other activities. As part of the residential facilities, business facilities compatible with housing were formed (craftsman's workshops and other facilities in the function of a small-scale economy).

The Svrljig urban settlement was formed in the Svrljig basin along both banks of the river Svrljig Timok and its tributaries, around the intersection of state roads in the direction of Niška Banja - Knjaževac (DP IB no. 35) and Aleksinac - Bela Palanka (DP IIA no. 222) and the Niš - Zaječar railway line. That is why the morphological structure of the settlement took a linear shape with an orthogonal street network. The central zone of the settlement with public urban functions was formed on the right bank of the Svrljiški Timok next to the road to Knjaževac. The central zone on the left bank of the river is complemented by sports and recreational facilities. In the urban area, low-density family residential zones prevail, with a small share of dispersed multi-family residential buildings. Business and work complexes are located on the outskirts of the settlement, next to the entrance-exit roads.

The urban settlement of Merošina was formed along the Krajčevačka river and local roads in the direction of the settlements of Brestovac, Baličevac and Rožina, which lead to the state road IB 35 Niš - Prokuplje. The morphological structure of the settlement took on a mixed linear-radial form - linear in the newer part of the settlement next to state and local roads, and irregularly radial in the older, southeastern part of the settlement organised by hamlets. The central zone of the settlement with public urban functions was formed on the left side of the state road (seen in the direction from Niš to Prokuplje). A mixed zone with work and service facilities was formed opposite the central zone, along the state road. Low-density family residential zones prevail in the settlement. Several multi-family residential buildings are located in the central area.⁷¹

The Gadžin Han urban settlement was formed along the Kutinska river and its right tributaries, next to the state roads DP IIA 224 Niška Banja (connection with the E-80 highway) - Bonjince and DP IIA 225 Gadžin Han - Brestovac - Bojnik - Lebane (connection with the E-75 highway), as well as next to the local road towards in the Koprivnica settlement. The morphological structure of the settlement took a mixed linear-radial shape - linear-radial along the right bank of Koprivnica and its tributaries, and irregularly radial in the older part of the settlement organised by hamlets on the left bank of Koprivnica. The central zone of the settlement with public urban functions was formed between the right bank of the Koprivnica River and DP IIA 224. The settlement is dominated by low-density family residential zones.⁷²

⁷¹ General regulation plan of Merošina, 2015

⁷² General regulation plan of Gadžino Han, 2016; Amendments to the PGR, 2022.

Brownfield sites

Brownfield locations in the Niš local authority are: 1) Industrial complex EI, Boulevard Car Konstantin; 2) Industrial complexes MIN, locations in Streets Šumadijska, 12. februar and Sarajevska; 3) KTK industrial complex; 4) Industrial complex "Nisal", Settlement "Nikola Tesla"; 5) Industrial complex "Vulkan", Mramor; 6) Industrial complex "Jastrebac"; 12. februar 7) Industrial complex "Pomoravlje", 12. februar; 8) Industrial complex "Žitopromet", Dimitrija Tucovića; 9) Industrial complex "Niška pivara", Dušan Popović; 10) Industrial complex "Žitopek", Dimitrija Tucovića; 11) Industrial complex "Niška Mlekara", Nikodija Stojanovića; and 12) Industrial complex "Inis", Ivana Milutinovića.⁷³ After privatization, the tobacco and textile industries have continued to operate in the same area, with a new ownership structure, until today. In the area of the Mechanical and Electronic Industry, property was divided and some of the buildings were brought to a new or similar purpose and new companies operate in them, while some of the buildings are still available as possible brownfield locations for the realization of a potential investment. The larger military complexes in the urban settlement are still owned by the Ministry of Defense, except for two of which the construction project of the residential settlement "Novi Niš" is being implemented on one, while on the other the existing facilities are used for the needs of judicial authorities. All the mentioned complexes at the time of their formation were located on the edge of the urban core, but now they are surrounded by housing. The infrastructural equipment of the complex is mostly of sufficient capacity even by today's standards, there was no dirty industry and no soil contamination and they are well connected by traffic. In contrast to settled property over buildings and land under buildings in complexes, property over other land, vacant and traffic roads is mostly a stumbling block and a factor that makes it difficult for business entities to operate within the complex.

Brownfield locations in the urban settlement of Svrljig are: 1) Furniture factory "Progres"; 2) "ITK Svrljig"; and 3) "Zeleni vrh".⁷⁴

The only brownfield site in the urban settlement of Merošina is Trikotaža "Omladinka".⁷⁵

Brownfield sites in the urban settlement of Gadžin Han are: 1) Industrial complex MIN AGH; 2) Industrial complex GP Rad; and 3) EI Sinteko.⁷⁶

5.3.3 Natural environment

Protected natural assets

The most important protected natural assets are the Nature Park Sićevo Gorge, the Special Nature Reserves Suva Planina and Jelašnica gorge, while the Seličevac, Svrljiške Mountains and Jastrebac areas are planned for protection.⁷⁷

Sićevo Gorge Nature Park, with an area of 7,746 ha, covers parts of the territories of the Local Government Area of Niš (parts of 6 KO) and Bela Palanka. The territory of LSG Niš includes 5,559 ha, or 72% of the protected area. A level III protection regime has been established on the

⁷³ Spatial plan of the administrative area of the city of Niš 2021, 2011.

⁷⁴ Spatial plan of the municipality of Svrljig 2025, 2012.

⁷⁵ Spatial plan of the municipality of Merošina 2024, 2012.

⁷⁶ Spatial plan of the municipality of Gadžin Han 2025, 2012.

⁷⁷ Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023.

greater part of the area of 6,555 ha and a level II protection regime on the localities Gradištanski Kanyon (partly on the territory of LSG Niš) and Vis - Kusača (entirely on the territory of LSG Niš) with an area of 1,199 ha.⁷⁸ The Suva Planina Special Nature Reserve, with a total area of 18,116 ha, is located on the territory of the Municipalities of Niš, Gadžin Han and Bela Palanka. All three levels of protection regime have been established: level I protection regime on an area of 848 ha, level II protection regime on an area of 2,194 ha and level III protection regime on an area of 15,073 ha. The level I protection regime includes two separate units: “Mosor” and “Sokolov Kamen - Trem - Smrdan - Divna Gorica”. The II level protection regime includes two separate units “Valože - Golemo Stražište” and “Rubovac - Cerje (Rebrine)”.⁷⁹ The special nature reserve Jelašnica gorge, with an area of 115.72 ha, is located in the area of 2 KO in the local government of Niš. A level II protection regime has been established in the protected area.⁸⁰

Other protected natural assets in the Urban area are:

- in the local government of Niš - natural monuments Cerje cave (KO Cerje and Kravlje), with the II level protection regime⁸¹; Kamenički Vis – Forest Park (19.65 ha); “Novoselski Brest zapis” (KO Novo Selo); “Dud zapis in Medoševac” (KO Medoševac); “Pavlović’s Oak in Donja Trnava” (KO Donja Trnava); “Hrast lužnjak in Donja Trnava” (KO Donja Trnava); “Rajković’s Oak” (KO Donja Trnava); “Oak zapis near the Banjičko lake” (KO Pasjača); “Cer zapis in Leskovik” (KO Leskovik); “Cer zapis in Leskovik” (KO Leskovik); and “White mulberry in Niška Banja” (KO Niška Banja); nature monument, object of hydrological heritage Lalinačka slatina;⁸²
- in LSG Svrljig - natural monuments, speleological objects Prekonoga Cave (KO Prekonoge), Ravna Peć Cave (KO Prekonoge), abyss called “Propast”, Popšički Pešter Cave (KO Popšica), Samar Cave System (KO Kopajkošara) and Cave System Jezava (KO Kopajkošara);⁸³
- in LSG Merošina, the landscape of outstanding features “Tatkova zemunica” with a total area of 361 ha in the III category of protection - a protected area of local importance;⁸⁴ and nature monument, object of hydrological heritage Lalinačka Slatina;⁸⁵
- in LSG Gadžin Han - nature monument Oskoruša Tree (KO Grkinja).⁸⁶
- The following areas are included in international lists of importance for nature protection⁸⁷:
- NP Sićevo Gorge, SNR Jelašnica Gorge and Suva Planina are registered in the List of Internationally Important Birds and Biodiversity Areas (IBA), the List of Internationally Important Plant Areas (IPA) and the List of Prime Butterflies Areas (PBA);

78 Decree on the Protection of the Sićevačka Gorge Nature Park, “Official Gazette of RS”, No. 16/2000

79 Decree on the Proclamation of the Suva Planina Special Nature Reserve, “Official Gazette of RS”, No. 72/2015

80 Decree on the Protection of the Special Nature Reserve Jelašnička Klisura, “Official Gazette of RS”, No. 9/1995

81 The nature monument includes the Abyssal Cave of Provalija, the Cerjanska Propast Pit, the Occasional Siphon Spring near Kravlje and the Karst Pit with distinct morphological and hydrological forms. The variety of cave jewelry, monumental canals and halls is a wealth of exceptional importance. In this system, the most significant is the abyssal cave Provalija, so far explored at a length of 6,025 m. This is one of the longest caves in Serbia.

82 Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia, <https://www.zzps.rs/wp/zasticena-podrucja>

83 Ibid.

84 Decision on the declaration of protection of the Area of Outstanding Characteristics “Father’s Den”, “Official Gazette of the City of Niš”, No. 17/2015

85 Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia, <https://www.zzps.rs/wp/zasticena-podrucja>

86 Ibid.

87 Decree on the National Ecological Network, “Official Gazette of RS”, No. 102/2010

- NP Sićevo Gorge and Suva planina are included in the EMERALD network, as part of the European ecological network for the preservation of wild flora and fauna and their habitats;
- the watercourse and the coastal zone of South Morava is entered in the List of Ecological Corridors of International Importance.

The Suva Planina Special Nature Reserve and the Sićevo Gorge Nature Park are threatened by industrial facilities.

Green infrastructure

The area of public green space on the territory of the Niš urban settlement is 292.37 ha. Park areas consist of 15 parks, 3 squares, an old quay, a quay under construction and a park in Niška Banja. Without the quay under construction, the area of park greenery is 49.01 ha. The forest park is: “Bubanj” forest park with 50.54 ha and “Koritnik” forest park in Niška Banja with about 40 ha. Protective greenery consists mainly of greenery along watercourses that are overgrown with wild vegetation and therefore do not fulfill their function. The biggest thing missing is the block greenery, which was destroyed, i.e. converted into a car park. It is planned to increase the area of greenery and open public spaces to 2,539.66 ha (15.7% of the construction area), of which 69.7 ha are for recreational areas, 331.2 ha of park greenery, 73.61 ha of forest park and 2,064 ha of protective greenery.⁸⁸

In the urban settlement of Svrlijig, the green infrastructure is formed by public green areas along watercourses, around public purpose buildings, on open sports and recreational areas, and greenery within family housing zones. Green infrastructure is connected to forests in the urban settlement environment. Green infrastructure coverage is satisfactory.⁸⁹

In the urban settlement of Merošina, the green infrastructure is formed by public green areas along watercourses, around public purpose buildings, along the state road IB no. 35 and greenery within family housing zones (with gardens). Green infrastructure coverage is satisfactory. It is planned to improve it by forming three park areas within the built-up residential fabric: between the right bank of the Krajковаčka River and Cara Lazar Street on an area of 1.2 ha; on an area of 0.4 ha next to the area set aside for a religious building; and from the left bank of the Krajковаčka River on an area of 0.53 ha.⁹⁰

In the urban settlement of Gadžin Han, the green infrastructure is formed by public green areas along watercourses, around public buildings, on open sports and recreational areas, and greenery within family housing zones (with gardens). Green infrastructure is connected to forests in the urban settlement environment. Green infrastructure coverage is satisfactory. It is planned to improve it by forming protective greenery and increasing the proportion of green areas to 24.23% of the construction area of the urban settlement.⁹¹

⁸⁸ General urban plan of Niš 2010-2025, 2010.

⁸⁹ Geos Serbia, RGZ

⁹⁰ Plan of general regulation of Merošina, 2015.

⁹¹ General regulation plan of Gadžin Han settlement, 2012.

5.3.4 Quality of environmental factors, exposure to environmental risks and climate change risks

Air, water and soil quality

Spatial differentiation of the environment in the Urban area, according to international standards and examples of good practice, and taking into account the existing state of environmental quality, includes four categories:

1. Areas of polluted and degraded environment (localities with exceeding limit values of pollution, urban area of Niš, highway corridors Belgrade - Niš - Preševo and Niš - Dimitrovgrad, watercourses of class IV and "out of class") with negative impacts on humans, flora and fauna and quality of life.
2. Areas of the endangered environment (localities with occasional exceeding of the limit values, suburban settlement zones of the most endangered areas from category I, urban settlement Svrljig, state roads of the first and second order, railways, large farms, zones of intensive agriculture in the LSG Merošina, the airport "Konstatin Veliki" and watercourses of class III) with smaller influences on man, living world and quality of life.
3. Areas of quality environment (forest areas, tourist zones of controlled development, agricultural, fruit growing and viticultural zones - Nišava-South Morava region, areas with natural degradation - eroded surfaces, saline soils, landslides, floodplains, meadows and pastures, hunting and fishing areas, watercourses of class II) with prevailing positive influences on man, living world and quality of life.
4. Areas of high quality environment (areas protected and planned for the protection of natural assets, wetlands, areas protected by international conventions, mountain peaks and difficult to access terrains, watercourses of class I) in which positive influences on humans and the living world dominate.⁹²

In the territory of LSG Niš, there are extraordinary cases of high soil pollution, most often due to the rise of the underground water level in extremely rainy years, and one of the causes of this is the unresolved problem of waste disposal (unsanitary landfill). About 300 ha of land directly under the landfill on the stretch from the village of Bubanj to the village of Belotinac is directly threatened. Based on the results of air monitoring, and in accordance with the Air Quality Control Programme, from the local network of measuring stations on the territory of LSG Niš, it is concluded that certain average values of pollutants exceed the maximum allowed values. In these cases, the following occur: exceeding the threshold value of the average annual concentration of nitrogen dioxide, at one of the five measuring points; exceeding the average annual value of total sediments at four out of eight measuring points; the average annual value of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ fractions of suspended particles is higher than the tolerance value. Exceeding the limit values on a daily basis occurs during the winter months due to changed climatic conditions, the use of individual fire pits and traffic.

The land in the Svrljig LSG area, as well as other environmental parameters, are of relatively good quality. Soil quality is affected by natural factors: soil erosion; floods along the river Svrljiški Timok; and droughts. Anthropogenic factors arise due to the uncontrolled use of agrochemicals in agriculture when the soil can be burdened with an increased amount of

⁹² Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023.

nitrates. Traffic affects the increased amount of sediments and sulfur dioxide, while next to roads in the winter months when the road is sprinkled with salt, increased soil salinity can occur. Illegal dumps also threaten soil quality. Air quality measurement and control are not carried out in the area of LSG Svrlijig, so pollution can only be given as an estimate based on the existence of potential pollutants. On air quality, the sources of air pollution can be reduced to the not so great influence of road traffic, home individual fireplaces and illegal landfills. According to the Systematic Water Quality Testing Programme, and according to the Decree on the Categorisation of Watercourses and the Decree on the Classification of Water, from the source to Okruglica, the water of Svrlijski Timok is classified in the I category of watercourses, and from Okruglica to Knjaževac in the II category. Wastewater treatment is not carried out on the territory of the LSG, but the construction of a treatment plant is underway. The average production of wastewater according to sources (industry, agriculture, population) amounts to 305,713.71 m³/year. On the territory of LSG Svrlijig, there are no cases of high water pollution.

There are no areas with high air, water and soil pollution in LSG Gadžin Han, nor are there any extraordinary cases of high pollution.

In the area of LSG Merošina, air and soil pollution occurs along the state road DP IB no. 35, and soil and water pollution due to the uncontrolled use of agrochemicals in agriculture. Uncontrolled disposal of solid waste on unorganised surfaces, the so-called landfills, is one of the biggest sources of environmental pollution (water, soil, air) and a danger to the health of living organisms.

Noise

The average noise level in the urban settlement of Niš is 68-72dB during the day and 65-70dB at night. The most vulnerable are the zones next to the main city roads. The main source of noise pollution is predominantly road traffic.

LSG Svrlijig has a significant acoustic load near important road and railway routes. The most intensive traffic is carried out on the state road IB no. 35 from Niš towards Knjaževac, state roads IIA no. 222 Svrlijig- Aleksinac and Svrlijig- Bela Palanka and the road in the direction of Knjaževac via Beli Potok. The average noise level on the territory of Svrlijig LSG is 60-73 dB during the day and 49-62 dB during the night. As for the railway traffic on the single-track regional railway (Niš)-Crveni Krst-Zaječar-Prahovo-Pristanište, based on the analyzes carried out in this area, with free propagation of sound, the limit value of 65 dB for the day is reached at a distance of about 85m.

No systematic noise measurements were carried out in the area of LSG Merošina and Gadžin Han.

Heat islands

The most vulnerable is the central zone of the urban settlement Niš, between the city squares in the centre, so this area can be seen as one big heat island. The causes of the appearance of these heat islands are concrete buildings, high-rise buildings that block the flow of wind, as well as sidewalks that absorb sunlight. Due to the large construction, this phenomenon is most pronounced in the summer, because the concrete heats up more, and in the winter, due to pollution, the cooling is weaker.

There are no heat islands in the urban settlements of Svrljig, Merošina and Gadžin Han, due to the size and morphological structure of the settlements.

Vulnerability from floods, landslides, earthquakes, erosion and climate risks

The area of the territory of LSG Niš is threatened by the occurrence of landslides (Mramor and Mramor Potok, Niška Banja), flash floods and seismic hazards (the seventh level of MCS intensity). The largest watercourses of the first order are South Morava, Nišava, Kutinska and Toponička river. The organisation and implementation of flood protection on these watercourses is carried out by JVP "Srbijavode" - VPC "Morava" Niš. The course of the river Nišava is regulated with embankments along the course through the urban area of Niš. The danger of Niš from flooding by external waters of the first order (by overflowing rivers) is moderate, but the danger from urban flooding during heavy rains, as well as from flooding by watercourses of the second order, which have a torrential character, is much higher. The LSG is responsible for flood protection for water of the II order, and in the territory of the LSG Niš, these are: Gabrovačka river, Suvodolski potok, Kovanlučki potok, Jelašnička river, Kunovička river, Malčanska river, Knezselski potok, Matejevačka river with Brenička river, Rujnička river, Humski potok, Rujnički potok and Mramorski potok.

The area of LSG Svrljig is threatened by erosion and floods. Svrljiški Timok is a torrential river that can cause a flood during heavy rains or melting snow. The urban settlement is protected by defensive embankments. In the suburban area, there is a risk of spillage, which can further cause flooding of crops and agricultural land, and thus great damage. Climatic features are warm summers with minimal precipitation and very cold winters. All these changes can lead to frequent restrictions and lack of water in certain villages during summer days. During the winter, due to ice and snow, many villages are covered in snow and without electricity. The municipality of Svrljig provides the necessary assistance to all residents throughout the winter.

The territory of the LSG Merošina is threatened by the occurrence of drought, flash floods and seismic hazards (the seventh level of MCS intensity).

The area of the territory of the Gadžin Han LSG is threatened by flash floods and erosion.

Since the middle of the last century, there has been a significant increase in the average, maximum and minimum daily temperature throughout the territory of the Republic of Serbia. The average temperature change trend for the territory of Serbia in the period 1961-2017 was 0.36°C per decade, and during the period 1981-2017 this trend of temperature increase was 0.60°C per decade. The entire territory of Serbia is faced with a significant increase in temperatures, especially in the summer and spring seasons, while the least pronounced trends were observed during autumn. According to the available data, climate changes in the considered area that can be expected at the current level of knowledge in the long term in the future are:

- An increase in average temperature, where the magnitude of this increase will depend on future greenhouse gas emissions. In relation to other parts of Serbia, the considered territory will have a slightly higher temperature increase than the average for Serbia.
- An increase in average maximum and minimum temperatures, where the temperature increase during the colder part of the year will be slightly lower than the temperature increase during the warmer part of the year.

- No pronounced changes in average annual total precipitation are expected, but a decrease in precipitation is expected during the June-August period (this trend has already been observed in the recent past).
- The number of frosty and icy days is progressively decreasing in the future due to rising temperatures.
- The number of summer and tropical days will continue to increase.
- Heat waves during future climate periods will become more intense and more frequent.

Waste management and illegal landfills

Non-hazardous waste is collected by the Public Utility Company “Mediana” in LSG Niš. All collected municipal waste is disposed of at the Bubanj city landfill, which has the character of an unsanitary landfill. Work at the landfill is carried out according to the project for rehabilitation, closure and reclamation. As part of its operations, PCU manages one recycling centre and one recycling yard. The recycling centre delivers non-hazardous waste and prepares it for further recycling to authorised operators. There is a risk of soil pollution with landfill leachate, because the city landfill still does not have a system for receiving and purifying leachate and sanitary water. There is a large number of illegal landfills in the area of the Niš local authority, which have been cleaned up several times. A large-scale illegal landfill is located on the coast of South Morava in the area of KO Gornje and Donje Međurovo, where waste of different composition and origin is deposited, and often dead domestic animals can also be seen.

The Public Utility and Housing Company “Svrljig” collects waste in the Svrljig LSG. There are certain locations that pose a great risk of waste pollution in the villages of Prekonoga, Drajinac, Niševac, Crnoljevica, Đurinac, Ribare, Varoš, Željevo, Grbavče and Plužina. There are several smaller landfills in the urban area awaiting removal.

In order to solve the problem of waste management, Merošina passed the Decision on the accession of the municipality of Merošina to the concept of regional waste management and the construction of a regional landfill for the municipalities of the Nišava District. The agreement on the formation of the Niš region for joint waste management between the local governments of Niš, Doljevac, Gadžin Han, Merošina, Svrljig, Aleksinac, Soko Banja and Ražanj was signed in 2010. The Local Action Plan for waste management on the territory of LSG Merošina 2012-2022 was adopted. In 2009, the PE “Directorate for Construction of the Municipality of Merošina” entrusted the collection, transportation and disposal of municipal waste to the Public Utility Company “Mediana” Niš. Solid waste collection covers about 50% of the territory of the municipality of Merošina (towns: Merošina, Aleksandrovo, Brest, Gradište, Balajnac, Rožina, Oblačina, Baličevac, Lepaja, Mramorsko Brdo and the settlement near Oblačina Lake) and includes ten industrial producers. The landfill located 3 km south of the Merošina settlement is still used for illegal dumping of municipal, construction, agricultural and other waste. In addition, there are a large number of illegal landfills on access roads and in rural areas. Due to the efforts of LSGs, existing illegal landfills are periodically cleaned.

In LSG Gadžin Han, the collection of non-hazardous waste is entrusted to PE Directorate Gadžin Han, and the waste is taken to the landfill at the “Bubanj” location in Niš. According to data from 2022, there are 34 illegal landfills on the territory of LSG Gadžin Han.

5.3.5 Primary utility infrastructure

Plumbing and sewerage

The urban settlement of Niš is supplied with water from the Niš Water Supply System - NIVOS, which includes four independent water supply systems:

- Water supply system “Mediana” (based on the use of resources of the alluvial infiltration source “Mediana”). The concept of the functioning of the source is to bring the river water captured from Nišava to the pre-treatment plant where, through the process of coagulation, flocculation and filtration on fast filters, its quality is improved to the required level for infiltration into the underground porous environment. After purification, the water from the plant is transported by gravity or via a low-pressure pumping station to the infiltration ponds. From the infiltration lakes, water infiltrates into the outfall, from which it is then captured by wells, i.e. by horizontal drainage, collected by stretchers and transported to the pumping stations Mediana 1 and Mediana 2. From the pumping stations, the water is distributed in the city to consumers with prior chlorine disinfection;
- Plumbing system “Studena”, (based on the use of the resources of the karst spring “Studena”);
- Regional Water Supply System “Ljuberađa-Niš”, which is based on the use of resources of karst springs: “Krupac”, “Mokra”, “Divljana” and “Ljuberađa”; and
- The “Morava” water supply system, based on the use of the resources of the karst springs Pešter, Toplik and the alluvial spring in Miljkovac.

The water production facilities are in a functional state, but there is a constant lack of investment in their restoration, and most of the facilities need reconstruction. All springs have specific sanitary protection zones according to the Rulebook on the method of determining and maintaining sanitary protection zones of water supply sources. The springs are physically fenced off and all the measures prescribed by the Rulebook are implemented. The source of Medijana is specific because it is located in the urban area of Niš. In 1994, works were carried out on the active protection of sources from pollution from the direction of “Elektronska Industrija EI”. Protective facilities were built: a watertight diaphragm towards “EI” and horizontal drainage towards the Brzi Brod settlement and partly towards “EI”, which significantly isolated the spring from the influence of pollution and thus created preconditions for further exploitation. The protection of the source and the implementation of the necessary measures are being taken care of, and although there are no significant identified problems in that direction, constant vigilance and compliance with further construction is required. The development and construction of the water supply network is handled by KLER through the Construction Land Development Programme and the maintenance of communal infrastructure. The programme is formed for each year and takes into account the strategy of the planned further development and expansion of the urban settlement. The urban settlement is almost completely covered by the water supply network. According to the last census from 2011, 260,237 inhabitants live in the administrative territory of the city of Niš, of which about 90% or 235,000 inhabitants are connected to the public water supply. The remaining 10% of the population lives in villages and is supplied with water from rural waterworks that are autonomous and outside the

authority of PCU Naissus. In 2021, the Niš water supply system collected from the source and delivered 36,022,178 m³, while the total invoiced water amounted to 18,800,521 m³, of which 13,653,813 m³ were invoiced to private users, and 3,833,027 m³ to other consumers (and for Babušnica 1,313,680 m³). The difference between captured and invoiced water is water losses and they amounted to 17,221,657 m³.

The total length of the sewage network is about 530 km fecal (combined system) and about 60 km atmospheric sewage. Like the development of the water supply and sewerage network, it follows the development of the urban settlement and is carried out through the programme of development of construction land and communal infrastructure. It is estimated that about 215,000 inhabitants are connected to the sewage system, which is slightly more than 80% of the population. The remaining population is not connected to the Niš sewage system because there is no built street sewage network to which they would be connected. There is a defined obligation to connect users wherever there are conditions for it. The existing sewerage system is mostly built according to the general system, with common drainage of used, industrial and storm water. This primarily refers to the central zone of the urban settlement. The sewerage network in new residential areas outside the central zone is built as per the separation system. The problem of excessive inflow of rainwater into the sewers was noticed, as a result of which overflows from the sewers occur during heavy rains (for example, in the lower parts of Palilula). Collected waste water is today discharged into the river Nišava without purification through two main waste water outlets on the left and right bank of the river Nišava, and several smaller ones. The realization of the project "Collection and treatment of municipal waste water of the city of Niš" is underway. In 2016, a Feasibility Study was prepared for the waste water collection and treatment project of the Niš LSG, which as a result gave a priority investment plan, according to which the technical documentation for the construction of collectors and waste water treatment plants was prepared in the following years. In April 2022, contracts were signed for the design and construction of the plant, as well as for the construction of collectors and the expansion of the network in 4 villages. The entire project is financed from the IPA 2018 and the funds of the Republic of Serbia. With the implementation of both contracts, LSG Niš will receive about 29 km of new sewage network in the villages, 16 km of collectors with a larger diameter, a plant for the treatment of municipal waste water, as well as a plant for the treatment of waste water resulting from the water treatment process at the source of drinking water in Medijana.

LSG Svrljig is supplied with drinking water from two karst springs: Rumenjak and Rail in the village of Prekonoga and from the village of Manojlica. "Rumenjak" water supply Prekonoga, the water supply from the source of Rail-Rumenjak, was constructed in 1965. The village water supply is connected to the line from "Rumenjak" in a place called "Mrzin potok" and an integral part of this facility is the "Mrzin potok" pumping station at the same location. Another source of supply for the settlement of Prekonoga is a drilled well at a place called "Krst" where there is a submersible pump. The total length of the water supply is 114,187.68 m. A total of 2,554 users are connected to the mentioned water supply facilities that make up the water supply system for Svrljig, Prekonoga and Manojlica, as of 31.12.2019. year namely: individual residential buildings in Svrljig 2,195 users, collective residential buildings in Svrljig 32 (with 476 members of household councils, Prekonoga village water supply 275 users, Manojlica village water supply 52 users). There are no pollutants in the water source protection zones.

The captured water at the springs is 739,322 m³, while the invoiced water to citizens was 321,613.45 m³, and invoiced water to legal entities 45,344 m³. Unbilled water (losses) is about 50%. In the summer period, due to the drought, the amount of captured water is less and the higher parts of the urban settlement are occasionally left without water. The entire area of the urban settlement is covered by a water supply network, but 50% of the water supply network requires reconstruction.

A total of 2,120 households (about 90% of the total number) are connected to the sewage network. Fecal sewage is 15,493 m long, and atmospheric sewage is 1,648 m long. A large part of the urban settlement lacks rainwater drainage. Fecal matter and rainwater do not mix. Today, there is no wastewater treatment system. As part of the “Clean Serbia” programme, the construction of the sewage network has begun and it is expected to be completed soon, which will enable the connection of the remaining users who are not connected to the sewage system.

The water supply for residents of the Merošina LSG depends on individual systems, and on the water supply system that covers the settlements of Merošina and Brest. The state of the water supply network is satisfactory, the supply is made through 4 wells with a total yield of 9 liters per second. In the previous months, 2 more wells were dug in the gate of the church of St. Roman in Merošina for the needs of expanding the water supply network. The total length of the water supply network is about 12 km and the supply is continuous. Water supply problems arise in the summer months due to increased and inappropriate consumption. The quality of drinking water, based on the analyses of the Institute for Public Health from Niš, meets the requirements for drinking water. Other settlements solve their need for water from local sources, through common water networks or through wells for each individual household. The water quality of village waterworks and individual wells is not monitored.

LSG Merošina has only a partially completed sewage network that covers a smaller, central part of the settlement, and which discharges all collected waste water directly into the Krajčovačka River without any treatment. Other settlements use inadequately constructed septic tanks or individual pits. A total of 374 households in Merošina are connected to the sewage network. The existing main collector through Merošina with a length of 2 km is in operation, and there is a newly built collector from Merošina to the recipient of South Morava with a total length of about 8 km which is still not in operation and needs to be examined and hydraulic tests carried out. Drainage of rainwater is carried out by a system of open channels that flow into the Krajčovačka River. The construction of communal infrastructure is defined as one of the key objectives of LSG development and improvement of the living and working conditions of the inhabitants of the municipality of Merošina.

The water supply of the Gadžin Han urban settlement is achieved by a system of gravity transport of water from the source to the user, whereby the water is previously disinfected with chlorine. Reconstruction and capacity expansion of the entire system is needed. According to the plans for the development of the water supply system in the territory of the Republic, the area of the municipality of Gadžin Han should be supplied with water from the Nišava regional water supply subsystem, which relies on the reservoir “Zavoj” on the river Visočica, on the reservoir “Selova” on the river Toplica, as well as on the source of underground water “Medijana”. In the

first phase, the area of LSG Gadžin Han will be supplied from local springs, primarily from the existing spring “Vrelo” in Gornji Dušnik and from a potential spring above the village of Veliki Krčimir, through the unique “Zaplanje” water supply system. Existing facilities and networks will be connected into a single system, and new facilities will be built in such a way as to enable later connection to the regional system. There are water source protection zones that are under the jurisdiction of the PE Directorate and are not threatened by pollution. There is no data for total water consumption because all water supply systems are not registered with the PE Directorate.

Sewerage of waste water from the area of LSG Gadžin Han will be carried out using a sewage separation system. The topography of the municipality of Gadžin Han is such that three watersheds can be distinguished: the watershed of the Kutinska river to which the largest part of the territory belongs, the slightly smaller watershed of the Barbeška river and the watershed of the Lužnica river. The development of canalization in the area of LSGs will take place according to the catchment areas. A large number of natural watercourses provide opportunities for channeling stormwater with minimal costs. Since the very topography of the terrain enables the formation of local sub-basins, i.e. outlets into the watercourses themselves, there is no need for a unique storm sewer system with long collectors. A total of 558 households in the urban settlement of Gadžin Han are connected to the sewage network, and there is no storm sewer. There is no wastewater treatment system in Gadžin Han.

Energy

There is a remote heating system in the urban settlement of Niš. PCU “Gradska toplana” Niš and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering Niš carry out energy production, distribution and supply of thermal energy in the area of the city of Niš. About 30,000 users are connected. The most common cause of disconnection is the price of the connection and the price of supplying thermal energy to end customers. The primary alternative source of heat energy is electricity. A very small number, 0.3% of households, are not connected to the electricity network. There is a built gas distribution network for general consumption in the territory of the local authority Niš, and about 800 users are connected. The reason for the small number of connected users is unresolved legal-property relations, the illegality of buildings, the price of connection, etc. The area of LSG Niš is suitable for using solar energy, biomass and geothermal energy as renewable energy sources. There is no data on the percentage of households and commercial facilities that use renewable energy sources. Over 90% of hybrid vehicles are used for taxi transport in Niš.

There is no remote heating system in the urban settlement of Svrlijig. The gas pipeline network has not been built in the LSG. In LSGs, the primary source of heat energy is individual solid fuel stoves, mostly wood. There is a possibility of using renewable energy sources, such as wind energy, solar energy, etc.

There is no remote heating system in the urban settlement of Merošina. The gas pipeline network has not been built in the LSG. The primary source of heat energy is individual wood burning stoves. LSG Merošina is 100% electrified, that is, there is not a single settlement to which electricity has not reached. The electricity distribution network is part of the national grid and there are no restrictions on the use of electricity. The settlement is supplied via an

overhead transmission network. Regarding renewable energy sources, in Merošina there are the Mini solar power plant Milša with a power of 50 kw (expected annual production of 63,400 kWh) and the Mini solar power plant Exxol with a power of 100 kw (expected annual production of 128,000 kWh).

There is no remote heating system in the urban settlement of Gadžin Han. The gas pipeline network has not been built in the LSG. The primary source of heat energy is individual wood burning stoves. Regarding renewable energy sources, the possibility of building five small hydroelectric power plants with a total planned installed capacity of 1,465 kW is envisaged in the area of Gadžino Han. Based on the data of the Republic Hydrometeorological Service collected by measurements on meteorological poles up to 10 meters high, the area of Suva Planina is promising for the construction of wind power plants. The area is also suitable for using solar energy.

None of the LSGs in the Urban area has a record of facilities with an energy passport.

5.3.6 Primary transport infrastructure and traffic

Traffic network

Corridor X and its branch to Bulgaria pass through the central and eastern part of the Urban Area. The network of state roads in the Urban area is formed by:

- state roads of the IA order in corridor X and its branch to Bulgaria - highway A1 and international road E-75 Belgrade - Niš - Skopje and highway A4 and international road E-80 Niš - Dimitrovgrad - Gradina - Sofia;
- state road IB order - no. 35 Zaječar – Niš – Prokuplje – Priština;
- state roads of the IIA order - no. 158 G. Toponica – Niš – Doljevac (connection with A1); no. 224 Niška Banja (connection with A4) – Gadžin Han – Bonjince (connection with DP IB row no. 39); no. 259 Niška Banja (connection with A4) – Niš (connection with A1); no. 225 Gadžin Han – Brestovac (connection with A1) – Bojnik; and no. 222 Bela Palanka – Svrljig – Aleksinac;
- state roads of the IIB order - no. 426 Malča - Niš and no. 417 Merošina – Ražanj.⁹³

The construction of the E-80 highway Niš - Merdare - Priština is planned.

The network of local roads is relatively developed, except in the Svrljig local authority. It is of different quality. There is a part of local roads without modern pavement - 9.7% in LSG Niš, 20.5% in LSG Merošina and 33.4% in LSG Svrljig. Only in LSG Gadžin Han are all local roads with modern pavement. Reconstruction and modernization of parts of local roads is needed.

The railway network in the Urban area is formed by:

- main railway lines in corridor X and its branch towards Bulgaria - E-85 Belgrade - Mladenovac - Niš - Preševo - border with the Republic of North Macedonia, single-track and electrified railway (designed and built for speeds up to 100 km/h); and E-70 Niš - Pirot - border with the Republic of Bulgaria, single-track and non-electrified railway;
- regional single-track railway Niš - Crveni Krst - Zaječar - Prahovo Port.

⁹³ Map of state roads, JP Putevi Srbije, 2022.

In the urban settlement of Niš, there is the Niš railway junction, which is one of the oldest railway junctions on the railway network of the Serbian Railways, as well as on the railway network of South-Eastern Europe. There are a total of 51 road/street crossings, of which only 11 are uneven, on the railway lines in the area of the Niš local government, some sections of which are located in densely populated parts of the urban area.⁹⁴ It is necessary to plan the unevenness of important road traffic routes, in order to increase the safety of road traffic.

Reconstruction, construction and modernization of the existing Corridor X tracks (E-70 and E-85) through Serbia are planned into two-track electrified high-performance tracks for speeds of 160-200 km/h, for mixed (passenger and freight) traffic and combined transport. The reconstruction of the regional railway Niš - Crveni Krst - Zaječar - Prahovo Port is planned, namely the revitalization, modernization and electrification of the single-track railway, with the construction of capacity to connect significant users of railway services.⁹⁵

“Konstantin Veliki” airport in Niš is CAT I category, with a certificate (with asphalt-concrete PSS). The reference code of the airport is 4D, for regional regular and charter traffic, connection to certain European hub airports.⁹⁶ Activities to improve services by building new and reconstructing existing infrastructure are planned, so that the airport will receive the status of an intermodal centre.⁹⁷ The airport is well positioned in terms of traffic, because it is located near the intersection of the A1 and A4 highways, but it is necessary to improve the traffic connection with the urban settlement of Niš, because the current approach to the airport complex intersects with the railway.

A logistics centre of international importance is planned on Corridor X in Niš.⁹⁸ The location is planned next to the main electrified single-track railway line Trupale - Niš Ranžirna - Međurovo and the railway station Niš Ranžirna on the west side, and on the east it is bordered by a special purpose.

Urban transport network and types of traffic movement

On the existing road network in the urban area of Niš, it is necessary to reconstruct the streets and roads and sections where damage is present, which are rated as “poor”, where there is a high traffic intensity and where there is no basic supporting infrastructure such as sidewalks, bus stops, signaling, etc. There are several special parking lots in the urban area, where parking services are charged for by zones and set time of use, managed by PCU “Parking servis”.

The capacities of the parking zones are insufficient. There are not enough available public parking garages according to user requirements. Garages are necessary on the perimeter of the central zone in the immediate vicinity of boulevards and primary city roads. Roadways and sidewalks are mainly used for parking within the time-limited parking regime. Unregulated parking in intra-block areas is also a problem.

There are pedestrian zones in Niš. During events and the organisation of concerts and other activities, certain streets or parts of streets are temporarily transformed into pedestrian zones.

⁹⁴ General urban plan of Niš 2010-220, 2010.

⁹⁵ Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia until 2035, MGSI, 2023

There is a need to expand pedestrian zones, not only in the centre, but also in other parts of the urban settlement. Apart from pedestrian zones, there is a need to establish slow traffic zones.

Bicycle traffic in Niš is not developed, and the network of bicycle paths is also insufficiently developed due to the small regulatory width of roads. The bicycle is mainly used for recreational purposes, and less for going to work, school, etc. Based on the available data on traffic counting, the participation of cyclists in the traffic flow is 1 - 3%. The total length of bicycle paths in Niš is about 13 km. There is no cycle path or traffic lane for cyclists in the central zone. The main shortcomings of bicycle traffic are reflected in the disconnection of bicycle paths, inadequate accessibility, the absence of prioritization measures, the bicycle rental system and the habits of citizens for using bicycles, etc.

The public transport system in Niš has been developed. On working days, a total of 1745 departures are realised in the system of city public transport lines, 627 departures in the system of suburban lines. The network of city lines consists of 14 lines, with a total length of 130,563 km. The network of suburban lines consists of 38 lines, with a total length of 644.11 km. The main disadvantages are the poor construction and equipment of the traffic infrastructure; lack of prioritization of city traffic vehicles at intersections in urban areas; the absence of the so-called "yellow strips" for public transport vehicles; and others. The existing contracts on public-private partnership in the field of urban and suburban transport services in the territory of the City of Niš define 2 packages of lines, where the first package is carried out by the private carrier Niš-ekspres DOO Niš, while the second package is implemented by the consortium SP Lasta AD Beograd and Strela Obrenovac DOO. The quality of the public transport service is at a high level, with the realization of departures defined by the timetable above 99%, which induces a high level of reliability of the public transport system. All vehicles in Niš are low-floor, equipped with ramps for disabled people and parents with small children in strollers.

Traffic coordination in terms of joint organisation of traffic between LSGs is not present. Currently, railway traffic between Niš and neighboring municipalities is almost non-existent due to the condition of the railway and the reconstruction of certain parts of the railway network. Intercity bus traffic takes place according to registered timetables. The departure, arrival or transit station is the Niš bus station. In addition to "Niš-Express", intercity transportation is also performed by other carriers that have properly registered timetables.

Regarding smart systems, in the JGTP system within the parking control and payment system managed by PCU "Parking servis" Niš, electronic payment and parking control are implemented, applications and services for users have been developed. At two intersections in Niš, video surveillance and traffic control with automatic detection of traffic violations is in use, managed by the Ministry of Interior, PU Niš, Traffic Police Department. As part of the measurement, monitoring and management system project required for the implementation of the "Smart & Safe City" project with a control centre in the Niš Science and Technology Park, the implementation of activities to establish a video surveillance system with video analytics for traffic monitoring on certain access roads to Niš from the direction of Pirot, Niška Banja, Mramor and from the direction of Bubanj is underway. In the public transport of passengers in Niš, an integrated system of automatic vehicle tracking - AVL and electronic billing system - ESN

is in use. There is coverage of Niš with free public internet and that is at 977 Free Wifi spots, mostly in parks, parking lots and public garages.

In the urban settlement of Svrljig, there are a large number of unpaved city streets in residential areas. In terms of traffic safety, the problem is the lack of organised sidewalks for the smooth movement of pedestrians, unmarked pedestrian crossings, and the lack of vertical traffic signals for the technical regulation of traffic in the area of intersections. The drawback is the built railroad crossing at the level of state road IB row no. 35 without appropriate light traffic signals. There are no built public parking lots, all parking takes place on the surface of city streets. There is a lack of permanent and occasional pedestrian zones in the urban area, and there is no network of bicycle paths.

There is no developed public urban transport, and suburban transport runs along established lines with a small number of departures to about twenty rural settlements out of a total of 38. Public suburban transport is provided by the company Niš-Express, and the key problem is the large fragmentation of the Svrljig LSG, the small number of residents in the rural area and the limited number of departures. The main directions of movement of passengers are daily migrations to Niš and Knjaževac for work. Most of the stops for public suburban transport were made without built canopies and mostly on the road as part of the city streets. There is no developed urban and suburban railway traffic, although the Niš - Zaječar - Prahovo Port railway passes through Svrljig. To the residents of Svrljiga, taxi transport is also available to a limited extent, as a form of passenger transport.

There is no traffic coordination with other LSGs in the form of organising certain activities. There are no smart systems introduced on the territory of Svrljig. There is limited public free internet coverage, mostly within public recreation and park areas.

There is no public transport in Merošina LSG. The main directions of passenger movement are daily migrations to Niš and Prokuplje, namely workers going to work, and children going to high school. There is no network of bicycle paths. There are no smart systems in place and no public free internet.

In the urban settlement of Gadžin Han, there are no pedestrian zones, nor a network of bicycle paths. Parking spaces are missing. There is no public transport in Gadžin Han LSG. The main directions of movement of passengers are daily migrations to Niš for schooling. There is no traffic coordination with other LSGs in the form of organising certain activities. No smart systems have been introduced, but there is free public internet on Dragutin Matić Square.

5.4 URBAN AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

5.4.1 Access to governance

Multi-level governance and partnerships

Management at multiple levels in terms of coordination and harmonisation of actions between different levels of administration from international, through national to local level is carried out in LSG Niš through a large number of programmes and projects. The following participate in them as partners:

- ministries of the Republic of Serbia (Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of European Integration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Mining and Energy, SME Development Fund);
- international level (European Union - IPA programmes of cross-border cooperation, TAIEX mechanism of the European Commission, HORIZON 2020, ERASMUS+, Exchange 6, EU PRO +, European Investment Bank (EIB), European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), Government of Switzerland, Swiss PRO, Government of Sweden (SIDA), Government of the Republic of Korea, Government of Italy, Government of Germany - Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs HELP, UNDP, UNOPS, UN-Habitat, USAID, GIZ, World Bank, ADA, French Development Agency (AFD).
- as well as LSGs, the Development Agency of Serbia, the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, NALED and SCTM.

The following projects are important:

- “Techno-park Serbia 2” for support of start-ups in the early stage of development, financed by the Government of the Swiss Confederation and LSG Niš, the Office for Local Economic Development (KLER) and Science and Technology Park Niš (NTP);
- Serbian-Korean IT access centre-skip centre Niš, for arranging the mezzanine of the National University and turning this space into an IT access centre, through an agreement on technical cooperation between the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, LSG Niš and the Government of the Republic of Korea;
- The “TOMORROW” project for the preparation of the “Road Map of the Energy Transition to 2050” is implemented by LSG Niš through HORIZON 2020;
- The UN-Habitat project to support the human settlements programme of the United Nations (2004 - 2008), within the programme of housing and permanent integration of refugees (SIRP) in Serbia, financed by the Government of Italy, in cooperation with the Ministry of Construction of the Republic of Serbia, LSG Niš and PE City Housing Agency, was implemented construction of apartments for refugees and the local population and the development of a housing strategy of the LSG. The Niš city housing agency is still active;
- The project “Collection and processing of waste water in the city of Niš”, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the RS, financed from the IPA fund of the EU.

Several regional initiatives and partnerships of LSG Niš were also realised in the form of inter-municipal cooperation with several LSGs in the following projects:

- CIVITAS CITY (from 2022) Declaration on joining the LSG initiative CIVITAS (City-VITALity-Sustainability) to the network of European cities to promote sustainable mobility through networking, exchange of good practices, education and support for political engagement in the implementation of measures and activities in sustainable mobility;
- USAID’s sustainable local development project (2010-2016), with the participation of LSGs Niš, Leskovac, Gadžin Han, Merošina and Doljevac;
- Regional Rural Development Plan (2011), financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) through the IPA 2007 Programme with Niš as the leading partner and the partner LSGs Aleksinac, Doljevac, Gadžin Han, Svrlijig, Merošina, Ražanj and Sokobanja;

- The joint project “Improving zoo hygiene in the Nišava district” (financed through the project “Local self-government for the 21st century”) with LSG Niš, Svrlijig and Gadžin Han as partners to create the basis for the Regional Centre for Animal Welfare;
- Regional plan for solid waste (2010) and the project for the Regional Centre for Waste Management “Keleš” and 5 transfer stations in the region in partnership with LSGs of Niš, Aleksinac, Doljevac, Svrlijig, Merošina, Gadžin Han, Sokobanja and Ražanj; and
- Establishment of the Regional Development Agency South - LSGs of Niš, Merošina, Gadžin Han and Svrlijig.

In the Svrlijig Local Government Area, the programme of the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia is implemented, namely the research of the Svrlijig Mountains and preliminary research of the meanders of the Timok River and the area of Tresibaba.

There are also several regional initiatives and projects implemented by RDA South, which include the participation of LSGs Niš, Svrlijig, Merošina and Gadžin Han - ITI municipalities and RDA South, RAS, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of European Integration and donors. Initiatives and projects are: Via Militaris (IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia), LANDS (Erasmus +), Link Up Serbia II (ADA), INO-REG project (Ministry of Economy and Development Agency of Serbia), C2CE - From crisis to circularity (EUPRO+), “Strengthening the capacities of local actors and young people at the regional level in the domain of EU cohesion policy” is implemented in within the German-Serbian development cooperation project “Support for public administration reforms in the EU accession process” implemented by GIZ. RDA South’s support to municipalities on an annual basis also takes place through the implementation of the programme of services of accredited regional development agencies to potential investors, a standardised set of services (SSU) for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, measures to co-finance the annual membership fee of local self-government units for the work and business of accredited RDAs, as well as supporting the implementation of the Development Fund’s SME programme.

Participatory approach

The participation of citizens and the involvement of stakeholders in the development of public policies, plans and projects in the local government of Niš is carried out in accordance with modern principles and more intensively than legally binding, namely early public insight, public insight and consultation, which is visible through several examples:

- The City of Niš Development Plan (2021-2027), as one of the more recent examples of citizen participation in the development of public policies. The Chamber of Commerce of Serbia and the Centre for Circular Economy, with the support of EIT Climate-KIC, helped develop the Development Plan through the “Future Cities of Southeast Europe” project. Citizen involvement was led by the “DA Team” of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the working team of the “Future Cities of Southeast Europe” project and the Office for Local Economic Development and Projects⁹⁹;
- Medium-term development plan of the city of Niš. The organiser of the activity is the Office for Local Economic Development (KLER) Niš, which prepared the project

⁹⁹ Through the process, initiatives were launched that encourage changes through innovations to improve the quality of life of citizens, education, mobility and accessibility for people with reduced mobility, arrangement of public spaces, protection of natural landscapes, achieving energy neutrality, decarbonization and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Various actors

“Implementation of a support package for the development of a medium-term plan”, based on the Public Call of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) within the EU Exchange 6 Programme - “Increasing the credibility of planning, programme budgeting and control of public expenditures at the local level in Serbia”;

- “Initiative for the funding of urban regeneration projects”, implemented by the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure with the financial support of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the French Development Agency (AFD). The project assignment for the development of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan has been prepared. The EIB concluded a contract with the company CESTRA, which will work on the project in the next 15 months;
- “Cities of the Future of Southeast Europe” is a five-year initiative of the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT) through Climate-KIC, which plans an inclusive and prosperous transformation of selected parts of LSG Niš. After a transparent process of drafting a strategic document, at the beginning of 2021, the City of Niš Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted as part of this initiative. Various innovative tools are used to identify pilot initiatives, such as hackathons, challenges, innovation camps, as well as “worldcafe”, “placemaking” and “designthinking” workshops;
- Local employment action plan of the city of Niš (LAPZ) (2021-2023);
- Urban resilient cities - With the support of the World Bank, Niš has been selected as one of the cities where models of resilient cities will be developed against climate and economic changes. The World Bank will provide technical support in harmonising the process of spatial planning and strategic/developmental planning and harmonising it with the budget preparation process, as well as in the development of project-technical documentation for the development of the banks of the Nišava River. In the course of 2022, the Office for Local Economic Development, together with other actors in Niš, worked on the preparation of extensive documentation necessary for the analysis of the state of Niš.

In LSG Svrlijig, participatory processes of public policy making are carried out:

- Development plan of Svrlijig municipality. The bearers of the activity are LSG Svrlijig and RDA South. The development plan was prepared in accordance with the Law on the Planning System, through the work of working groups, the coordination body, consultations, partner forums, focus groups, surveys, and public discussion. There is a “banner” for the development plan on the website where there is a proposal form.

It is similar in LSG Merošina and Gadžin Han, and the most obvious examples are:

- Development plan of the municipality of Merošina: The holder of the activity is the LSG of Merošina and RDA South. The development plan was prepared in accordance with the Law on the Planning System using a participatory approach through the work of working groups, a coordinating body, consultations, partner forums, focus groups, surveys, and public discussion. There is a development plan “banner” on the website where the proposal form is located;

participated in the process (academia, public, civil and commercial sectors), and various methods of citizen participation and stakeholder involvement were applied.

- Currently, a medium-term development plan for LSG Merošina is being developed in cooperation with SCTM;
- The development plan of the municipality of Gadžin Han is made in cooperation with SCTM and it is adopted.

Governance capacities of LSGs

Support for the development of the capacity of LSG Niš for managing urban development is reflected in several projects:

- Strategic support of TAIEX to local authorities - capital investment management. LSG Niš, in cooperation with NALED, received strategic support from the European Commission's TAIEX mechanism for local authorities. Through three workshops, participants were given experiences and best practices in the field of capital investment planning at the local level, with the aim of building the capacity of users to prepare for EU cohesion policy;
- "Project for Responsible Government". A four-year USAID project that works together with partners from Serbia to improve the responsibility of local and national authorities. For the year 2021, the technical support of LSG Niš in the development of the Communication and Citizen Participation Strategy was selected;
- Platform for responsible management of public finances. The project is implemented by the UNDP Programme in Serbia and financed by the Government of Sweden (SIDA), while LSG Niš is one of the five LSGs participating in the project. The project envisages work on strengthening the partnership between local self-government units (LSGs), civil society through building a more transparent approach to funding civil society organisations (CSOs) from the LSG budget, in accordance with local needs;
- Building the capacity of expert centres for good governance at the local level, with the support of the Swiss Government, is implemented through the Swiss Programme within the component of good governance;
- "E-administration in the implementation of the local economic development plan". The project aims to introduce e-government and modern information technologies in order to improve and modernise the work of the Office for Local Economic Development and projects of the Niš LSG, as well as to create technical conditions for electronic connection and improvement of communication between the City Administration and investors, small and medium-sized enterprises, institutions and civil society organisations. As part of the project, an information system was developed that provides support for the management and implementation of various programmes and projects;
- Improvement of the geographic information system in order to improve the capacity of Niš to identify, integrate into development processes, manage and use geo-spatial data. KLER worked on upgrading GIS by introducing new layers from priority areas, providing missing functionalities (3D analysis and visualization, user management module, flood simulation tool, mobile object tracking tool, development of support for online background layers) and a mobile application for accessing GIS was created. In the course of 2021 GIS members were trained for the full application of GIS in their daily work, as well as the procurement of specific equipment (unmanned aerial vehicle, GNSS devices and necessary software) that will be used by LSGs for further surveying

of the terrain. The project was supported by the EU with €86,200.00 through the EU PRO development programme, which is implemented by UNOPS. The total value of the project is €105,700.00;

- Establishment of a single administrative place. KLER implemented the project as part of the City Service Centre, with funds from the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government. Citizens will be able to carry out all actions in which administrative bodies make decisions in three possible ways: electronically, by mail or directly, by contacting the competent authority. The info desk will enable citizens to get all the necessary information for the right they want to exercise or the service they need from the competence of the City Administration for City Bodies and Civil Affairs, the City Administration for Social Activities and the City Administration for Finances - Local Tax Administration Sector.

5.4.2 Sources of funding

There are different types of urban development funding in LSG Niš, from international funds and national funds, public-private partnerships, and private funds.

The main domestic sources of funding urban development are the own funds / budget of LSGs, as well as programmes of various ministries, namely: Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure¹⁰⁰, Ministry of Mining and Energy¹⁰¹, Ministry of Environmental Protection¹⁰².

LSG Niš continuously uses international funding sources - European Union funds, Union programmes, available Cohesion Policy funds, international financial instruments (banks) and bilateral and multilateral cooperation. It is important to mention EU funds¹⁰³, but also new credit lines from the French Development Agency and the World Bank. In addition to the above, bilateral and multilateral cooperation and donor programmes are also implemented through cooperation projects with the organisation HELP (Socio-Economic Empowerment of the Western Balkans for the Empowerment of Socially Vulnerable Groups and Support for Social Inclusion), as well as through the support of the Swiss government for the development of municipalities through the improvement of good governance and social inclusions - Swiss PRO.

100 MGSI awarded LSG Niš with the Champion of Urban Mobility award in the category of cities for the year 2022. Planned activities improve bicycle transportation in Niš, asphaltting, adaptation and marking of the 580 m Trošarina-Stopshop bicycle path. The value of the project is 2,000,000.00 dinars.

101 Co-funding of energy rehabilitation measures of residential buildings, family houses and apartments in the territory of the Niš local authority for 2021; Co-funding of measures for the energy renovation of residential buildings, family houses and apartments in the territory of LSG Niš for 2022.

102 "Green and clean - plan for the prevention of illegal waste disposal and the removal of illegal landfills in the territory of the City of Niš for the year 2022", LSG Niš removed 9 illegal landfills with a total volume of 2,941 m³ in July; Reforestation project with the aim of protecting and preserving landscape diversity in 2022; Reforestation project with the aim of protecting and preserving the natural diversity in 2022; Project to reduce air pollution from individual sources in 2021.

103 EU PRO PLUS programme for project proposals for business support organisations, for the project Resilient and stable startups as a driver of regional development. The total value of the project is \$55,730 with co-funding from the Start-up Centre in the amount of \$8,000.00. Support is provided to startups through the "School of Innovation" programme, as well as support to local governments to create a framework to support the development of start-up entrepreneurship. Through the project, it is planned to provide support to LSG Niš in the development of a model of support for technological entrepreneurship and adaptation of local economic development measures to innovations and technological entrepreneurship. The next project is Improving the energy efficiency of the Niš Puppet Theater building, in which the work on mechanical installations, necessary construction works for the implementation of the mechanical project and work on solving the problem of lack of space to accommodate the decorations and props of the Niš Puppet Theater are carried out.

In LSG Svrlijig, domestic sources of funding are: projects and programmes of various ministries, LSG budgets, loans from investment and commercial banks in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Foreign funding sources are mainly EU PRO+ programmes. The largest part of funds for the improvement of urban development comes from the budget of LSGs and amounts to about 90%, while from international and national funds it amounts to about 10% of funds.

In LSG Merošina, the main domestic sources of funding are the programmes of various ministries of the Republic of Serbia. Foreign sources of funding are the programmes of the EU and the Swiss government, namely the GIS development project through the European Progress programme (there were also funds from the Republic of Serbia). The preparation of three DRPs was financed with the same funds. The largest part of funds during the development of planning documents are funds from European funds or ministries of the Republic of Serbia. LSG Merošina has never participated with more than 20% of the required funds.

5.4.3 Transparency and information

According to the local self-government transparency index for 2021, four local self-governments achieved the transparency indices shown in table 4:

Table 4: Local government transparency index for 2021

LSG	Place in LTI 2021	2019	2020	2021	2022	Growth 022/2021	Growth 2022/2021 (%)
Niš	103	34	46	40	64	24	60.0%
Svrlijig	98	43	37	41	53	12	29.3%
Gadžin Han	88	46	56	43	37	-6	-14.0%
Merošina	140	26	24	29	34	5	17.2%

In LSG Niš, the Geographical Information System of public green areas exists, but is not used. LSG Niš through KLER has a GIS Improvement project, in order to improve the capacities of Niš to identify, integrate into development processes, manage and use geo-spatial data.

In LSG Svrlijig there is a developed system of electronic communication with citizens through the municipal website. Citizens are informed at the LSG level about the decisions made and key local documents. Citizens can participate in decision-making through consultation, co-decision, and even empowering groups of citizens. In 2020, LSG Svrlijig was recognised for its contribution to affirming the right to access information of public importance in the LSG category from the commissioner for information of public importance and personal data protection.

In LSG Merošina, there is a developed system of electronic communication between the administration and citizens. In addition to the official website of the municipality of Merošina, there is also an application "Merošina Municipality" which, in addition to information, also enables the generation of applications and proposals for municipal services and public enterprises. There is a GIS that is currently down (expired software and server licenses). While

it was in operation, it was used as a source of data for the development of strategies and plans. Data on donor projects are available on the website of the local government of Niš¹⁰⁴ (from 2006-2021) and Gadžin Han¹⁰⁵ (implemented with the support of the European PROGRES programme), while LSG Merošina and Svrljig do not have this data available.

104 <https://www.ni.rs/projekti/>

105 <http://gadzinhan.rs/vazni-linkovi/donatorski-projekti/>

6 SWOT ANALYSIS AND NEEDS

6.1 IDENTITY OF THE URBAN AREA

advantages/strengths

- Excellent geo-strategic position, good infrastructure and connectivity by road, rail and air transport
- Gate of East and West > crossroads of Western Europe with the Middle East and Greece
- A modern European city with a recognizable identity and urban heritage and the 3rd city in Serbia, an industrial, tourist, health, educational and cultural centre (Niš)
- Wealth of natural heritage - Sićevačka Gorge Nature Park, Special Nature Reserves Jelašnica Gorge and Suva Planina, nature monuments Lalinačka slatina; Cerje, Prekonoga and other caves; planned for protection are Svrljig Mountains, Tresibaba - Svrljiški Timok gorge and Seličevica
- Rich cultural heritage and historical heritage - immovable cultural properties of exceptional importance Mediana, Čele Kula, memorial park Bubanj and Čegar, of great importance Niš Fortress, Latin Church, Sićevo Monastery, Humska čuka, Kulina (Balajnac), the building "Oficirski dom", the old Headquarters and the Pasteur Institute and other fortified properties, as well as intangible cultural heritage
- Natural and cultural resources and other cultural manifestations in the service of tourism

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Uneven development and dysfunctionality of the territory > predominantly rural areas surrounded by urban centres (LSG centres)
- LSGs' lack of interest in the protection of natural assets
- Lack of mechanisms for the protection of cultural property - inspection supervision and financial resources
- Insufficient utilization and uneven development of tourist potentials
- Insufficient accommodation capacity in 4-star hotels, lack of hotels in Niška Banja
- Lack of quality tourist signage
- Non-profiled workforce in the field of tourism
- Insufficient entrepreneurial spirit for rural tourism
- Weak inter-municipal cooperation in the function of tourism development and wider tourist destinations
- Concentration on "building" in the development of urban settlements
- Expansion of settlements and construction areas in contrast to the compactness of urban centres/settlements, usurpation of agricultural and forest land, inefficient and inadequate system of legalising illegal construction
- Special Nature Reserve Suva Planina and Nature Park "Sićevačka Klisura" endangered by industrial facilities

potentials/possibilities

- Possibilities of urban regeneration of urban structures and public spaces
- Possibilities of renovation and multifunctional repurposing of buildings in rural areas (local communities, etc.)
- Primary zones of development on the territory of R. Serbia > territorial cohesion > Great Morava, South Morava, Nišava and Toplica - Kosovo - Metohija zone
- Regeneration of brownfields > former industrial and military complexes (Niš Barracks Bujanjski Heroji, Pantelej, Tobacco and Textile Industry; Mechanical and Electronic Industry property division)
- Industrial heritage as a potential
- Ecological preservation and natural resources for the development of sustainable tourism
- Development of cultural tourism, gastronomic tourism and tourist destinations with cultural and natural heritage for sustainable tourism; tourist train Niš-Svrljig
- Connecting the tourist offer of Stara and Suva Planina for the development of rural tourism; complementarity of the tourist offer in the context of urban-rural links
- Cultural landscape as a potential
- Connecting the tourist offer - establishment of a regional tourist organisation
- Branding of tourist and agricultural products and place brand
- Strengthening urban-rural links > agricultural products and services

threats/risks

- Further concentration of urban contents in the dominant urban centre of Niš > economy, education and public services > uneven and inhomogeneous development of the territory
- Continuation of spatial concentration of settlements along infrastructure corridors and traffic routes towards Niš
- Industrial and military complexes > still without new purposes
- A large number of illegal buildings
- Further endangerment of natural and cultural assets by illegal and excessive construction and illegal dumping
- Uncontrolled expansion of settlements and usurpation of agricultural and forest land

needs

- Development and improvement of the image and branding of the Urban area
- Regulation of expansion of the construction area; urban regeneration, strengthening of the existing / by creating a new identity of public urban spaces and rehabilitation of buildings from the socialist heritage
- Adequate transformation and reactivation of brownfield sites; amendment of the legal framework for the conversion of military facilities
- Integrated protection and valorization of cultural and natural heritage; and continuous systematic research of cultural heritage
- The need to strengthen urban-rural links > jobs and services, complementarity of the tourist offer

6.2 GREEN AND ENERGY TRANSITION AND MOBILITY

advantages/strengths

- District heating system and division of the urban settlement into heating and gasification zones (Niš)
- Charging for heating according to consumption - the effect of increasing energy efficiency (savings)
- Programmes of energy and other rehabilitation of residential buildings (Niš)
- Wealth of forests and forest land in the Urban area (40-55% of the territory of the municipalities, except Merošina > only 19.4%)
- Traffic hub of great importance in Serbia > intersection of multimodal Corridor H, airport, cargo handling centre
- Konstantin Veliki Airport > European airport with the highest operational and organisational standards and air traffic safety
- Developed traffic network of European, national and local roads
- Public city transport (JGP) in Niš
- Over 90% of hybrid vehicles for taxi transport in Niš

weaknesses/deficiencies

- There is no obligation to connect all buildings in the heating zone to the remote heating system
- Low level of awareness about energy efficiency and measures
- Low energy efficiency of public and other buildings
- Low standard of citizens for implementation of energy efficiency solutions (replacement of joinery and individual fireplaces); use of energy-inefficient equipment in households (low energy level of electronic devices)
- Great focus on certain energy sources (gas)
- Absence of a district heating system (Svrljig, Merošina, Gadžin Han)
- Endangerment of the urban area due to the occurrence of landslides and flash floods > flooding of crops and agricultural land
- The quality of the forest is unsatisfactory
- Reduction of open public and green spaces in the centres of settlements
- Non-use of certain public spaces (e.g. quay for cyclists)
- Urban infrastructure unsatisfactory and threatened by climate change
- Heat islands between squares in the city centre (Niš)
- Polluted air in urban settlements > traffic and heating (individual fireplaces) in winter, excessive construction, landfills and basin (city of Niš)
- Underdeveloped network and dilapidation of communal infrastructure, poor communal equipment outside urban settlements; there is no capacity to expand the sewage network in the Urban area
- Discharge of unprocessed wastewater from economic entities into recipients; absence of a waste water treatment system
- Illegal and unsanitary landfills in villages and waste management
- Railway infrastructure poorly located / in poor condition > passes through the central city core > high risk (Niš)

- Underutilization of Niš Airport 30-40%
- Unsafe and endangered zones in terms of traffic > a large number of traffic accidents (Niš)
- Public city transport (JGP) does not exist (Svrlijig, Merošina, Gadžin Han)
- Non-economic price for JGP compared to private individuals; due to legal regulations, it is not possible to change or increase the capacity and scope of the JGP
- Impossibility of traffic coordination for transport integration
- Insufficient street and off-street parking
- Insufficiently developed cycling infrastructure
- Lack of chargers for electric vehicles

potentials/possibilities

- Increasing the number of users of the remote heat energy supply system in the heating zones of the urban settlement of Niš
- Construction of new heat sources and accompanying distribution networks in accordance with the planned expansion of the urban settlement of Nis
- Potential for diversification of energy sources and use of renewable energy sources > biomass and solar, geothermal and wind energy, etc.
- Possibilities for using gas > solving the problem of polluted air; gas interconnection with Sofia
- Adopting a climate change strategy; Niš 2022 - adaptation plan to climate change
- Airport “Konstantin Veliki” intermodal hub
- Planned intermodal terminal next to the railway line > logistics services for containers > rail and road transport (Niš, Svrlijig)
- Construction of the infrastructural corridor of the E-80 Niš-Merdare highway > positive impact on social and economic life (Merošina) and connection of Serbia with the largest port in Albania (Durrës)
- Freeing central urban areas from motorised traffic; expansion of public pedestrian areas, development and decarbonization of public transport and use of alternative vehicles
- Further development of smart systems for urban mobility

threats/risks

- Energy - a marginalised topic
- Possible construction of small hydropower plants on the Kutina and Barbeška rivers (Gadžin Han) > ecological damage to the environment
- Underutilization of the potential of renewable energy sources
- Further endangerment of the environment and environmental problems from illegal landfills, risk of pollution from landfill leachate
- The concept of development of urban contents that favors the greater use of passenger cars
- Insufficient use of alternative (environmentally clean) modes of transportation

needs

- Mapping and researching the needs for a regional energy agency; One-stop-shop for the field of energy
- Improvement and networking of green infrastructure in urban settlements
- Improvement of municipal equipment in the Urban area, implementation of facilities for the purification of municipal waste water
- Rehabilitation of unsanitary landfills
- Development of intermodality and transport infrastructure

6.3 INNOVATIVE AND SMART ECONOMY***advantages/strengths***

- Food industry - export of agricultural products
- Significant greenfield and brownfield site development facilities
- Developed institutions for business support
- The existence of a science and technology park
- Existence of higher education institutions (new technical solutions to reduce energy consumption)
- A large number of small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs
- Scholarships for pupils and students in small communities

weaknesses/deficiencies

- The absence of a free customs zone with special benefits and incentives
- Inconsistency of the educational programme with the requirements of the economy - inadequate educational structure of the workforce
- Departure of the workforce to other centres and abroad
- Unfavorable age and qualification structure of available labor force seekers
- Insufficient subsidies and reliefs for domestic micro, small and medium enterprises
- A small number of agricultural holdings
- High participation of products with low values
- Low level of investment - private sector technology development in research and development (R&D)
- Weak cooperation with the diaspora
- Weak governance mechanisms for SMEs
- Low degree of digitization of the industry and application of modern technology
- A small number of accredited scientific research institutions

potentials/possibilities

- Existence of industrial zones
- Cooperation of the economy with the University and other educational institutions
- The existence of national programmes for economic development
- The existence of EU and other international and domestic funds
- Connecting with other local communities in the country and abroad in order to improve the business environment and create conditions for better business

- The role of the civil sector
- Technological solutions of the fourth scientific and technological revolution to reduce pollution

threats/risks

- Inconsistent economic policy measures to attract foreign investments
- High political influence on economic development and investment attraction
- Illegal work and gray economy
- Uneven regional development

needs

- Formation of a free zone
- Additional benefits for business start-up and development; incubator centre - formation in smaller urban settlements
- Networking of the public sector, scientific research institutions and the economy
- Establishment of a centre for education and development of agriculture

6.4 SOCIAL WELLBEING

advantages/strengths

- Existence of the City Housing Agency and planning documentation, social housing
- A developed system of institutions and a wide range of social protection services
- A strong university and scientific centre
- Existence of primary and tertiary healthcare; good availability of primary health services (points and branches and in rural areas) in Niš
- Qualified staff and a favorable structure of specialist staff in the field of health care
- Cultural institutions with existing infrastructure and contents; the existence of cultural centres in rural areas
- Developed personnel infrastructure and well-equipped sports fields and facilities

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Population migrations - a bad demographic picture
- Lack of institutions for integral treatment of social housing (Merošina, Svrljig, Gadžin Han)
- Lack and inadequacy of space for social protection institutions; lack of counseling centres for young people
- Absence of private licensed service providers
- Non-existence and insufficiently developed specific services (personal assistance, assistance to rural elderly households, etc.)
- Lack of adequate space for basic education; poor condition of elementary schools in remote settlements (Svrljig, Merošina, Gadžin Han)
- Low level of health culture and literacy; insufficient availability of primary health care in most LSGs; lack of emergency medical assistance in the part of the LSGs
- Absence of a general hospital - burden of tertiary health care with specialist examinations

- Insufficient equipment of cultural centres; unresolved legal-property relations for rural facilities - cooperative homes, cultural centre
- Lack of strategy and policy in the field of culture; insufficient intersectoral, interinstitutional cooperation in the field of cultural promotion; lack of cultural programmes - programmes for the elderly, young, etc.
- Lack of multifunctional hall and gallery space (Niš)
- Insufficient number of sports halls in relation to the number of sports organisations

potentials/possibilities

- Developing inter-municipal cooperation in the field of providing social protection services
- Inclusion of the private sector as a provider of all types of services
- Establishment of a common package of programmes for different groups of users for cultural centres in the Urban area, potential for a museum (military facility); Small stage of the National Theater in Niš

threats/risks

- Population decline
- Unfavorable demographic structure
- The outflow of a large number of professional health workers

needs

- Demand for affordable apartments (Niš, Svrlijig, Merošina); housing development with support and institutional support for integral treatment of social housing
- Improvement of services and the network of social protection facilities
- Improvement of services and the network of education facilities
- Improvement of services and the network of health care facilities
- Improvement of services and the network of cultural and sports facilities

6.5 URBAN AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

advantages/strengths

- Multi-level governance > international, national and regional actors through various programmes and projects
- Participatory approach for strategies and development plans (development plans of Svrlijig and Gadžina Han), and certain urban plans (GUP Niš)
- Different international and domestic types of urban development funding
- A developed system of electronic communication between the administration and citizens
- Great transparency of local self-government for 2022 (Niš in high 18th place, Svrlijig in excellent 39th place, Gadžin Han in 127th place and Merošina in 137th place)
- Use of GIS in urban development governance (Merošina > development of strategies and plans; GIS)

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Poor inter-institutional cooperation and the question of competence for the implementation of projects - the absence of departmental administration for the implementation of projects
- Lack of adopted decision-making mechanisms
- Lack of planning culture
- Failure to comply with adopted strategies
- Lack of data from certain institutions and institutions: non-updated data, poor quality, unknown data holder
- Formal participation of citizens through legally mandated public consultations and public inspection; lack of a quality legal basis for the participatory process
- Small and insufficient use of GIS in urban development governance (Niš: GIS system of public green areas > not in use, only GIS for GSP)

potentials/possibilities

- International and national programmes and projects for building and increasing management capacity
- Networking, cooperation and partnerships with public and private sector actors on international projects
- Application of good governance standards, development of participation and transparency mechanisms for the purposes of drafting planning documents and making investment decisions
- Public-private partnerships in various fields > infrastructure; place branding; sustainable mobility; development of sustainable and cultural tourism
- Strengthening the cooperation of LSGs for managing the development of the Urban Area
- Better cooperation with the civil and private sector and strengthening of transparency in decision-making in the management of urban development

threats/risks

- Slow governance reform for multi-stakeholder management processes
- Low level of citizen participation in the process of urban development
- The departure of young, highly educated people to bigger cities and abroad
- Moving away from the rapprochement of the EU and the economic crisis caused by the war in Ukraine > reduced number of EU projects and additional sources of funding

needs

- Capacity building in the integrated urban development governance
- Improvement of spatial, urban and sectoral planning for sustainable spatial development of the Urban Area
- Strengthening of institutional capacities for inter-municipal cooperation
- Essential participation of citizens and interested parties in the planning process beyond formal forms for quality urban management
- Greater use of ICT tools for integrated urban management between different institutions (collection, consolidation and exchange of data of institutions) and for the participation of citizens and other interested parties

7 VISION, OBJECTIVES, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

7.1 VISION

LIVE, INNOVATIVE AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, INCLUSIVE, CREATIVE URBAN AREA

A MODERN AREA WITH CENTURIES OF TRADITION, FACING THE FUTURE

GREEN AND HEALTHY URBAN AREA, SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY AND INTEGRATED AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT

THE URBAN AREA OF NIŠ IS A PLACE OF CROSSING GREAT ROADS AND EXCHANGE OF GREAT IDEAS.

A territory of equal opportunities and quality of life where “merak nema cenu” (meaning “you can’t put a price on true enjoyment”), strong educational potential and creative minds, innovative and encouraging, inclusive and safe environment and haven for young people. The territory of Niš is a mobile and green, clean and orderly, energy-sustainable and ecologically conscious environment. The centre of regional innovative development, advanced technologies and creative industry, but at the same time a centre for research, rehabilitation and promotion of cultural heritage, an area with a centuries-old tradition, modern and future-oriented, which makes it competitive in the global economy.

7.2 THEMATIC OBJECTIVES, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

The starting framework for formulating the goals, specific goals and measures of the urban area strategy (SUP) is the new legislation of the European Commission, which establishes common output and result indicators for the European Fund for Regional Investments (investments in jobs and growth and Interreg) and the European Cohesion Fund¹⁰⁶ (EC, 2021). The goals of the new EU Cohesion Policy for the period 2021-2027 are: 1) A more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and ICT regional integration; 2) A greener, more resilient, low-carbon Europe, transitioning to a net-zero carbon economy by promoting the clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investments, circular economy, climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk management and its prevention, and sustainable urban mobility; 3) A more connected Europe by strengthening mobility; 4) A more inclusive Europe with a prominent social component by implementing the EU pillar of social rights, and 5) Europe closer to citizens by encouraging sustainable and integrated development of all types of areas and local initiatives.

The National framework for SUP consists of public policies, which are prepared and adopted in the process of Serbia’s integration into the EU. They are listed chronologically starting from the most recent, namely: Draft Law on the Establishment and Functioning of the Cohesion Policy Management System, 2023¹⁰⁷; Sludge management programme in Serbia from 2023 to

¹⁰⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2021:231:FULL&from=EN>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/vesti/2811/detaljnije/w/0/nacrt-zakona-o-uspostavljanju-i-funkcionisanju-sistema-za-upravljanje-kohezionom-politikom-na-portalu-ekonsultacije/>

2032¹⁰⁸ (Government of RS, 2023); Low-carbon development strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2023 to 2030 with projections until 2050¹⁰⁹; Strategy for young people in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2022 to 2030¹¹⁰ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 9/2023); Strategy of deinstitutionalization and development of social protection services in the community for the period 2022-2026 year¹¹¹ ("Official Gazette of the RS", no. 12/2022); Air protection programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2022 to 2030 with an action plan¹¹² ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 140/2022); Circular economy development programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2024 year¹¹³ ("Official Gazette of RS", no. 137/2022); Waste management programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2031 year¹¹⁴ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 12/2022); Programme of adaptation to changed climatic conditions with Action Plan, Draft¹¹⁵; Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035, Draft¹¹⁶; Strategic priorities for the development of the culture of the Republic of Serbia from 2021-2025 year¹¹⁷ (Ministry of Culture and Information of the RS, 2021); Integrated national energy and climate plan of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021 to 2030 with a vision until 2050¹¹⁸; Strategy for the development of information society and information security in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026¹¹⁹ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 86/2021); Strategy of scientific and technological development of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2025 "Power of knowledge"¹²⁰ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 10/2021); Strategy for the development of the startup ecosystem of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2025¹²¹ ("Official Gazette of RS", number 125/2021); Industrial policy strategy of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2030¹²² ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 35/2020); Employment strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026¹²³ ("Official Gazette of RS", no. 18/2021, 36/2021); Strategy for the development of education and upbringing in Serbia until 2030¹²⁴ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 107/2021); Strategy of smart specialisation in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2027. year¹²⁵ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 21/2020); Strategy of sustainable urban development of the Republic of Serbia until 2030¹²⁶ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 47/2019); Artificial intelligence development strategy in the Republic of Serbia for

108 <https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/vesti/prvi-put-usvojen-vazan-planski-dokument-%E2%80%93-program-upravljanja-muljem-u-republici-srbiji>

<https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/735156/usvojen-program-upravljanja-muljem-u-srbiji-od-2023-do-2032-godine.php>

109 <https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/saopstenja/vesti/vlada-republike-srbije-usvojila-strategiju-niskougljenicnog-razvoja-do-2030-godine>

110 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2023/9/1/reg>

111 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2022/12/1>

112 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/drugiakt/2022/140/1>

113 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/drugiakt/2022/137/1>

114 http://demo.paragraf.rs/demo/combined/Old/t/t2022_02/SG_012_2022_010.htm

115 <https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/informacije-od-javnog-znacaja/javne-rasprave/javni-poziv-za-ucescje-javnosti-u-procesu-konsultacija-u-vezi-sa-izradom-programa-prilagodjavanja-na-izmenjene-klimatske-uslove-sa-akcionim-planom-0>

116 <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/sites/default/files/PPRS%20Nacrt.pdf>

117 <https://www.kultura.gov.rs/extfile/sr/6132/Strate%C5%A1ki%20prioriteti%20razvoja%20kulture.pdf>

118 <https://www.mre.gov.rs/dokumenta/strateska-dokumenta/integrisani-nacionalni-energetski-i-klimatski-plan-republike-srbije-za-period-2021-do-2030-sa-vizijom-do-2050-godine>

119 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/86/1/reg>

120 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/10/1/reg>

121 http://demo.paragraf.rs/demo/combined/Old/t/t2021_12/SG_125_2021_011.htm

122 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2020/35/1/reg>

123 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/ispravka/2021/36/1>

124 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/63/1/reg>

125 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/10/1/reg>

126 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2019/47/1/reg>

the period 2020-2025. year¹²⁷ ("Fig. Gazette of the RS", no. 96/2019); Public health strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2026 year¹²⁸ ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 61/2018); Tourism development strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2025¹²⁹ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 98/2016); Strategy of agriculture and rural development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2024 year¹³⁰ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 85/2014); Strategy for supporting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, entrepreneurship and competitiveness for the period from 2015 to 2020¹³¹ ("Official Gazette of RS", number 35/15).

By harmonising the objectives and measures from the EU and national policies, a framework for sustainable and integrated territorial development of urban areas was formulated, which consists of the following objectives:

- 1) Strengthening the urban identity and renewal of the urban area by encouraging sustainable and integrated development;
- 2) Promoting the transition to clean and fair energy, green and blue investments, climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility;
- 3) Promoting innovative and smart economic transformation, circular and low-carbon economy and ICT integration;
- 4) Improvement of social wellbeing, i
- 5) Improvement of urban development governance.

The "localization" of objectives, specific objectives and measures was checked for each territory and adapted to the local context. It took place through workshops with local actors - members of working groups and strategy councils, as well as in public forums with citizens. After the cycle of checks on individual strategies, the next iteration was carried out where the proposals were sublimated and the specificities of local territories, problems, needs, project proposals were considered, and where the final correction of specific objectives and measures was made. The following text presents the objectives, specific objectives and measures for the urban area.

Table 5: Thematic objectives, specific objectives and measures

Explanation of abbreviations used: O – objective, SO – specific objective, M – measure

O 1. Strengthening the urban identity and renewal of the urban area by encouraging sustainable and integrated development
SO 1.1 Improved and uniform quality of arrangement and accessibility of the urban area
M 1.1.1 Development, renovation and regeneration of underutilised buildings, zones and units (unused, unequipped, unresolved property and legal relations), including the revitalization of brownfield sites
M 1.1.2 Urban regeneration of parts of the settlement that are exposed to devastating processes, including the consequences of climate change (flooding, heat islands, etc.)

127 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2019/96/1/reg>

128 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2018/61/1/reg>

129 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2016/98/1>

130 <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2014/85/1>

131 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2015/35/1/reg>

M 1.1.3 Arrangement, preservation and connection of public spaces (surfaces and buildings) in accordance with the concept of accessibility and safety
M 1.1.4 Establishing measures to improve management and maintenance, and raising the culture of housing in residential communities (multi-apartment buildings)
M 1.1.5 Improving security in urban settlements
SO 1.2 Encouraging the protection of cultural and architectural heritage
M 1.2.1 Active protection of cultural heritage and recommendations for the character and intensity of acceptable activities in urban development planning
M 1.2.2 Restoration and protection of architectural and urban heritage objects that are not protected cultural assets (traditional types, vernacular architecture, industrial buildings, architecture and urban planning after World War II, etc.)
M 1.2.3 Preservation of cultural landscape diversity
SO 1.3 Encouraging the development of sustainable tourism
M 1.3.1 Diversification of the tourist offer based on the identity of the urban area with the sustainable use of natural and cultural assets, their more effective and comprehensive protection, and mitigation of the negative impacts of tourism
M 1.3.2 Improvement of various forms of tourism in the urban area: sports, gastronomic, cultural, congress, lake, adventure, rural, event, etc.
SO 1.4 Encouraging an integrated and sustainable approach in remediation of illegal construction and its prevention
M 1.4.1 Prevention of uncontrolled expansion of construction land at the expense of agricultural, forest and water land
M 1.4.2 Rehabilitation and renovation of existing substandard or unorganised residential areas and units through their infrastructural equipment, construction of public facilities and improvement of the quality of public spaces
M 1.4.3 Removal of illegal structures in zones under protection regimes (sanitary protection of sources of drinking water, floodplains, wetlands, protected cultural and natural assets...)
SO 1.5 Strengthening and improving the management of urban-rural connections
M 1.5.1 Development of public service services, traffic and technical infrastructure, suburban public transport (bus and railway) and communal activities in the urban area
M 1.5.2 Identification projects and monitoring programmes of ecosystem services that rural areas provide to urban settlements
M 1.5.3 Renovation of underutilised buildings (in different forms of ownership) in rural areas and their conversion into multifunctional centres, tourism facilities, art/craft communities - colonies, social housing, sports, etc.

O 2. Promoting the transition to clean and fair energy, green and blue investments, climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility

SO 2.1 Improvement of energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

M 2.1.1 Establishing sustainable energy (using energy efficiency measures, using renewable energy sources and applying norms and innovative materials for environmental protection and reducing harmful effects on the climate)

SO 2.2 Encouraging the use of Renewable energy sources

M 2.2.1 Integration of the use of renewable energy sources (electrical and thermal energy)
M 2.2.2 Provision of incentives for the installation and use of the O.I.E. system. (renewable energy sources)
M 2.2.3 Programme of general information and education about O.I.E.
M 2.2.4 Increasing the participation of civil society organisations in raising awareness of O.I.E.
M 2.2.5 Research, mapping and use of geothermal energy sources in accordance with planning documents
SO 2.3 Development of smart energy systems, networks and storage
M 2.3.1 Smart networks, advanced systems for energy storage and distribution, energy efficiency monitoring, development of smart cities, energy-efficient lighting, sustainable biomass production, etc.
SO 2.4 Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk prevention, strengthening resilience to climate change, taking into account an ecosystem-based approach
M 2.4.1 New or improved systems for risk monitoring, preparedness, warning and response to natural disasters
M 2.4.2 Protection measures against natural disasters related to climate change (except floods and forest fires)
M 2.4.3 Protection against flooding by external waters (rivers and lakes)
M 2.4.4 Newly built or reinforced protection against landslides and landslides
M 2.4.5 Built or improved green infrastructure to adapt to climate change
M 2.4.6 Protection measures against forest fires
SO 2.5 Ensuring equal access to sanitation and water supply and promoting sustainable water management
M 2.5.1 New or improved systems to improve the quality of drinking water delivered to consumers in public water systems
M 2.5.2 New or improved public distribution water systems
M 2.5.3 New or improved public sewage collection systems
M 2.5.4 New or improved capacities for wastewater treatment and sewage sludge treatment
M 2.5.5 New or improved stormwater flood protection systems, including rainwater harvesting systems
SO 2.6 Improvement of waste management
M 2.6.1 Improvement of the municipal waste management system in accordance with the Law
M 2.6.2 Establishment of a hazardous waste management system in accordance with the Law
M 2.6.3 Primary waste selection and support for incentive measures for households and the economy in urban areas
SO 2.7. Strengthening the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, and reducing all forms of pollution
M 2.7.1 Green and blue infrastructure
M 2.7.2 Identification of areas in preparation for NATURA 2000 networks and protection measures
M 2.7.3 Identification of geo-heritage and protection measures
M 2.7.4 Reclaimed land (for green areas, housing support, economic or other purposes)
M 2.7.5 Areas covered by the installation of air quality monitoring systems

M 2.7.6 Areas covered by the protection against major chemical accidents and the limitation of the consequences of those accidents on human health and the environment through the control of the Seveso plant/complex
M 2.7.7 Improvement of the monitoring system and databases on air, water and soil quality
SO 2.8 Encouraging sustainable multimodal urban mobility
M 2.8.1 New lines of rail systems
M 2.8.2 Environmentally acceptable vehicles for collective public transport
M 2.8.3 Infrastructure intended for bicycle traffic
M 2.8.4 Infrastructure intended for pedestrian movement (pedestrian zones, sidewalks, footpaths)
M 2.8.5 Infrastructure for the supply of alternative fuels
M 2.8.6 A new or modernised digitised urban transport system
M 2.8.7 Improvement of the car-sharing parking system
M 2.8.8 Establishing the infrastructure for the park-and-ride system with public transport (park and ride)
SO 2.9 Development of a smart, safe, sustainable and multimodal transport network of international and national importance that is resistant to climate change
M 2.9.1 Inclusion of population impact assessment in technical and planning documentation
M 2.9.2 Harmonisation of spatial and urban planning documents at the level of LSGs and urban areas with the development of the traffic network of international and national significance
SO 2.10 Development and strengthening of sustainable, smart and multimodal national, regional and local mobility that is resilient to climate change, including better access to the transport network of international and national importance and cross-border mobility
M 2.10.1 Improvement of the road network and road traffic
M 2.10.2 Improvement of the road traffic management system
M 2.10.3 Improvement of the railway network and railway traffic
M 2.10.4 New and modernised multimodal connections

O 3. Promoting innovative and smart economic transformation, circular and low-carbon economy and ICT integration

SO 3.1 Development and strengthening of research and innovation capacities and application of advanced technologies

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| M 3.1.1 Support for businesses and job creation, strengthening of innovation capacities and application of advanced technologies in micro, small, medium and large enterprises |
| M 3.1.2 Support to researchers and scientific research organisations participating in joint research projects that have applications in the economy and public sector |
| M 3.1.3 Increasing the number and support of companies cooperating with scientific research organisations |
| M 3.1.4 Encouraging interregional investment for innovation |
| M 3.1.5 Development and strengthening of the network for the promotion and development of the start-up innovation ecosystem and technological entrepreneurship |
| M 3.1.6 Strengthening organisations for business support in the development of innovative and technological entrepreneurship |

SO 3.2 Using the advantages of digitization for citizens, businesses, research institutions and public administration bodies
M 3.2.1 Improving citizens' digital knowledge and skills, raising the capacity of employees in the public and private sector to use new technologies and improving digital infrastructure in educational institutions
M 3.2.2 Digitization of services and business in the public and private sector
M 3.2.3 Improvement of information security of citizens, public administration and economy
SO 3.3 Strengthening sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation
M 3.3.1 Improved operations and development of SMEs, improved business infrastructure, strengthening of innovation and stimulation of business association and creation of value chains
M 3.3.2 Integrated programme of economic development and smart specialisation of the urban area (competitiveness, start-up, technology transfer, value and supply chains, sustainable/organic agriculture)
SO 3.4. Development of competences for smart specialisation 4S, industrial transition and entrepreneurship, within the quadruple spiral of innovation (economy, education, science, public and civil sector - institutional participants)
M 3.4.1 Developing the competences of SMEs and institutional participants oriented towards innovation and entrepreneurship
M 3.4.2 Participation of SMEs and institutional participants in competitive calls
M 3.4.3 Connecting to a platform for the promotion of services, technologies and products in the areas of digital, innovative and creative activities
SO 3.5 Strengthening digital connectivity
M 3.5.1 Provision of broadband access with high data transmission capacity
SO 3.6 Encouraging and promoting the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy
M 3.6.1 Education of business entities and connection with other actors in the process of transition to a circular economy
M 3.6.2 Support the creation of regulatory bodies that encourage the transition to a circular economy
M 3.6.3 Financial support, innovative funding models and encouraging investments and circular economy solutions
SO 3.7 Encouraging and promoting the transition to a net zero carbon economy
M 3.7.1 Encouraging investments in low-carbon economy solutions as generators of growth, more efficient use of material resources and energy efficiency

O 4. Improvement of social wellbeing

SO 4.1 Improving the inclusiveness of the labor market and access to quality employment and dignified work and encouraging social entrepreneurship
M 4.1.1 Development of new or modernization of existing employment services and encouragement of social entrepreneurship
SO 4.2. Development of social infrastructure and services and encouragement of social inclusion and social innovation
M 4.2.1 Integrated action for persons at risk of security (vagrants, begging children, victims of violence, migrants, etc.)
M 4.2.2 Construction of day care facilities for disabled and sick children

M 4.2.3 Support for the construction, reconstruction and operation of nursing homes
M 4.2.4 Finding a sustainable solution for continuous funding of geronto housewives in accordance with the real needs of the population (establishment of services)
SO 4.3 Promoting socio-economic inclusion of marginalised communities, low-income households and disadvantaged social groups, including persons with special needs, through integrated action that includes housing and social services
M 4.3.1 Support for the construction of social housing in urban areas
M 4.3.2 Revitalization of abandoned rural households and other facilities for the needs of social housing and housing with support
SO 4.4 Improving equal access to inclusive and quality education services
M 4.4.1 Development of new or modernization of existing child care services for preschool, primary and secondary education
M 4.4.2 Building an adequate network of schools in remote areas of the urban area
M 4.4.3 Support for the development of education according to the needs of the economy
M 4.4.4 Improvement of lifelong education and acquisition of practical skills
SO 4.5 Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering health system resilience
M 4.5.1 Modernization of health infrastructure
M 4.5.2 Improving the system of public health care
M 4.5.3 Development of new or modernization of existing health and social care services
SO 4.6 Ensuring equal access to cultural services, programmes and facilities
M 4.6.1 Development of new or modernization of existing programmes and facilities
M 4.6.2 Development of educational, cultural and informative programmes for children and young people
SO 4.7 Ensuring equal access to sports and recreation services, programmes and facilities
M 4.7.1 Development of new or modernization of existing services and facilities
M 4.7.2 Creating conditions for the availability of recreational sports for all categories of the population
M 4.7.3 Promotion of recreational sports
SO 4.8 Creating a stimulating environment for youth initiatives and activities
M 4.8.1 Designing and organising the offer of programmes and content for the quality use of young people's free time
M 4.8.2 Development of the "Youth Club" model
M 4.8.3 Encouraging young people to volunteer in various fields

O 5. Improvement of urban development governance
SO 5.1 Encouraging development governance at multiple levels - local, national, international, EU, etc.
M 5.1.1 Establishing and strengthening administrative capacities for development governance at local and higher levels
M 5.1.2 Development of local self-government
M 5.1.3 Strengthening public dialogue, more effective implementation of networks, partnerships, programmes and projects of urban development governance at multiple levels in order to improve the quality of work and introduce innovations in accordance with the principles of good management and standards of open administration
M 5.1.4 Strengthening the principle of obligation in the adoption and implementation of mutually harmonised contents of planning documents
M 5.1.5 Management and strengthening of the principle of mandatory content in planning documents
SO 5.2 Encouraging a multi-stakeholder approach - economy, education, science, public and civil sector
M 5.2.1 Application of the quadruple and quintuple helix model of innovation within the knowledge economy (Quadruple and quintuple Helix Model of innovation)
SO 5.3 Encouraging a participatory approach and community-led initiatives involving local actors
M 5.3.1 Raising the awareness of citizens and stakeholders about their right to be included in the decision-making process on urban development through information, consultation and active participation
M 5.3.2 Directing participation towards strengthening social responsibility and balancing public and private interests in decision-making processes
M 5.3.3 Improvement of citizen participation procedures and stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes in accordance with the Decree on the Promulgation of the Law on Confirmation of the Additional Protocol to the European Charter on Local Self-Government on the Right to Participate in the Affairs of Local Authorities ¹³² and standards of open administration
SO 5.4 Encouraging mixing (blending) urban development funding from different types of funding (domestic and international)
M 5.4.1 Support for the use of various sources of funding for the priority areas of the urban area strategy intervention
M 5.4.2 Application of EU Cohesion Policy instruments and others - Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI), Sustainable Urban Development (SUD), Community Led Local Development (CLLD)
SO 5.5 Strengthening the transparency of decision-making at the level of the urban area
M 5.5.1 Development and implementation of digital literacy models intended for specific groups to improve the use of information systems for the needs of development governance
M 5.5.2 Development of information and communication systems for the needs of territorial development governance (monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the urban area strategy)
M 5.5.3 Establishment of registers (registries/records of public property and public goods, brownfield sites, underutilised sites and facilities, mapping of illegal construction, traffic monitoring, water management infrastructure, risk management, etc.)
M 5.5.4 Disclosure of public interest data of importance to local communities in accordance with the standards of open administration
SO 5.6 Encouraging common governance mechanisms
M 5.6.1 Establishment and development of management mechanisms in the areas of: E-administration and informatics, ZOO hygiene, Citizens' Protection Service, Tourism, Smart specialisation, Public transport

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8 PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

8.1 STRATEGIC APPROACH AND SPATIAL DIMENSION

The central zones of cities and urban areas with different degrees of urbanization, in the network of rural settlements and areas of extensive agricultural production and natural landscapes, require increased capacities for the implementation of development policies. The overarching context, which is the framework for this condition, can be broken down into several key aspects. First, the different local contexts and conditions make it extremely difficult to formulate a single approach for policy making in these urban areas¹³³. These areas have a unique territorial capital, so this requires different strategies for conceiving potential directions of sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development.

Second, these areas are predominantly under the influence of national and even supranational policies that are primarily organised by sector. And the understanding of their socio-economic and spatial dynamics and adapted policies are often limited to their main advantages or only sectoral issues: subsidies for industrial restructuring initiatives, investment promotion, preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage, etc.¹³⁴. In the long term, this approach can foster the status quo and hinder flexibility in the implementation of innovative policies.

Finally, a movement advocating greater sensitivity to this diverse range of urban areas has emerged in the last few decades and has encouraged research focused on lagging regions and processes of spatial marginalization. The result has been several attempts to formulate recommendations for alternative policies. This change has led to an increased emphasis on spatial complexity and the application of a tailored approach to directing national and international (e.g. EU) resources to the different characteristics of each place.

In response to criticism of the neglect of the spatial aspect within territorial policies, a new orientation emerged. Place-based approach supports the development of specific locations, adapting interventions and investments to unique spatial contexts with the intention of releasing their underutilised potential. This approach accelerated a significant transition towards a strategically oriented attitude, with additional emphasis on participatory processes and extensive engagement of various actors. The approach is based on a clear understanding of different contexts, their vulnerabilities or their unique complexities, and implies a more comprehensive strategic orientation in shaping development policies. In this sense, two dimensions are important: the importance of the geographical context and the key role of actors' knowledge in the creation of spatial initiatives.

First, planning urban areas requires a thorough understanding of local characteristics and adapting strategies to local resources and capacities. This implies looking at the appropriate

¹³³ It is interesting that large cities tend to collect opportunities and challenges that are closer to each other than to the environment. This is reflected in the similarities between internationally propagated urban policies and the dissemination of best practices through academic and political networks. In contrast, a series of natural, geographical, socio-cultural and economic circumstances, along with functional relationships and local administrative competences, depict urban areas with a low degree of urbanization as a kaleidoscope of characteristic places and situations.

¹³⁴ Although these are necessary pillars of support, this operational framework does not provide consistent visions capable of facing contemporary challenges and countering the prevailing trends of underdevelopment that have affected Europe in recent decades. Furthermore, the sectoral distribution of funds usually takes place through established subsidy mechanisms, which can foster a reciprocal dynamic for the electoral support of current local elites.

territory, with appropriate spatial coverage, to create a critical mass and effectively mobilise resources in a coherent manner.

Second, the knowledge of actors is crucial in shaping the structure and implementation of territorial policies. Given that no level of management possesses all the necessary knowledge for effective action, the interaction between different administrative entities and actors becomes the most important. Knowledge is exchanged in numerous dialogue spaces of local communities, and this knowledge, rooted in everyday activities, is an invaluable resource.

These dimensions find their way to effective expression through a strategic approach, which serves as an operational framework for better utilising the potential of urban areas by adopting a “challenge-oriented” mindset. This approach includes the formulation of transformative processes within public action, together with the definition of relevant socio-spatial objectives that can be achieved within a limited time frame, all based on social agreement and activities that unite the efforts and resources of stakeholders.

This approach must be inherently pragmatic. A strategy cannot solve all development issues at once, and while it is crucial to strategically address selected problems, it should also aim to create an effective learning environment and testing ground for refining and evaluating vision and objectives. Accepting the strategy implies monitoring the decision-making process and the operational process, in which tangible actions and projects arise from a common spatial vision of the urban area. This process is created through the interaction of different actors.

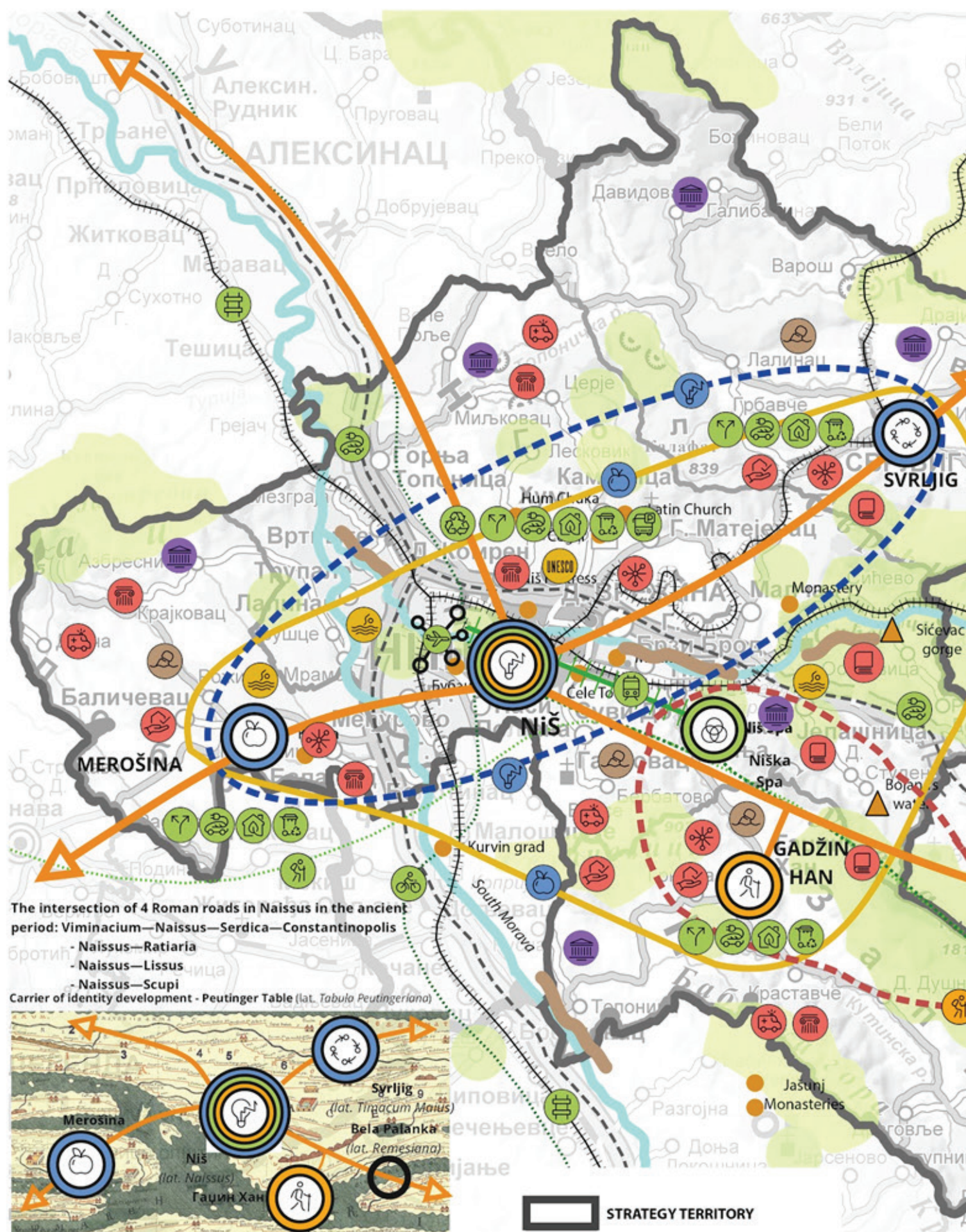
Based on the above approach, the following are graphical representations:

- priority areas of intervention (development generators, intervention areas, development routes and hubs, protection and development zones, development points and networks) and
- strategic projects (according to thematic objectives), which were reached through the participatory process of creating a territorial strategy.

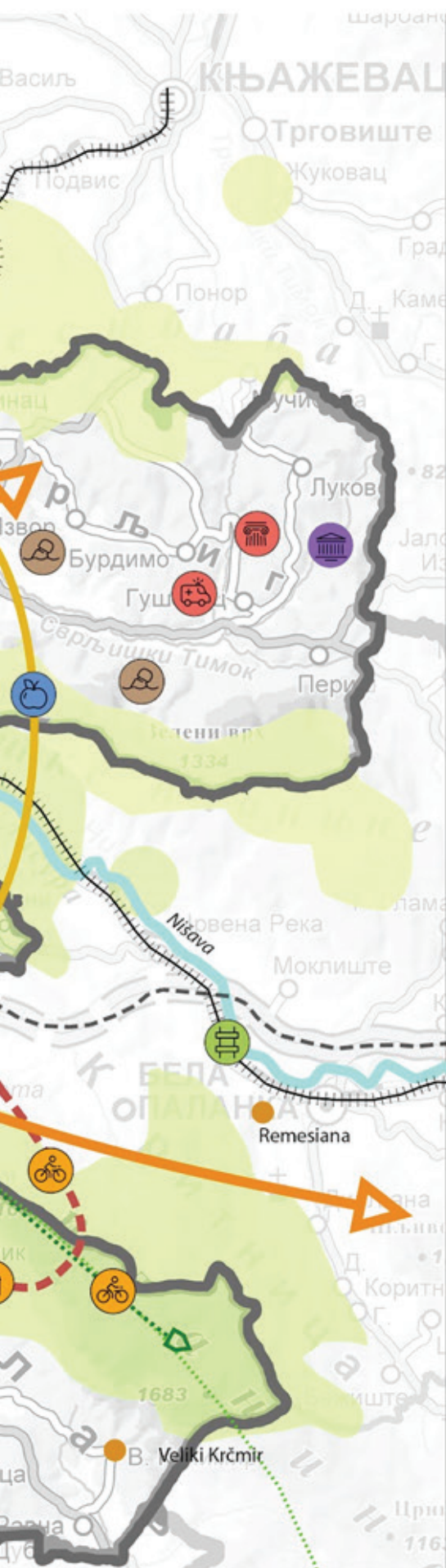
8.2 PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION - GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

TERRITORIAL STRATEGY OF NIŠ AND SVRLJIG, MEROŠINA AND GADŽIN HAN

PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION



URBAN AREA



DEVELOPMENT GENERATORS

Niš: centre for connecting educational institutions with the economic sector, start-up, technology transfer, value and supply chains, ECO industrial park, green tech. and mobility, digital transformation, rehabilitation of cultural heritage

SVRLJIG - centre of rural tourism, free trade zone, industrial zone, recycling centre

MEROŠINA - regional centre for agricultural development

GADŽIN HAN - centre of eco-tourism

NIŠKA SPA - rehabilitation centre for the treatment of rheumatism and cardiovascular diseases and tourism

PRIORITY AREAS

Carrier of identity development - Peutinger Table
(lat. Tabula Peutingeriana) revitalization of the Roman heritage

Smart specialization zone: Information and communication technologies, development of advanced technology zones: Innovation District Niš, formation of start-up centres in other parts of the Urban Area and

Distribution/logistics centre - "Wholesale market": association of agricultural producers and purchase, freezing, packaging, processing and product placement with the use of the most modern technical and IT solutions for packaging and communication according to the principle "from field to the table" - value chains

Zone of sustainable and eco-tourism: cultural, adrenaline, manifestation, religious, congress and promotion of gastronomic and rural tourism and products from the region - "House of the South", branding of agricultural products and education in the field of rural tourism

Sport zone, rehabilitation and health tourism
Niška Spa - Gadžin Han - Dry Mountain (Suva Planina)

PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT ZONES

green infrastructure: zones and individual locations

blue infrastructure

regulation of the river Nišava and its tributaries, Svrlijski Timok, greening and afforestation of flood-prone areas

areas threatened by illegal dumping (rural areas)

DEVELOPMENT ROUTES AND HUB

state road of the IA order

main and regional railway

E7 pedestrian corridors

EURO VELO 11 cycling route

tram Airport - Niš - Niška Spa
land restoration of the old railway corridor

cycling route Nis - Gadžin Han - Dry Mountain

Multi-modal node: Konstantin Veliki airport - IA state road - main railway, Airport city: free zone, EXPO

DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

Landmarks and National Cultural Heritage of great / extraordinary importance

Revitalization of the World Heritage Fortress and the early Christian necropolis of Jagodin mala

Arrangement of picnic areas along the river banks (Nišava, South Morava) and lakes (Oblačinsko)

Integration of city and intercity public transport (railway, buses) and bicycle paths in the entire Urban Area

Park & ride and car sharing

Regional landfill with incinerator and ECO industrial park Niš

Recycling yards/collection centres for household hazardous waste

Waste water treatment plant from the landfill in Niš

Infrastructure for electric vehicles

Energy efficiency of buildings, green roofs and solar panels

Revitalization of underutilized buildings and conversion into multifunctional and cultural facilities, creative industries, galleries

Clinics in remote parts of Urban Areas and rural areas

Social infrastructure - nursing homes

Network of schools for children's stay in nature / camps for school children

Day care facilities for children with disabilities

Development of local self-government: cooperatives and cultural centres - rural areas

8.3 LIST OF STRATEGIC PROJECTS

8.3.1 Identity of the urban area

1. Revitalization of brownfield locations (MIN, Elektronska industrija, Vulkan, Krka) and land restoration
2. Urban regeneration of a brownfield site and restoration of the land of the old railway corridor
3. Active protection of cultural heritage - "Tabula Peutingeriana"
4. Promotion of rural tourism - "House of the South" (products from the region, education in the field of rural tourism, branding of agricultural products and quality control)
5. Revitalization and promotion of architectural and urban heritage buildings that are not protected cultural assets
6. Improvement of existing and creation of new inclusive and safe public spaces

8.3.2 Green and energy transition and urban mobility

1. Improvement of the water supply system in the urban area
2. Improvement of environmental quality monitoring
3. Establishing a regional waste management system
4. Integration of all modes of transport (along with the formation of a suburban railway, the introduction of a tram from Niška banja to the airport and the Niš-Svrljig tourist train) and the introduction of a single transport ticket
5. Multimodal cargo centre
6. Construction of a traffic ring and a green protective zone around Nis
7. Gasification of residential areas in the outskirts of Niš and other urban centres and the retirement of individual firebox
8. Integrated regional approach related to adaptation to climate changes "PIKU"

8.3.3 Innovative and smart economy

1. Utilization of innovations - development of advanced technology zones (Innovation District Niš and construction/introduction of start-up centres in other parts of the urban area)
2. Regional Centre for Circular Economy and Eco Park (research and development of innovations in the field of alternative energy sources)
3. Distribution/logistics centre "Veletžnica" (association of agricultural producers and purchase, freezing, packaging, processing and placement with the use of the most modern technical solutions and IT solutions for packaging and communication according to the principle "from field to table" - value chains)
4. Tourist packages for gastronomic, religious, cultural and adrenaline tourism

8.3.4 Social wellbeing

1. Increasing the availability of educational and cultural content through the revitalization and conversion of existing public facilities in rural areas
2. Improvement and development of social infrastructure and services for the elderly (innovative and inclusive services)
3. Providing equal availability of health care services in distant zones of the urban area
4. Construction of the General Hospital in Niš
5. Promotion of healthy lifestyles through networking and improvement of existing public spaces and institutions
6. Construction of housing facilities with support and affordable housing

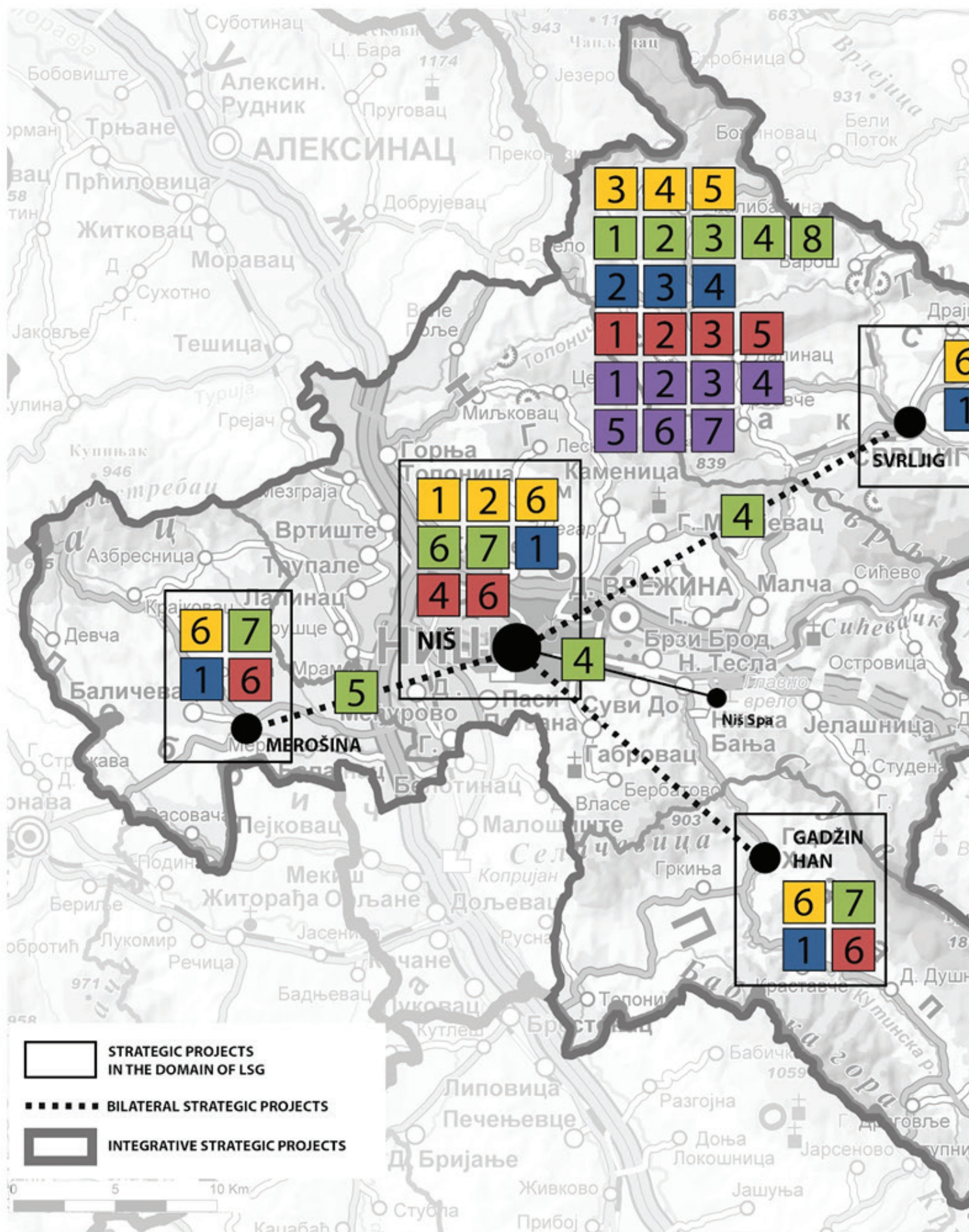
8.3.5 Urban and territorial development governance

1. Improving the capacity for managing integrated territorial investments, including the establishing of a project coordination unit
2. Establishment of Regional GIS (cadastre of public property, underused and neglected sites, brownfield sites)
3. Improving the capacity of local actors and developing practical tools for managing and monitoring territorial investments and developing Smart City functions
4. Training to encourage the utilization of a multi-stakeholder approach - economy, education, science, public and civil sector (Quadruple and Quintuple Helix Model of innovation)
5. Establishment of the Regional Tourist Organization
6. Establishment of the Regional Housing Agency
7. Increasing the participation of citizens in the decision-making process through the processes of “co-creation”

8.4 STRATEGIC PROJECTS - GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

TERRITORIAL STRATEGY OF NIŠ AND SVRLJIG, MEROŠINA AND GADŽIN HAN URBAN AREA

STRATEGIC PROJECTS





URBAN AREA IDENTITY

- 1 Revitalization of brownfield locations (MIN, Elektronska industrija, Vulkan, Krka) and land restoration
- 2 Urban regeneration of the brownfield site and land restoration of the old railway corridor
- 3 Active protection of cultural heritage - "Tabula Pointigerana"
- 4 Promotion of rural tourism - "House of the South" (products from the region, education in the field of rural tourism, branding of agricultural products and quality control)
- 5 Revitalization and promotion of architectural and urban heritage buildings that are not protected cultural assets
- 6 Improvement of existing and creation of new inclusive and safe public spaces

GREEN AND ENERGY TRANSITION AND URBAN MOBILITY

- 1 Improvement of the water supply system in the urban area
- 2 Improvement of environmental quality monitoring
- 3 Establishment a Regional waste management system
- 4 Integration of all modes of transport (along with the formation of a suburban railway, the introduction of a tram from Niš Spa to the airport and the Niš-Svrljig tourist train) and introduction of a single transport ticket
- 5 Multimodal cargo center (establishment)
- 6 Construction of a traffic ring and a green protective zone around Niš
- 7 Gasification of residential areas in the outskirts of Niš and other urban centers and retirement of individual firebox
- 8 Integrated regional approach related to adaptation to climate changes

INNOVATIVE AND SMART ECONOMY

- 1 Utilization of innovations - development of advanced technology zones (Innovation District Niš and construction/introduction of start-up centres in other parts of the urban area)
- 2 Regional Center for Circular Economy and Eco Park (research and development of innovations in the field of alternative energy sources)
- 3 Distribution/logistics centre "Veletržnica" (association of agricultural producers and purchase, freezing, packaging, processing and placement of products with the use of the most modern technical solutions and IT solutions for packaging and communication according to the principle "From field to table" - values chains)
- 4 Tourist packages for gastronomic, religious, cultural and adrenaline tourism

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

- 1 Increasing the availability of educational and cultural content through the revitalization and conversion of existing public facilities in rural areas
- 2 Improvement and development of social infrastructure and services for the elderly (innovative and inclusive services)
- 3 Providing equal availability of health care services in distant zones of the urban area
- 4 Construction of the General Hospital in Niš
- 5 Promotion of healthy lifestyles through networking and improvement of existing public spaces and institutions
- 6 Construction of housing facilities with support and affordable housing

URBAN/TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

- 1 Improving the capacity for managing integrated territorial investments, including the establishing of a project coordination unit
- 2 Establishment of Regional GIS (cadastre of public property, underused and neglected sites, brownfield sites)
- 3 Improving the capacity of local actors and developing practical tools for managing and monitoring territorial investments and developing Smart City functions
- 4 Training to encourage the utilization of a multi-stakeholder approach - economy, education, science, public and civil sector (Quadruple and Quintuple Helix Model of innovation)
- 5 Establishment of the Regional Tourist Organization
- 6 Establishment of the Regional Housing Agency
- 7 Increasing the participation of citizens in the decision-making process through the processes of "co-creation"

9 SOURCES OF FUNDING

Urban and territorial development requires significant financial resources for project implementation. Currently available financial resources in LSGs in the Republic of Serbia (RS) are only sufficient to cover smaller projects. The situation regarding the possibility of developing long-term investment projects (Strategy of Sustainable Urban Development of the Republic of Serbia until 2030) is slowly changing, as evidenced by the data in the following text.

On the basis of concluded bilateral and multilateral international framework agreements on development cooperation and agreements on the implementation of various instruments and programmes financed from international development aid funds, LSGs in the RS have at their disposal funds from various national and international funds that finance the implementation of strategic reforms in the process accession to the EU and their socio-economic development.

Domestic sources of funding are: funds, agencies, commercial banks, projects, programmes of various ministries, budgets of LSGs, own funds of activity holders (companies), funds of interested domestic investors, and loans from investment and commercial banks in the territory of RS.

In particular, the possibility of using funds from the following sources is pointed out:

- Programmes and incentive funds of the ministries of the RS (Ministry of Finance¹³⁵; Ministry of Economy¹³⁶; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management¹³⁷; Ministry of Environmental Protection¹³⁸; Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure¹³⁹; Ministry of Mining and Energy¹⁴⁰; Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade¹⁴¹; Ministry of Justice¹⁴²; Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government¹⁴³; Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue¹⁴⁴; Ministry for European Integration¹⁴⁵; Ministry of Education¹⁴⁶; Ministry of Health¹⁴⁷; Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs¹⁴⁸; Ministry of Family Care and Demography¹⁴⁹; Ministry of Sports¹⁵⁰; Ministry of Culture¹⁵¹; Ministry of Rural Care¹⁵²; Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation¹⁵³; Ministry of Tourism and Youth¹⁵⁴; Ministry of Information and Telecommunications¹⁵⁵; Ministry of Public

135 <https://www.mfin.gov.rs/>

136 <https://privreda.gov.rs/>

137 <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/>

138 <https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/>

139 <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/projekti>

140 <https://www.mre.gov.rs/>

141 <https://must.gov.rs/>

142 <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/>

143 <https://mduls.gov.rs/category/projekti-i-programi/>

144 <https://www.minlmpdd.gov.rs/>

145 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/>

146 <https://prosveta.gov.rs/>

147 <https://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/>

148 <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr>

149 <https://minbpd.gov.rs/>

150 <https://www.mos.gov.rs/>

151 <https://www.kultura.gov.rs/>

152 <https://www.mbs.gov.rs/>

153 <https://nitra.gov.rs/>

154 <https://www.mto.gov.rs/>

155 <https://mit.gov.rs/>

Investments¹⁵⁶; The cabinet of the minister without portfolio in charge of improving the development of underdeveloped municipalities¹⁵⁷; The cabinet of the minister without portfolio responsible for the coordination of activities and measures in the field of relations between the Republic of Serbia and the diaspora¹⁵⁸; Cabinet of the minister without portfolio in charge of balanced regional development¹⁵⁹), their bodies and agencies (Customs Administration; Free Zones Administration; Republic Water Directorate; Forestry Administration; Agricultural Payments Administration; Agricultural Land Administration; National Academy of Public Administration; Development Agency of Serbia¹⁶⁰; Port Management Agency¹⁶¹) and funds (Development Fund of the Republic of Serbia¹⁶²; Fund for innovation activity¹⁶³; Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia¹⁶⁴);

- The local budget, as well as loans from commercial banks (Erste Banka A.D.¹⁶⁵; UniCredit Banka¹⁶⁶; Banca Intesa¹⁶⁷; NLB Komercijalna banka¹⁶⁸; Banka Poštanska štedionica¹⁶⁹; ProCredit banka¹⁷⁰) that operate on the territory of RS.

Foreign sources of funding are: EU funds and programmes, credit lines (credit lines of foreign governments and credit lines of international financial institutions), development and other funds of non-EU countries, projects and funds of interested foreign investors. International development assistance of the RS includes support from bilateral and multilateral development partners, including financial support from international financial institutions, and is provided either in the form of grants or concessional loans, which are approved under significantly better conditions than market ones.

In the coming period, special attention should be paid to the possibilities of mobilizing funds from the following international funds and programmes:

- IPA - Instrument for pre-accession assistance¹⁷¹ (2021-2027; 2014-2020; 2007-2013), Programmes of European territorial cooperation in the Republic of Serbia 2021-2027¹⁷², Investment framework for the Western Balkans¹⁷³ (Western Balkans Investment Framework - WBIF), IPARD III¹⁷⁴, a multi-user IPA¹⁷⁵;

156 <https://www.obnova.gov.rs/>

157 <https://rnro.gov.rs/javni-konkursi/>

158 <https://www.mbpdiijaspora.gov.rs/>

159 <https://rrrz.gov.rs/extfile/sr/472/%D0%88avni%20poziv.pdf>

160 <https://ras.gov.rs/>

161 <https://www.aul.gov.rs/>

162 <https://fondzarazvoj.gov.rs/cir>

163 <http://www.inovacionifond.rs/cir/>

164 <https://fondzanauku.gov.rs/>

165 <https://www.erstebank.rs/sr/Pravna-lica>

166 <https://www.unicreditbank.rs/rs/pi.html>

167 <https://www.bancaintesa.rs/>

168 <https://www.nlbkb.rs/>

169 <https://www.posted.co.rs/>

170 <https://www.procreditbank.rs/>

171 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc-2021-2027/>

172 https://www.mei.gov.rs/upload/documents/publikacije/Brosure%20nove/22/Programi_evropske_teritorijalne_saradnje_u_RS_2021-2027.pdf

173 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/investicioni-okvir-za-zapadni-balkan-western-balkans-investment-framework-wbif/>

174 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/ipard-iii/>

175 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/src/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/visekorisnicka-ipa/>

- EU programmes¹⁷⁶ (Digital Europe¹⁷⁷, HORIZON Europe, SME Competitiveness Programme - COSME, Employment and Social Innovation Program, ERASMUS, Creative Europe, Europe for Citizens, European Health Programme III, FISKALIS 2020, CUSTOMS 2020, EU Civil Protection Mechanism, Connecting Europe Facility, Rights, Equality and Citizenship, European Facility for Democracy and Human Rights);
- Cohesion policy and other EU funds¹⁷⁸ (New Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, MADAD, EU Solidarity Fund, Regional Housing Programme) and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans¹⁷⁹;
- International financial instruments - banks¹⁸⁰ (Council of Europe Development Bank - CEB, European Investment Bank - EIB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - EBRD, World Bank - WB¹⁸¹, German Development Bank - KfW);
- Bilateral and multilateral cooperation, donor programmes (United Nations Team in Serbia¹⁸², German Agency for Technical Cooperation - GIZ¹⁸³, French Development Agency¹⁸⁴, Japan, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, China, Austria, France, Greece, India, Korea, Poland, Singapore, Slovenia, Turkey, Germany, United States of America, Slovakia, United Kingdom, Switzerland, etc.).

Available data on funding sources were collected by searching multiple sources: RS budget, medium-term plans of authorities, data on websites of RS authorities, websites of programmes and projects, and available data on banks' websites. Data on the amount of funding are not publicly available for all sources.

The following table shows the available sources of funding for urban development, a detailed overview of which is given in Annex 4.

176 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/programi-unije/>

177 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/digital-programme>

178 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/koheziona-politika/>

179 <https://balkangreenenergynews.com/rs/usvojeni-akcioni-plan-za-zelenu-agendu-za-zapadni-balkan-donosi-devet-milijardi-evra-grantova-rok-za-uskladjivanje-s-eu-ets-om-2024-godine/>

180 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/bilateralni-i-multilateralni-partneri/po-medjunarodnim-organizacijama/>

181 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/serbia/brief/green-livable-resilient-cities-in-serbia-program>

182 <https://serbia.un.org/sr/about/about-the-un>

183 <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/giz/>

184 <https://rs.ambafrance.org/AFD-4148>

Table 6: Sources of funding (as of July 2023)

N A T I O N A L R E S O U R C E S	NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SOURCES		
	Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Ministry of Environmental Protection; Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure; Ministry of Mining and Energy; Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government; Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue; Ministry for European Integration; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs; Ministry of Family Care and Demography; Ministry of Sports; Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Rural Care; Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation; Ministry of Tourism and Youth; Ministry of Information and Telecommunications; Ministry of Public Investments; The cabinet of the minister without portfolio in charge of improving the development of underdeveloped municipalities; The cabinet of the minister without portfolio responsible for the coordination of activities and measures in the field of relations between the Republic of Serbia and the diaspora; Cabinet of the minister without portfolio in charge of balanced regional development; Customs Administration; Administration for Free Zones; Republic Water Directorate; Forest Directorate; Administration for Agrarian Payments; Administration for Agricultural Land; National Academy for Public Administration; Development Agency of Serbia; Agency for Port Management) and funds (Fund for the Development of the Republic of Serbia; Innovation Fund; Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia		
	BANKS		
	Erste Bank A.D.; UniCredit Bank; Banca Intesa; NLB Komercijalna banka; Bank Poštanska štedionica; ProCredit Bank		
I N T E R N A T I O N A L S O U R C E S	EUROPEAN UNION FUNDS		
	IPA – Instrument for pre-accession assistance	EU programmes	Cohesion policy and other EU funds
	IPA 2021-2027 IPA 2014-2020 IPA 2007-2013) Programmes of European territorial cooperation in the Republic of Serbia 2021-2027 Investment framework for the Western Balkans IPARD III A multi-user IPA	Digital Europe HORIZON Europe SME competitiveness programme – COSME Programme for employment and social innovation ERASMUS Creative Europe Europe for citizens European Health Programme III FISCALIS 2020 CUSTOMS 2020 EU Civil Protection Mechanism An instrument for connecting Europe Rights, equality and citizenship European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights	New cohesion policy 2021-2027 MADAD EU Solidarity Fund Regional housing programme Green Agenda for the Western Balkans
	INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS-BANKS		
	Council of Europe Development Bank - CEB, European Investment Bank - EIB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - EBRD, World Bank - WB, German Development Bank - KfW		
	BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION, DONOR PROGRAMMES		
	United Nations Team in Serbia, German Agency for Technical Cooperation - GIZ, French Development Agency, Japan, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, China, Austria, France, Greece, India, Korea, Poland, Singapore, Slovenia, Turkey, Germany, United States of America, Slovakia, United Kingdom, Switzerland		

The areas of activity for the establishment and operation of high-potential mechanisms for funding urban development at the local management level are:

- increasing available finances - by supporting them to collect funds for investment in urban development through bilateral cooperation, attracting EU and other donor funds (raising);
- management - creating conditions that enable private investment in sustainable urban development - by shaping the market, e.g. through tax mechanisms, other pricing mechanisms and/or supporting sustainable alternatives (steering);
- mixing/combining financial sources - attracting private financial capital using incentives and incentives from public finance to change the risk ratio - return on capital investment, PPP and so-called. “investment vehicle” can play an important role in establishing evidence or conditions for commercial return (blending).

For the area of increasing funds (raising) the local level of administration can support the implementation of the entire scale of high-potential financial instruments intended for urban development in several ways and use the following:

- *Real estate valuation* is a means of funding large development projects that raise the value of real estate. This increase in value can be used as a source of income;
- *Prices, regulation and standards* - they are of particular importance for sectors characterised by smaller amounts of required investment funds and where consumer choices are key investment drivers, such as distributed production from renewable energy sources, electromobility and green construction;
- *International investment vehicle* - international financial instruments also have significant potential for movements in the field of sustainable urban development (raising), and have the potential to mix different sources in case domestic sources have limited capacity;
- *Public-private partnership* - are particularly important because the effectiveness of PPPs largely depends on the appropriate identification of effects, structuring and maturity of projects, contractual arrangements and management capacities.

Examples from the past practice of combining funding sources are given in the following table.

Table 7: Examples from practice of combining funding sources

Priority areas of intervention (Strategy of sustainable urban development of the RS until 2030)	Funding sources used	
	National sources of funding	International sources of funding
Commercial and commercial zones and brownfield sites	Ministry of Economy IPA - competitiveness + RS Government PPP Banks Diaspora	European Investment Bank European Bank for Reconstruction and Development KfW Bank UN SDGs Switzerland, Japan GIZ EU PRO
Uncontrolled elemental expansion of urban settlements and degradation of rural areas	MGSI MDULSU Ministry of Public Investments	European Investment Bank UN SDGs
Endangered urban structures, urban matrices and central urban areas	Ministry of Culture MGSI PPP	Creative Europe European Investment Bank World Bank WB Green fund KfW UN SDGs GIZ/AMBERO EU PRO
Parts of urban settlements with a problem improvement of social standard or solving social problems	RS Housing programme for security forces Ministry of Public Investments	IPA European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Bank of the Council of Europe CEB Regional housing programme UN SDGs SWISS PRO UNOPS
Settlements and parts of settlements exposed to problems environmental protection and climate change	Ministry of Mining and Energy Ministry of Public Investments	IPA European Bank for Reconstruction and Development GIZ + KfW UN SDGs bilateral cooperation
Celine with ICP and architectural heritage, important rappers cultural and historical development of urban settlements, grouping of urban settlements	Ministry of Culture Ministry of Tourism	World heritage foundation Creative Europe IPA cross-border cooperation Transnational cooperation INTERREG ADRION DANUBE UN SDGs EU PRO

10 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a general framework of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the implementation of territorial strategies of the EU PRO Plus programme. Monitoring and evaluation are important elements in the process of implementing territorial strategies and fulfill a number of important functions:

- **Efficiency and effectiveness of strategies:** monitoring generates data and knowledge to track progress and provide a basis for revisions, and helps to evaluate the results of the measures contained in the strategies.
- **Transparency and accountability:** monitoring shows that activities and results follow agreed objectives and makes data transparent to all actors, including local communities.
- **Visibility and capacity:** showing what has been achieved strengthens local mobilization and ownership; engagement in monitoring by local actors affects capacity development and learning.

Successful monitoring depends on the quality and appropriateness of the indicators used. When choosing indicators, some basic principles should be kept in mind. Ideally, the indicators should be:

- **relevant** - closely related to the objectives of the strategy;
- **accepted** - by employees and relevant stakeholders;
- **credible** - for non-experts, unambiguous and easy to interpret;
- **easy** - monitoring is possible with low costs and acceptable administrative burden; and
- **irrefutable** - in relation to manipulation.

The list of indicators below is designed in accordance with the five thematic objectives defined in the EU PRO Plus territorial strategies (table 8). Its purpose is to act as a “menu” for strategy “owners” to select appropriate indicators depending on their choice of objectives. Although indicators cover a wide range of objectives, they cannot capture all locally specific contexts. Thus, each urban area can select additional strategy-specific indicators to be included in the local strategy.

The proposed indicators are based on a number of different international and domestic sources. As far as possible, the indicators are drawn from existing national sources, such as the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia until 2030 (SOURRS), the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2020 until 2027 (SPSRS) and the Low Carbon Development Strategy (SNUR). However, most of the indicators are taken from the list of so-called common output indicators (RCO) and common result indicators (RCR) defined in the context of the EU Cohesion Policy 2021 - 27. They are supplemented by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Table 8: List of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of territorial strategies implementation

Objectives	Indicators	Unit of measure	Sources
Thematic objective 1			
SO 1.1 Improved and uniform quality of arrangement and accessibility of the urban area	- Strategies of integrated territorial development for which support has been received	Number of strategies	RCO 75 RCO 76 SOURRS
	- integrated territorial development projects for which support has been received	Number of contracted projects	RCO 114 RCR 52 SOURRS
	- Newly created or renovated open public spaces in urban areas	m2	
	- Reclaimed land used for green areas, social (affordable) housing, economic or other purposes	m2	
SO 1.2 Encouraging the protection of cultural and architectural heritage and promotion of sustainable construction	- Total funds spent for the protection, preservation and conservation of cultural and architectural heritage and vernacular architecture	Euro	SPRKRS SDG11 SRKRS SOURRS
SO 1.3 Encouraging the development of sustainable tourism and a unified tourist offer	- Visitors to cultural and tourist sites for which support has been received	Number of visitor increase	RCR 77 SRTRS PPRS
SO 1.4 Encouraging an integrated and sustainable approach in remediation of illegal construction and its prevention	- Rehabilitated, renovated and reused substandard or informal settlements and units	ha/m2	SOURRS
SO 1.5 Strengthening and improving the management of urban-rural links	- Integrated territorial development projects for ecosystem services that rural areas provide to urban settlements	Number of projects	RCO 76 SOURRS SPRRRS
Thematic objective 2			
SO 2.1 Improvement of energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	- Annual consumption of primary energy (of which: residential buildings, public buildings, companies, other)	Reduction (MJ)	RCR 26 RCR 29 SNURRS
	- Estimated greenhouse gas emissions	Reduction of t CO2	
SO 2.2 Encouraging the use of renewable energy sources	- Total renewable energy produced (of which: electricity, thermal energy)	MWh	RCR 31 SNURRS
SO 2.3 Development of smart energy systems, networks and storage	-Users connected to smart energy systems	Number of users	RCR 33 SNURRS
SO 2.4 Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk prevention and resilience, strengthening resilience to climate change, taking into account an ecosystem-based approach	- Green infrastructure built or improved to adapt to climate change	ha/m2	RCO 26 PIKUAP SNURRS
	- Population benefiting from flood protection measures	Number of people	

SO 2.5 Ensuring equal access to sanitation and water supply and promoting sustainable water management	- Population connected to an improved public water supply network	Number of households	RCR 41 RCR 35 RCR 42 RCO 25 PPRS
	- Population connected at least to the secondary public network for wastewater treatment	Number of households	
	- Newly built or reinforced flood protection on the banks of rivers and lakes	Length in km/m	
SO 2.6 Improvement of waste management	- Separately collected waste	t	RCR 103 RCR 47 PUORS SNURRS
	- Recycled waste	t	
SO 2.7. Strengthening the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, and reducing all forms of pollution	- Green infrastructure for which support was received in order to protect biodiversity and preserve natural habitats	ha/m2	RCO 36 RCO 37 RCO 38 RCO 39 RCR 50 RCR 95 PPIKUAP PPRS PZVRS
	- The area of the Natura 2000 network covered by protection and restoration measures	ha/m2	
	- Area of restored land for which support was received	ha/m2	
	- Area covered by air pollution monitoring systems	ha/m2	
	- Population benefiting from air quality measures	Number of people	
	- A population that has access to new or improved green infrastructure	Number of people	
SO 2.8 Encouraging sustainable multimodal urban mobility	- Annual number of users of new or modernised public transport - Annual number of users of new or modernised tram lines and (underground) railway lines - Annual number of users of infrastructure intended for cycling	Increasing the number of users	RCR 62 RCR 63 RCR 64 PPRS
SO 2.9 Development of a smart, safe, sustainable and multimodal transport network of international and national importance that is resistant to climate change	- Annual number of users of newly built, renovated, improved or modernised roads	Increasing the number of users	RCR 55 RCR 58 RCR 59 RCR 60 SNURRS PPRS
	- Annual number of users of newly built, improved, renovated or modernised railways	Increasing the number of users	
SO 2.10 Development and strengthening of sustainable, smart and multimodal national, regional and local mobility that is resilient to climate change, including better access to the transport network of international and national importance and cross-border mobility	- Freight rail transport	t	
	- Freight transport by inland waterways	t	

Thematic objective 3			
SO 3.1 Development and strengthening of research and innovation capacities and application of advanced technologies	- Companies that received support (of which: micro, small, medium, large)	Company number	RCO 01 RCR (3)01 RCR 102 SNTRRS SERVIRS SIPRS SRSEERS
	- Jobs created in entities that received support	Number of people	
	- Jobs created in the field of research in the entities that received support	Number of people	
SO 3.2 Using the advantages of digitization for citizens, businesses, research institutions and public administration bodies	- Users of new and improved public digital services, products and processes	Number of users	RCR 11 RCR 12 RCR 13 SRIDIB SNTRRS SERVIRS
	- Users of new and improved digital services, products and processes developed by businesses	Number of users	
	- Companies that have achieved high digital intensity	Company number	
SO 3.3 Strengthening sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation	- New businesses that survive on the market	Number of companies that survive on the market 2 years after opening	RCR 17 RCR 18 RCR 19 RCR 25 SPRMSPPK SIPRS
	- SMEs that use the services of the incubator after the creation of the incubator	Company number	
	- Companies with higher turnover	Company number	
	- SMEs with higher added value per employee	Company number	
SO 3.4. Development of competences for smart specialisation 4S, industrial transition and entrepreneurship, within the quadruple spiral of innovation (economy, education, science, public and civil sector - institutional participants)	- Internships made possible by grants in SMEs - SME staff completing skills training for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship (by skill type: technical, managerial, entrepreneurial, green, other)	Number of people	RCR 97 RCR 98 SPSRs SOURRS SNTRRS SERVIRS SIPRS SRSEERS
SO 3.5 Strengthening digital connectivity	- Residential buildings with a subscription to broadband access to a network of very high capacity	Number of apartments	RCR 53 RCR 54 SRIDIB SNTRRS
	- Businesses with a subscription to broadband access to a very high capacity network	Company number	
SO 3.6 Encouraging and promoting the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy	- Waste used as raw material	Increase (t)	RCR 48 SNURRS PRCERS SIPRS PUMS

SO 3.7 Encouraging and promoting the transition to a net zero carbon economy	- Estimated greenhouse gas emissions	Reduction of t CO2	RCR 29 RCR 105 RCO 59 SNURRS SIPRS
	- Estimated greenhouse gas emissions by boilers and heating systems converted from solid fossil fuels to gas	Reduction of t CO2	
	- Infrastructure for alternative fuels (filling/refueling points)	Number of points	
	- Afforestation	ha/m2	
Thematic objective 4			
SO 4.1 Improving the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the labor market and access to quality employment and dignified work and encouraging social entrepreneurship	- Area of new or modernised facilities for employment services	m2	RCO 61 RCR 65 SZRS
	- Annual number of users of new or modernised facilities for employment services	Number of users	
SO 4.2 Development of social infrastructure and services and encouragement of social inclusion and social innovation	- Annual number of users of new or modernised social protection facilities - The population covered by projects within the framework of integrated action for the socioeconomic inclusion of marginalised communities, low-income households and disadvantaged social groups	Number of users	RCR 74 RCO 113 SDRUSZZ
SO 4.3 Promoting socio-economic inclusion of marginalised communities, low-income households and disadvantaged social groups, including persons with special needs, through integrated action that includes housing and social services	- Annual number of users of new or modernised social housing	Number of households	RCR 67 SOURRS SDRUSZZ
SO 4.4 Improving equal access to inclusive and quality education services	- Annual number of users of new or modernised childcare facilities - Annual number of users of new or modernised educational facilities	Number of users	RCR 70 RCR 71 SROVRS
SO 4.5 Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering health system resilience	- Annual number of users of new or modernised e-healthcare services - Annual number of users of new or modernised health care facilities	Number of users	RCR 72 RCR 73 SJZRS
SO 4.6 Ensuring equal access to cultural services, programmes and facilities	- Annual number of users of new or modernised cultural facilities	Number of users	SRKRS
SO 4.7 Ensuring equal access to sports and recreation services, contents and facilities	- Annual number of users of new or modernised sports and recreation facilities	Number of users	SMRS PPRS

SO 4.8 Creating a stimulating environment for youth initiatives and activities	- Annual number of beneficiaries of new or modernised youth initiatives and activities	Number of users	SMRS
Thematic objective 5			
SO 5.1 Encouraging development governance at multiple levels - local, national, international, EU, etc.	- A project unit was established for the implementation of the Strategy	Yes/no	RCO 75 RCO 76 SOURRS
	- Integrated projects of territorial development that include local, national, international and EU level, and include the application of various management instruments - collaborative, command, hybrid	Number of contracted projects	
SO 5.2 Encouraging a multi-stakeholder approach – economy, education, science, public and civil sector	- Application of the quadruple and quintuple innovation spiral models	Initiative number	SPSRS SOURRS SNTRRS
SO 5.3 Improvement of inter-municipal cooperation through institutional cooperation	- The population covered by projects within the strategy of integrated territorial development	Number of people	RCO 74
SO 5.4 Encouraging a participatory approach and community-led initiatives involving local actors	- Actors who participated in the preparation and implementation of integrated territorial development strategies	Number of participants	RCO 112 RCO 80 ZRR SOURRS
	- Community-led local development strategies for which support has been received	Number of participants	
	- Developed innovative solutions, such as an open innovation platform, a living laboratory, citizen science, etc.	Number of innovative solutions	
	- Application of a gender-responsive approach in the preparation and implementation of strategies	Number of participants	
SO 5.5 Encouraging mixing (blending) urban development funding from different types of funding (domestic and international)	- Application of different sources of funding of priority interventions in urban areas of territorial strategies	Euro	RCO 75 RCO 80 SOURRS
	- Implementation of public-private partnership	Number of PPP projects	
	- Strategies of integrated territorial development for which support has been received - Community-led local development strategies for which support has been received	Number of strategies	
SO 5.6 Strengthening the transparency of decision-making at the level of the urban area	- Development of an information system for the needs of territorial development governance	Number of developed systems	SOURRS SRIDIB

Sources of indicators:

REGULATION (EU) 2021/1058 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund. Official Journal of the European Union L 231/60. Common output and result indicators for ERDF and the Cohesion Fund – Article 8(1)(1)	RCO – common output indicators; RCR – common result indicators
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN	SDG
Law on Gender Equality, 2021	ZRR
Sludge management programme in Serbia from 2023 to 2032	PUMS
Low-carbon development strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2023 to 2030 with projections until 2050	SSNRRS
Strategy for young people in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2022 to 2030	SMRS
Strategy of deinstitutionalization and development of social protection services in the community for the period 2022-2026. year	SDRUSZZ
Air protection programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2022 to 2030 with an action plan	PZVRS
Circular economy development programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2024. year	PRCERS
Waste management programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2031. year	PUORS
Programme of adaptation to changed climatic conditions with Action Plan, Draft.	PPIKUAP
Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035, Draft	PPRS
Strategic priorities for the development of the culture of the Republic of Serbia from 2021-2025. year	SPRKRS
Integrated national energy and climate plan of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021 to 2030 with a vision until 2050	INEKPRS
Strategy for the development of information society and information security in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026.	SRIDIB
Strategy of scientific and technological development of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2025 “Power of knowledge”	SNTRRS
Strategy for the development of the startup ecosystem of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2025	SRSERS
Industrial policy strategy of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2030	SIPRS
Employment strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026	SZRS
Strategy for the development of education and upbringing in Serbia until 2030	SROVS
Strategy of smart specialisation in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2027. year	SPSRS
Strategy of sustainable urban development of the Republic of Serbia until 2030	SOURRS
Artificial intelligence development strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025. year	SERVIRS

Public health strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2026. year	SJZRS
Tourism development strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2025	SRTRS
Strategy of agriculture and rural development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2024. year	SPRRRS
Strategy for supporting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, entrepreneurship and competitiveness for the period from 2015 to 2020	SPRMSPPK

11 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Strategy begins immediately after its adoption. The implementation contains very demanding obligations in terms of management, namely:

- preparation and determination of priority projects,
- preparation and publication of calls for proposals for projects and approval of operations,
- obtaining projects for construction / implementation,
- implementation and closure of projects,
- leading and managing/maintaining projects.

All these functions will certainly lead to the fact that the existing structures and institutions of the City of Niš and the municipalities of Svrlijig, Marošina and Gadžin Han (LSG) will be under pressure (and taking into account the existing capacities), even more, and that there where coordination and establishment of inter-municipal procedures are needed cooperation between several LSGs. At this stage, LSGs do not have adequate capacities, resources and knowledge to effectively perform all the mentioned functions. For this reason, a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) will be established to support LSGs in implementing this Strategy and establishing a systemic change in planning and implementation.

The current management structure for the Strategy development process includes:

- A working group that also acts as a committee of actors and social partnerships,
- The Council for Development, which also acts as a political coordination committee.

The scope of work of the Development Council already covers the political aspects of project selection and the implementation of the Strategy. Therefore, the management of procedures should be added to this scope of work in order to enable the implementation of the Strategy. The working group has the task of supporting the Council during the development of the Strategy and will be dissolved after its adoption. Therefore, the Unit for Project Coordination (that is, the Unit for Project Coordination and Inter-Municipal Cooperation in the case of a wider territory) follows the steps of the Working Group in order to:

- Support to the Council for Development in the project identification process that takes place between various interested parties (Urban Planning Department under the LSG administration, administrative authority/intermediary authority, European Investment Bank EIB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development EBRD, etc.).
- Cross-sector coordination of all necessary studies in order for the project and the business planning process to “mature”, through the involvement of other departments/units of local self-government, as needed. In addition, it provides support for coordination between different local policies - the integrated territorial investment plan and the municipal capital investment program, as well as the LSG development plan, spatial planning documentation and other sectoral strategies, programs and action plans. The project coordination unit will not be directly responsible for planning and programming at the LSG level, but will closely cooperate with the relevant sectors and all other competent authorities. In coordination with the procurement services (budget and

finance department) of the LSG, the PCU will support the effective establishment and approval of contracts with suppliers and consultants on each project, including studies/surveys required for application submission, approval, permits (e.g. impact assessment for life environment and strategic impact assessment, traffic survey, etc.).

- Contract administration, which is the duty of each sector within which the project is implemented (e.g. cleaning and recycling department/company for waste management contracts, etc.). The PCU is involved in coordinating and supporting the administration of service contracts and contracts with different sectors (and consultants).
- Liaising with administrative authorities that issue permits and with consultants during the process of drafting and submitting applications for approval/permits, in order to meet the needs of issuing permits/licenses and obtain the necessary approvals/permits/licenses.
- Support the urban planning authority/department and the administrative authority/intermediary authority in the management of the project fund to prepare the necessary financial and technical documents/studies/expertise for disbursement requests and financial systems. This function should be coordinated with the financial management of the entire LSG.
- Project management, to ensure that the projects meet the planned objectives. The project coordination unit should carry out the following tasks as a minimum: ensure that the projects meet the general objectives of the program (urban planning as well as business planning) and specific key performance indicators determined by the framework of integrated territorial investment policies; coordination of regular meetings to monitor progress at the local and regional level, as well as with financiers and consultants; taking care of the related administrative functions of (EU-funded) project management, from project identification and evaluation to final project completion reports.
- Ensuring an efficient and effective mechanism for strengthening and building capacity to achieve set goals. This capacity building is for the employees of the Project Coordination Unit in some specific areas, who deal with the management and coordination of the Unit's duties. In a broader context, capacity development is also for other relevant parties/actors who are involved in the investment program, and where the need for capacity development is recognised.
- Ensuring that the necessary activities related to PR, publicity and communication are fulfilled, in coordination with and with the support of the communication service and work with the LSG community. These activities should include appropriate communication and engagement with the community (private, public, civil, educational and research sectors), taking into account project planning and implementation, to ensure participation and long-term sustainability of projects.
- Management of the database for monitoring and preparation of all necessary reports for the administrative body/intermediate body. The project coordination unit will be responsible for: monitoring the results of the projects, during their implementation and after completion. The completion of the project is in accordance with the standards of the Republic of Serbia and the EU. Socio-economic impact assessments detailing how the

investment program impacted communities and municipalities in terms of competence development, community involvement, municipal partnerships, local economic and inter-municipal development, and how the quality of life in communities was improved. Conducting such studies is recommended. Facilitating the implementation and support of the necessary studies and expertise (such as assessments of the impact of projects on the population and the environment, i.e. risk assessment studies, etc.).

To that end, the City of Niš has one of the following three options for establishing a Project Coordination Unit:

- a) Establishment of the PCU as a special working group that will use the existing employees, who will be transferred to the PCU. In that case, the PCU will “borrow” human and other resources from the existing LSG administrative units.
- b) Establishment of PCU as a new administrative unit within the LSG structure. In that case, new personnel would be hired to fill the Unit, but existing personnel and resources could be transferred to the new unit. It should be pointed out that there is a great risk due to the outflow of personnel, insufficient number of employees for daily legal obligations, as well as the acquisition of new responsibilities by municipalities in the process of decentralization and entry into the EU.
- c) Establish a PCU in an existing administrative unit whose scope of work could be adapted appropriately, so that it also covers the tasks and functions of the PCU. As in the previous variant, there is a great risk due to the outflow of personnel, insufficient number of employees for daily legal obligations, as well as the acquisition of new competences by municipalities in the process of decentralization and entry into the EU.

In any case, the Project Coordination Unit should have a clear mandate from the mayor and report directly to the mayor’s cabinet. The following personnel are needed as a minimum within the municipality for the functions of the Project Coordination Unit:

- Head of the Project Coordination Unit;
- project manager;
- engineer/expert for project implementation;
- procurement officer;
- financial manager or administrator;
- IT specialist for data collection;
- Community Officer and Liaison and Communications Officer;
- policy and sector coordination officer.¹⁸⁵

After closing the project, the City of Niš should manage and maintain the created elements. In the case of “soft” projects, the local government should consider the implementation of the exit strategy of the project. Normally, this would mean that the existing LSG service would be taken over or a separate unit would be created, or the responsibility would be transferred to a civil society/NGO or RRA, which are institutional mechanisms established by municipalities

¹⁸⁵ This person will facilitate alignment between policies, strategies, projects and funding sources. It would support the Council for the Development of the Urban Area through the work/identification of projects. It would also enable cross-sectoral coordination and coordination of the integrated territorial investment plan and the municipal capital investment plan, in the context of the objectives of the EU cohesion policy.

for inter-municipal cooperation. It is therefore imperative that management and maintenance as well as exit strategies receive due consideration when conducting feasibility studies for any project, and that LSGs use the project implementation period to establish systems and institutions that would ensure the long-term functioning of projects. The project coordination unit would have the responsibility to ensure that the LSG has the resources to fulfill its obligations in relation to the management and maintenance of all capital projects. The Project Coordination Unit will assist directly or indirectly wherever possible in relation to the running and maintenance of the programme.

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13 ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 - DECISIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORIAL STRATEGY



На основу члана 10. и 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 30/2018), члана 13. став 1. 32. став 1. тачка 6) Закона о локалној самоуправи („Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 129/2007, 83/2014 - др.закон, 101/2016 - др.закон, 47/2018, 111/2021 - др.закон), члана 37. став 1. тачка 7) Статута Града Ниша („Службени лист Града Ниша", број 88/2008, 143/2016 и 18/2019) и Меморандума о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, Града Ниша и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, (1606/2022-01 од 26.05.2022 године) којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан

Скупштина Града Ниша на седници одржаној 29.6.2022 године, доноси

ОДЛУКУ

О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША И ОПШТИНА СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЦИН ХАН

Члан 1.

Град Ниш приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан (у даљем тексту: Стратегија).

Члан 2.

Циљ израде Стратегије је допринос одрживом развоју територије заснованом на подстицању: иновативне, паметне, нискоугљеничне и циркуларне економије; прелаза на чисту и праведну енергију, зелених и плавих улагања, ублажавања и прилагођавања климатским променама, спречавања и управљања ризицима, бољег снабдевања водом и управљања отпадом, одрживе и мултимодалне урбане мобилности; јачања социјалне компоненте у домену запошљавања, образовања, социоекономске укључености и интеграције, становања, социјалне и здравствене заштите, јавног здравља, културе, одрживог туризма, социјалних иновација и иновација у области дигиталних технологија; примене интегралног и партиципативног приступа развоју друштва и привреде, развоју предела, културног и градитељског наслеђа, природне баштине, одрживог туризма, и јачању урбано-руралних веза.

Стратегија поставља приоритете одрживог територијалног развоја, доприноси максимизирању вредности финансирања и развијању веза унутар и изван окружења.

Члан 3.

Полазну основу за формулисање Стратегије представљају дефинисани правци одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије и Европске уније и територије урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан, кроз сагледавање европских, националних и локалних развојних докумената и докумената јавних политика, и програма и пројекта који се реализују на територији урбаних подручја.

Члан 4.

Кроз процесе израде Стратегије промовисаће се интегрални и партиципативни приступ планирању развоја, међусекторска сарадња и размена информација, укључивање и координација јавног, приватног, цивилног сектора и научно-истраживачког сектора у процесу одлучивања, и партнерство међу институцијама.

Члан 5.

У циљу израде Стратегије, градоначелник образује Савет за развој урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан (у даљем тексту: Савет) и Радну групу за израду Стратегије (у даљем тексту: Радна група).

Прва седница Савета одржаће се најкасније у року од 30 дана од дана усвајања ове Одлуке.

Републике Србије
ГРАД НИШ
КАНЦЕЛАРИЈА ЗА ЛОКАЛНИ
ЕКОНОМСКИ РАЗВОЈ

01.07.2022

Број	Прилог	Вредност
11	2062	

Члан 6.

Савет чине Градоначелник Града Ниша, председници општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Југ“, док су заменици чланова Савета заменик градоначелника односно заменици председника општина и предложени представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Југ“.

Радом Савета руководи председник Савета, који се бира на првој седници Савета.

Савет доноси Пословник о раду на својој првој седници.

Задатак Савета је да координира и надзире процес израде Стратегије, да разматра Стратегију по фазама припреме, предложено од стране Радне групе, даје мишљење на предложени нацрт Стратегије, прибавља мишљења релевантних институција и упућује коначни нацрт Стратегије на усвајање. Савет координира процес спровођења Стратегије и даје предлог за реализацију одређених стратешких пројеката важних за развој урбаног подручја.

Члан 7.

Радна група има задатак да изради радни текст Стратегије, дефинише кључне циљеве и приоритете развоја и предложи стратешке пројекте Савету.

Координатора и чланове Радне групе именује градоначелник.

Члан 8.

Регионална развојна агенција „Југ“ пружа стручну подршку и административно-техничку помоћ Радној групи током израде Стратегије, која подразумева обезбеђење простора за рад у сарадњи са градским управама и административно-техничку помоћ током израде Стратегије, прикупљање и достављање свих званичних релевантних података и др.

Члан 9.

Током израде Стратегије могу се организовати тематски округли столови, радионице, форуми за стручне и јавне расправе, у чији рад могу бити укључени сви остали заинтересовани учесници, како би се обезбедила партиципација и транспарентност процеса одлучивања и правовремено обавештавање јавности.

Члан 10.

Рок за израду Стратегије је 8 (осам) месеци од дана ступања на снагу ове одлуке.

Члан 11.

Реализација ове одлуке обезбеђује се кроз програм ЕУ ПРО Плус.

За реализацију ове одлуке задужена је Канцеларија за локални економски развој.

Члан 12.

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у "Службеном листу града Ниша".

Број: 06-529/2022-6-02
Датум: 29.6.2022.

СКУПШТИНА ГРАДА НИША

ПРЕДСЕДНИК
др Бобан Цунић

У складу са чланом 12. Закона о планском систему ("Сл. гласник РС", број 30/2018), чланом 13. став 6. и чланом 21. Закона о локалној самоуправи ("Сл. гласник РС", број 129/2007, 83/2014 - др. закон, 101/2016 - др. закон, 47/2018, 111/2021 - др. закон), чланом 20. Закона о територијалној организацији Републике Србије ("Сл. гласник РС", број 129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018 и 9/2020 - др. закон), чланом 33. и 39. Закона о регионалном развоју ("Сл. гласник РС", број 51/2009, 30/2010 и 85/2015 - др. закон), Правилником о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учесника јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката ("Сл. гласник РС", број 51/2019), Стратегијом одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године ("Сл. гласник РС", број 47/2019), Меморандумом о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, града Ниша и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, дана 26.05.2022. године, којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Гаџин Хан и Мeroшина и чланом 40. Статута општине Мeroшина ("Сл. лист Града Ниша", број 23/19 и 13/20)

Скупштина општине Мeroшина на седници одржаној дана 27.06.2022. године, донела је

ОДЛУКУ О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША И ОПШТИНА СВРЉИГ, ГАЏИН ХАН И МЕРОШИНА

Члан 1.

Општина Мeroшина приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Гаџин Хан и Мeroшина

Члан 2.

Под Стратегијом развоја урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Гаџин Хан и Мeroшина (у даљем тексту: Стратегија), у смислу ове Одлуке, подразумева се плански документ развоја, а у складу са правилима Европске Уније¹.

Члан 3.

Циљ израде Стратегије је да допринесе одрживом развоју територије заснованом на подстицању: иновативне, паметне, нискоугљеничне и циркуларне економије; прелаза на чисту и праведну енергију, зелених и плавих улагања, ублажавања и прилагођавања климатским променама, спречавања и управљања ризицима, бољег снабдевања водом и управљања отпадом, одрживе и мултимодалне урбане мобилности; јачања социјалне компоненте у домену запошљавања, образовања, социоекономске укључености и интеграције, становања, социјалне и здравствене заштите, јавног здравља, културе, одрживог туризма, социјалних иновација и иновација у области дигиталних технологија; примене интегралног и партиципативног приступа развоју

¹ Члан 29. Уредбе (ЕУ) 2021/1050 Европског парламента и Већа од 24. јуна 2021. о утврђивању заједничких одређба о Европском фонду за регионални развој, Европском климатском фонду, Кохезионом фонду, Фонду за праведну транзицију и Европском фонду за помоћ малим и средњим предузећима, Финансијском позиву за техничку помоћ и Фонд за азил, миграције и интеграцију, Фонд за унутрашњу безбедност и инструмент за финансијску подршку за подручја управљања границама и визне политике.

друштва и привреде, развоју предела, културног и градитељског наслеђа, природне баштине, одрживог туризма, и јачању урбано-руралних веза. Стратегија поставља приоритете одрживог територијалног развоја, доприноси максимизирању вредности финансирања и развијању веза унутар и изван окружења.

Члан 4.

Полазну основу за формулисање Стратегије представљају дефинисани правни развоја Републике Србије и Европске уније и територије урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Гаџин Хан и Мерошина, кроз сагледавање Европских, националних и локалних развојних докумената и докумената јавних политика, и програма и пројекта који се реализују на територији урбаног подручја.

Члан 5.

Кроз процесе израде Стратегије промовисаће се интегрални и партиципативни приступ планирању развоја, међусекторска сарадња и размена информација, укључивање и координација јавног, приватног, цивилног сектора и научно-истраживачког сектора у процесу одлучивања, и партнерство међу институцијама.

Члан 6.

У циљу спровођења ове одлуке и израде Стратегије, образоваће се Савет за развој урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Гаџин Хан и Мерошина (у даљем тексту: Савет) и Радна група за израду Стратегије (у даљем тексту: Радна група).

Члан 7.

Савет има задатак да координира и надзире процес израде Стратегије, да разматра Стратегију по фазама припреме, предложеном од стране Радне групе, даје мишљење на предложени нацрт, прибавља мишљења релевантних институција и упућује коначни нацрт Стратегије на усвајање. Затим, Савет координира процес спровођења Стратегије и даје предлог за реализацију одређених стратешких пројеката важних за развој урбаног подручја.

Чланови Савета су градоначелница града Ниша и председници општина Сврљиг, Гаџин Хан и Мерошина које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представници регионалне развојне агенције Југ Доо Ниш, док су заменици чланова Савета заменици градоначелника односно председника општина.

Радам Савета руководи председник Савета који се бира на првој седници Савета.

Савет доноси Пословник о раду на првој седници Савета, која ће се одржати најкасније у року од месец дана од дана усвајања ове Одлуке.

Члан 8.

Радна група има задатак да спроведе све фазе у процесу израде Стратегије, дефинише кључне циљеве и приоритете развоја и предложи стратешке пројекте Савету. Чланове и координатора Радне групе именује градоначелник.

На основу члана 10. и 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему („Службени гласник Републике Србије“, број 30/18“) члана 13. став 1. члана 32. став 1. тачка 6. Закона о локалној самоуправи (*Службени гласник РС*, број 129/2007, 83/2014-др.закон, 101/2016-др.закон 47/18,11/2021-др.закон) и члана 40. Статута општине Гаџин Хан („Службени лист града Ниша“, број 10/19 и 101/19)

Скупштина општине Гаџин Хан, на седници одржаној дана 20. септембра 2022. године, донела је

ОДЛУКУ О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША, ОПШТИНЕ СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЏИН ХАН

Члан 1.

Општина Гаџин Хан приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Ниша и општине Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан.

Члан 2.

Циљ израде Стратегије је допринос одрживом развоју територије заснованом на подстицању: иновативне, паметне, нискоугљеничне и циркуларне економије; прелаза на чисту и праведну енергију, зелених и плавих улагања, ублажавања и прилагођавања климатски промена, спречавања и управљања ризицима, бољег снабдевања водом и управљања отпадом, одрживе и мултимодалне урбане мобилности; јачања социјалне компоненте у домену запошљавања, образовања, социоекономске укључености и интеграције, становања, социјалне и здравствене заштите, јавног здравља, културе, одрживог туризма, социјалних иновација и иновација у области дигиталних технологија; примене интегралног и партиципативног приступа развоју друштва и привреде, развоју предела, културног и градитељског наслеђа, природне баштине, одрживог туризма и јачању урбано-руралних веза.

Стратегија поставља приоритете одрживог територијалног развоја, доприноси максимизирању вредности финансирања и развијању веза унутар и изван окружења.

Члан 3.

Полазну основу за формулисање Стратегије представљају дефинисани правци одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије и Европске уније и територије урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан, кроз сагледавање европских, националних и локалних развојних докумената и докумената јавних политика и програма и пројеката који се реализују на територији урбаних подручја.

Члан 4.

Кроз процесе израде Стратегије промовисаће се интегрални и партиципативни приступ планирању развоја, међусекторска сарадња и размена информација, укључивање и координација јавног, приватног, цивилног сектора и научно-истраживачког сектора у процесу одлучивања и партнерство међу институцијама.

Члан 5.

У циљу Стратегије, градоначелник образује Савет за развој урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан (у даљем тексту Савет) и Радну групу за израду Стратегије (у даљем тексту : Радна група). Права седница Савета одржаће се најкасније у року од 30 дана од дана усвајања ове Одлуке.

Члан 6.

Савет чине Градоначелник града Ниша, председници општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Јут“, док су заменици чланова Савета заменик Градоначелника односно заменици председника општина, и предложени представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Јут“.

Радам Савета руководи председник Савета, који се бира на првој седници Савета.

Савет доноси Пословник о раду на својој првој седници.

Задатак Савета је да координира и надзире процес израде Стратегије, да разматра Стратегију по фазама припреме, предложеној од стране Радне групе, даје мишљење на предложени нацрт Стратегије, прибавља мишљење релевантних институција и упућује коначни нацрт Стратегије на усвајање. Савет координира процес спровођења Стратегије и даје предлог за реализацију одређених стратешких пројеката важних за развој урбаног подручја

Члан 7.

Радна група има задатак да изради текст Стратегије, дефинише кључне циљеве и приоритете развоја и предложи стратешке пројекте Савету. Координаторе и чланове Радне групе именује Градоначелник.

Члан 8.

Регионална развојна агенција „Јут“ пружа стручну подршку и административно-техничку помоћ Радној групи током израде Стратегије, која подразумева обезбеђење простора за рад у сарадњи са градским управама и административно-техничку помоћ током израде Стратегије, прикупљање и достављање свих званичних релевантних података и др.

Члан 9.

Током израде Стратегије могу се организовати тематски округли столови, радионице, форуми за стручне и јавне расправе, у чији рад могу бити укључени сви остали заинтересовани учесници, како би се обезбедила партиципација и транспарентност процеса одлучивања и правовремено обавештавање јавности.

Члан 10.

Рок за израду Стратегије је 8 (осам) месеци од дана ступања на снагу ове Одлуке.

Члан 11.

Раализација ове Одлуке обезбеђује се кроз програм ЕУ ПРО Плус.
За реализацију ове Одлуке задужена је Општинска управа општине Гацин Хан.

Члан 12.

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у „Службеном листу града Ниша“.

Број: 06- 350-144 /2022-II
У Гацином Хану, дана 20.септембра 2022.године.

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ ГАЦИН ХАН

ПРЕДСЕДНИК,
Марија Цветковић, с.р.



На основу 10. и 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 30/2018), члана 13. став 1, 32. став 1. тачка 6. Закона о локалној самоуправи ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 129/2007, 83/2014 - др.закон, 101/2016 - др.закон, 47/2018, 111/2021 - др.закон) и члана 40. Статута општине Сврљиг („Сл. лист Града Ниша“ бр. 21/2019), Скупштина општине Сврљиг, на седници одржаној дана 28.06.2022. године, донела је

О Д Л У К У

О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША И ОПШТИНА СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЦИН ХАН

Члан 1.

Општина Сврљиг приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан.

Члан 2.

Циљ израде Стратегије је допринос одрживом развоју територије заснованом на подстицању: иновативне, паметне, нискоугљеничне и циркуларне економије; прелаза на чисту и праведну енергију, зелених и плавих улагања, ублажавања и прилагођавања климатским променама, спречавања и управљања ризицима, бољег снабдевања водом и управљања отпадом, одрживе и мултимодалне урбане мобилности; јачања социјалне компоненте у домену запошљавања, образовања, социоекономске укључености и интеграције, становања, социјалне и здравствене заштите, јавног здравља, културе, одрживог туризма, социјалних иновација и иновација у области дигиталних технологија; примене интегралног и партиципативног приступа развоју друштва и привреде, развоју предела, културног и градитељског наслеђа, природне баштине, одрживог туризма, и јачању урбано-руралних веза.

Стратегија поставља приоритете одрживог територијалног развоја, доприноси максимизирању вредности финансирања и развијању веза унутар и изван окружења.

Члан 3.

Полазну основу за формулисање Стратегије представљају дефинисани правци одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије и Европске уније и територије урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан, кроз сагледавање европских, националних и локалних развојних докумената и докумената јавних политика, и програма и пројекта који се реализују на територији урбаних подручја.

Члан 4.

Кроз процесе израде Стратегије промовисаће се интегрални и партиципативни приступ планирању развоја, међусекторска сарадња и размена информација, укључивање и координација јавног, приватног, цивилног сектора и научно-истраживачког сектора у процесу одлучивања, и партнерство међу институцијама.

Члан 5.

У циљу израде Стратегије, градоначелник образује Савет за развој урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан (у даљем тексту Савет) и Радну групу за израду Стратегије (у даљем тексту: Радна група).

Прва седница Савета одржаће се најкасније у року од 30 дана од дана усвајања ове Одлуке.

Члан 6.

Савет чине Градоначелник Града Ниша, председници општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Југ“, док су заменици чланова Савета заменик Градоначелника односно заменици председника општина, и предложени представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Југ“.

Радам Савета руководи председник Савета, који се бира на првој седници Савета. Савет доноси Пословник о раду на својој првој седници.

Задатак Савета је да координира и надзире процес израде Стратегије, да разматра Стратегију по фазама припреме, предложеној од стране Радне групе, даје мишљење на предложени нацрт Стратегије, прибавља мишљења релевантних интитуција и упућује коначни нацрт Стратегије на усвајање. Савет координира процес спровођења Стратегије и даје предлог за реализацију одређених стратешких пројеката важних за развој урбаног подручја.

Члан 7.

Радна група има задатак да изради радни текст Стратегије, дефинише кључне циљеве и приоритете развоја и предложи стратешке пројекте Савету.

Координатора и чланове Радне групе именује Градоначелник.

Члан 8.

Регионална развојна агенција „Југ“ пружа стручну подршку и административно-техничку помоћ Радној групи током израде Стратегије, која подразумева обезбеђење простора за рад у сарадњи са градским управама и административно-техничку помоћ током израде Стратегије, прикупљање и достављање свих званичних релевантних података и др.

Члан 9.

Током израде Стратегије могу се организовати тематски округли столови, радионице, форуми за стручне и јавне расправе, у чији рад могу бити укључени сви остали заинтересовани учесници, како би се обезбедила партиципација и транспарентност процеса одлучивања и правовремено обавештавање јавности.

Члан 10.

Рок за израду Стратегије је 8 (осам) месеци од дана ступања на снагу ове Одлуке.

Члан 11.

Реализација ове Одлуке обезбеђује се кроз програм ЕУ ПРО ПЛУС.

За реализацију ове Одлуке задужена је Канцеларија за локални економски развој.

Члан 12.

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у "Службеном листу града Ниша".

Број: I 020-24/2022

Датум: 28.06.2022. године

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ СВРЉИГ

ПРЕДСЕДНИК
Михајловић



ANNEX 2 - LIST OF PROJECT IDEAS

O 1. IDENTITY OF THE URBAN AREA	
1.	Revitalization of brownfield sites - Vulkan, Tobacco industry-part, Mechanical industry, Electronic industry (Niš), Krka (Svrljig)
2.	Formation of a complex of cultural objects, a museum, an archive, a gallery at the location of the Konjicka barracks
3.	Activation of the "Vulkan" factory for creative industry and cultural content
4.	Active protection of cultural heritage - "Tabula Peutingeriana"
5.	Arrangement and revitalization of the Fortress and Jagodin mala
6.	Reaffirmation of the archeological site of Mediana, richer offer, new contents, innovative ways of promotion
7.	Formation of the Centre for Research and Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage - institution and facility
8.	River Nišava - arrangement of waters with tributaries
9.	Formation of the Tourist Region and Agency for Southern and Eastern Serbia
10.	Svrljiški Timok - landscaping of the coast and riverbed
11.	"House of the South" - a centre for the promotion of rural tourism, products from the region, education in the field of rural tourism, branding of agricultural products and quality control
12.	Improvement of adrenaline and extreme tourism in the villages of Varoš - Niševac - Kule
13.	Craft House - renovation and reconstruction into a Crafts Centre
14.	Development of golf tourism - courses on Suva planina
15.	Construction of mountain lodges in locations where possible and revitalization of lodges on Bojan's waters
16.	Registration of tourist service providers and renewal and affirmation of tourism in Gadžino Han and Suva Planina
17.	Arrangement of the Prekonoška cave - traffic, interior lighting and ticket office
18.	Promotion and improvement of paragliding in Niška banja
19.	Construction and creation of conditions for camps - connections, infrastructure
20.	Arrangement of picnic areas on the territory of the entire urban area
21.	Arrangement of Oblačina Lake
22.	Renovation of Roma settlements Crvena Zvezda, Jewish Cemetery, Ivan Milutinović
23.	Extension of communal services to rural areas
O 2. GREEN AND ENERGY TRANSITION AND MOBILITY	
24.	Construction of gas pipelines Svrljig, Niš, Merošina and Gadžin Han
25.	Research works on determining the potential for the use of geothermal energy
26.	Construction of a solar power plant and formation of local solar systems - photovoltaic, as an integrated drive of secondary collector plants

27.	Solutions inspired by nature for landscaping the banks of the river Nišava - protection of riverbeds
28.	Afforestation of flood-prone areas
29.	Construction of the regional water supply system for Niš and the surrounding LSGs
30.	Project for the construction and expansion of the water supply and sewerage network
31.	Increasing the efficiency of water supply systems in urban areas
32.	Construction of the water supply network from Doljevac to Gadžin Han (Rusina - Duka - Toponica)
33.	Biodiversity and geo-heritage research project to identify areas for preparation for the NATURA 2000 network
34.	Botanical garden
35.	The new city nursery in Niš
36.	Roof gardens and gardens in neighborhood greenery
37.	Urban beekeeping, urban gardening
38.	Proclamation of Svrljiška planina nature reserve
39.	Improvement of air, water and soil quality monitoring by increasing the number of measuring points
40.	Establishing a database of the soil, water and air information system
41.	An integrated regional approach to waste management
42.	Regional landfill project with waste incinerator and ECO industrial park in Niš
43.	Primary waste selection and support for incentive measures for households and the economy in urban areas
44.	New recycling yards - Svrljig
45.	Workshops for children and adults - Let's teach them to recycle
46.	Centre for the collection of hazardous waste from households
47.	Wastewater treatment plant from the existing landfill in Niš
48.	Solving animal hygiene problems
49.	Asphalting of the road to the Church of St. Archangel Gabriel (Dukat, Gadžin Han)
50.	Reconstruction of the asphalt road to Bojanina vode and other roads to sports and tourist destinations (Suva planina and Svrljiška planina)
51.	Construction of a traffic ring around Niš
52.	Connecting the airport with better road and rail infrastructure
53.	Integrating public city and intercity transport (railway, buses) with bicycle paths
54.	Establishing a mechanism for creating integrated public transport adapted to the needs of vulnerable groups
55.	Establishment of public urban transport in the urban area
56.	Introduction of the intercity line Niš-Svrljig
57.	Construction of a bus station in Niš

58.	Installation of a digital display (totem) with changeable content and information (touch) for passengers at the ten most frequent stops in Niš
59.	The project of marking the Euro velo route through the city of Niš and its surroundings
60.	Networking of existing bicycle paths and construction of new ones in the urban area
61.	Project of bicycle paths along the Nišava quay
62.	Construction of a bicycle path in Svrljig
63.	Installation of totems with cyclist counters on cycle paths
64.	Arrangement of safe parking lots for bicycles
65.	Installing frames for carrying bicycles on public city transport buses
66.	Training and training of goods deliverers - cyclists and moped riders
67.	Improvement of the pedestrian path E7 in the urban area
68.	Project of integrated streets and slow traffic zones
69.	Improving pedestrian safety by introducing smart footpaths
70.	Construction of a pedestrian and bicycle bridge over Nišava
71.	Arrangement of taxi stands with the installation of fast chargers for electric taxi vehicles
72.	Construction of underground garages with parks on the roof
73.	Car-sharing project
74.	Zoning project of the territory of urban settlements for the park-and-ride system (park and ride)
75.	Environmentally friendly vehicle for the transport of communal and fecal waste (Niš)
76.	Cargo centre
77.	Improving the availability of locations of tourist importance in remote parts of the urban area - the frequency of organised transportation
O 3. INNOVATIVE AND SMART ECONOMY	
78.	Integrated programme of economic development of the territory: competitiveness, start-up, technology transfer, value and supply chains, sustainable/organic agriculture
79.	Establishment of an integrated industrial zone on the territory of the partnership
80.	Establishing an innovative regional community for a management mechanism through the NTP
81.	Establishment of a free zone with a goods transport centre
82.	Furnishing of industrial zone B in Svrljig
83.	Construction of duty-free zone in Svrljig
84.	Development of the zone of advanced technologies
85.	EKO industrial park (with shared facilities)
86.	Consolidation of Airport city contents - free zones, congress halls, EXPO, economic zones in the locality near the airport
87.	EXPO I
88.	Formation of the Regional Centre for Agricultural Development

89.	Construction of start-up centres in remote areas of the urban area
90.	Improving the use of e-services in the field of education and child protection
91.	Introduction of the Internet in villages
92.	Multimedia info boards with ticket purchase service (JGP, museum, galleries)
93.	Development of FNT as a platform for connection
94.	Establishment of a grant scheme for the implementation of circular solutions
95.	Support and development of innovative funding models (CROWD funding, accelerators, VC...)
96.	Development of a centre for green tech and mobility
97.	Incentives for green tech solutions and environmental innovations
98.	Education of personnel in tourism for rural tourism (entrepreneurship)
99.	Reaffirmation of Niška Spa as a health and tourist centre
100.	Project for reducing the carbon footprint of buildings and creating green roofs and facades in Niš
O 4. SOCIAL WELLBEING	
101.	Private bureau of the city - mediation in the employment of young people and persons with disabilities
102.	Transformation of the City Housing Agency into a regional agency
103.	Construction of social housing
104.	Completion of facilities for housing young people - university apartments
105.	Revitalization of abandoned rural households for the needs of social housing - housing with support
106.	Revitalization of brownfield sites for social housing (factories, barracks...)
107.	Construction of day care facilities for children with disabilities
108.	Reconstruction and construction of social infrastructure - nursing homes, supported housing
109.	Opening of service in the form of SOS contact, Youth Centre
110.	Establishment of the research station Divljani (Petnica 2.0)
111.	School in the village of Izvor, municipality of Svrljig - Gerontological Centre
112.	Construction of networks of schools in nature - Kamenički vis and Divljana
113.	Revitalization of devastated and formation of new camps for school-age children
114.	Adaptation of the elementary school building in Merošina for the needs of dual education
115.	Reconstruction in the original form of the old school building in Svrljig (100 years old)
116.	Introducing the Personal Companion service in Svrljig, Merošina, Gadžina Han and Niš
117.	Pilot project for improving safety in public space for the most vulnerable parts of the population
118.	Construction of the General Hospital in Niš (turning a military hospital into a general hospital)
119.	Opening of clinics in rural areas in Svrljig
120.	Renovation of the school in the village of Brest, Merošina municipality - Native museum

121.	Renovation of the cinema hall in Svrlijig
122.	Construction of a new Archive - Museum - Gallery complex
123.	The fortress - new facilities for quality leisure time
124.	Revitalization of rural centres of culture
125.	Renovation of the House of Culture in the village of Dukat, municipality of Gadžin Han
126.	Contemporary youth cultural centre
127.	Theater for young people and for young people
128.	Opening a common space for young artists, so-called. "Creative District"
129.	Development of educational, cultural and informative programmes for children of primary school age with children's participation (internet, radio, public service)
130.	Support and promotion of recreational sports
131.	Playgrounds and recreational activities for children of primary school age
132.	Renovation of existing and construction of new sports (public) playgrounds
133.	Construction and arrangement of sports pavilion and skate park in Niš
134.	Availability of free extracurricular activities for children and young people (sports/hobbies)
135.	Construction of sports halls for training
136.	Completion of the sports hall in Svrlijig
137.	Arrangement of the sports centre "Pastiriste" in Svrlijig
138.	Renovation and modernization of the Sports Centre "Chair"
139.	Construction of a multifunctional hall in Niš (conference, sports, performances, etc.)
140.	Bring back the Niša marathon
141.	Construction of the Youth Centre (Teacher's Dorm)
142.	Submission of documentation for one cultural monument on the Tentative List of UNESCO Cultural and Natural Heritage

O 5. URBAN/TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

143.	Reconstruction and commissioning of cooperative homes and cultural centres in rural areas - development of local self-government
144.	Improvement of the existing platform for citizen participation and its adaptation for the urban area and the implementation of the "Innovation Camp" programme as a regular activity for the involvement of all stakeholders in order to generate ideas and innovative solutions related to urban development
145.	Development and implementation of an information system for monitoring the implementation of ITI and other strategies (monitoring and evaluation)
146.	Integrated centralised database of underground infrastructure (water supply, sewerage, telecommunications, gas pipeline, electrical installations) available to everyone in the form of GIS
147.	Development of sectoral development strategies (tourism, social welfare, gender equality, economy)
148.	E registry office in Svrlijig municipality

149.	Introduction and improvement of smart systems in the management of public financial resources and monitoring
150.	Mapping and establishment of the register of the existing housing stock and monitoring of illegal interventions on buildings using alternative systems (drones)
151.	Establishment of a system of advisers to farmers in the field - 2 times a year free of charge
152.	Development of a regional centre for digital literacy of public administration and citizens
153.	Establishment of the Centre for Digital Transformation
154.	Development of the Regional Smart Specialisation Strategy

ANNEX 3 – PARTICIPANTS IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Participants in the Strategy development process

Milica Maksić, Jelena Đorđević, Tijana Ilić, Ana Kostić, Miljana Medarov Vujaklija, Aleksandra Dimić, Srdjan Savić, Zlata Hodžić, Dušan Knežević, Dušan Dejanović, Aleksandar Obradović, Aleksandar Utvić, Jovana Milosavljević, Ivan Cvetković, Nebojša Petrović, Rade Avramović, Milan Ilić, Miomir Pešić, Marina Stoilković, Zoran Đorđević, Milica Stojanović, Milorad Džinić, Cedomir Šargić, Natalija Zivanović, Luka Popović, Đurica Spasić, Miljana Nikolić, Igor Igić, Ivan Stojanović, Elena Vasić Petrović, Sonja Stanković, Danijela Radovanović, Ivana Cvetković, Jasminka Bogić, Slobodan Milutinović, Goran Vučković, Dragana Radojković, Bojan Gajić, Slobodan Zejak, Bojan Mitić, Mirjana Dikić, Nataša Andrejević, Nikola Spasić, Aleksandar Jovanović, Vlasta Stanojević, Nebojša Rančić, Olivera Milošević, Milan Stefanović, Jasna Stojanović, Ljubinko Veličković, Marina Stanković, Aleksandra Miljković, Teodora Miljković, Nenad Rokvić, Ivica Jovanović, Bojan Mitić, Marija Tomić, Tanja Micić, Bratislav Rajković, Zoran Dušanović, Ivana Milošević, Ivana Knežević Spasović, Aleksandar Ždraljević, Natalija Milićević, Ivana Miljanović, Marko Dinić, Gordana Janković, Bratislav Vučković, Jovana Petrović, Milica Stojanović, Miloš Stefanović, Nenad Tolić, Miomir Pešić, Jovana Milosavljević, Stevan Mitković, Aleksandar Utvić, Aleksandar Obradović, Bojan Mitić, Jeroslav Nešić, Tamara Živadinović, Nataša Obradović, Milena Stevanović, Aleksandar Cvetković, Ana Mitrović, Dušan Knežević, Milan Živković, Slaviša Kondić, Milan Nikolić, Julija Marković, Vukosava Miljković, Julija Nikolić, Marina Vučić, Zoran Todorović, Milena Stojadinović Antić, Saša Tasković, Marko Ristic, Srđan Igić, Stanoje Stojanović, Aleksandar Đorđević, Slaviša Ivković, Dalibor Jovanović, Ljubodrag Stepanović, Jovica Marković, Filip Nikolić, Dušan Vasković, Boban Radenković, Miloš Milošević, Olivera Mikić.

ANNEX 4 - NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDING URBAN AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

August 2023.

1 NATIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDING URBAN AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINISTRIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND WATER MANAGEMENT

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

MINISTRY OF MINING AND ENERGY

MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AND FOREIGN TRADE

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

MINISTRY OF STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

MINISTRY OF HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE

MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

MINISTRY OF LABOR, EMPLOYMENT, VETERANS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

MINISTRY OF FAMILY CARE AND DEMOGRAPHY

MINISTRY OF SPORTS

MINISTRY OF CULTURE

MINISTRY OF RURAL CARE

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND YOUTH

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT A PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF PROMOTING THE
DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERDEVELOPED MUNICIPALITIES

CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF COORDINATING ACTIVITIES
AND MEASURES IN THE FIELD OF RELATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA WITH THE DIASPORA

CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT A PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF EVEN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

AUTHORITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA: CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION; ADMINISTRATION
FOR FREE ZONES; REPUBLIC WATER DIRECTORATE; ADMINISTRATION FOR FORESTS;
ADMINISTRATION FOR AGRARIAN PAYMENTS; ADMINISTRATION FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND,
NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF SERBIA,
PORT GOVERNANCE AGENCY

FUNDS: DEVELOPMENT FUND OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, INNOVATION FUND, FUND FOR SCIENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, CENTER FOR THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE (CPN)

BANKS: Erste Bank A.D.; UniCredit Bank; Banca Intesa; NLB Komercijalna banka; Bank Poštanska štedionica; ProCredit Bank.

1.1 MINISTRIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA¹⁸⁶

1.1.1 MINISTRY OF FINANCE¹⁸⁷

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support to local self-government - non-purpose transfers determined by Article 37 of the Law on Local Self-Government, financing and transfers for equalization - transfer of solidarity, which is determined in accordance with Article 38 of the Law on Local Self-Government Financing.
- Expropriation of land for the purpose of building capital projects - the funds are intended for expropriation, that is, the administrative transfer of real estate - land and buildings that may be subject to expropriation by law, for the purpose of building capital projects.
- Document management system - system for document management - electronic business.

1.1.2 MINISTRY OF ECONOMY¹⁸⁸

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Financial support programme - use of standards to more competitive products. The programme is designed as a form of necessary support, primarily for small and medium-sized enterprises, in order to encourage them to increase the use of standards in production and business organisation, to certify products and management systems and use other services in the field of IC, which will result in an increase in competitiveness economy as a whole. The programme includes an instrument of financial support to economic entities in the form of subsidies. The available funds are approved individually to the users, with a refund, as co-financing in the amount of 40% or 60% of justified costs without VAT for each project activity;
- Encouraging regional development - financial support that serves the purpose of supporting the development of business infrastructure through infrastructural equipping of the business zone and their connection with the environment, as well as the improvement of infrastructure capacities in order to develop tourism and other economic activities. Programme activities strengthen the capacities of local self-government units and accredited regional development agencies, and connect all subjects of regional development, at the national, regional and local level, in order to implement the policy of regional development;

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/link/2497>

¹⁸⁷ <https://www.mfin.gov.rs/>

¹⁸⁸ <https://privreda.gov.rs/>

- Support programme for small businesses for the purchase of equipment - grants are awarded for investments in new production equipment to micro and small businesses, entrepreneurs and cooperatives for the purpose of strengthening their competitiveness, improving and improving their business and internationalization, as well as creating new jobs. The programme is a combination of grants from the budget (25%), loans from commercial banks and leasing companies (70%) and the client's own funds (5%);
- Programme to encourage the development of entrepreneurship through financial support for beginners in business - grants are awarded for financial support to newly founded entrepreneurs, micro and small businesses, which have been registered in the Agency for Economic Registers for the earliest two years in relation to the year of application submission. The support is a combination of 30% grants from the budget and 70% loans from the Development Fund, as well as non-financial support through a standardized set of services from accredited regional development agencies - education and assistance in creating a business plan;
- Support through a standardized set of services for MSMEs related to training, advisory services, as well as promotion of available types of support for small and medium at the local level, free of charge The programme is implemented by 17 accredited regional development agencies, with the coordination of the Development Agency of Serbia;
- Support for industrial development, industrial restructuring in the direction of approaching innovative and technology-intensive and moving away from labor-intensive sectors and improvement and digitization of business models of industrial production;
- Incentive programme to support the digital transformation of industry - Continuous co-financing of the implementation costs of approved projects proposed within the digital transformation strategy of individual economic entities (improvement/introduction of new business processes, business models, products, services);
- Incentives for industrial business entities for the development of innovative solutions through cooperation projects with the scientific and research community;
- Support programme for industrial economic entities for the procurement of first generation technological equipment;
- Infrastructure development support programme for the needs of industrial zones;
- Investments of special importance - allocation of funds to business entities that invest in fixed assets or create a large number of new jobs, in relation to the object of investment and the territorial concentration of certain economic branches and economic activities;
- Credit support to companies in the privatization process, which ensures the efficient continuation of the company's privatization process, i.e. the company's survival until the end of the process;
- The Podrinje Development Programme - a joint initiative of the governments of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Srpska, is predominantly of an economic nature, foresees the possibility of joint activities and cooperation in the implementation of projects in the field of economic development. The following LGUs are participating from the Republic of Serbia: Šid, Sremska Mitrovica, Bogatić, Šabac, Loznica, Mali Zvornik, Krupanj, Valjevo, Osečina, Ljubovija, Kosjerić, Bajina Bašta, Užice, Čajetina, Priboj and Koceljeva.

1.1.3 MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND WATER MANAGEMENT¹⁸⁹

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Incentive for investments for the improvement and development of rural public infrastructure - incentives include support for investments in the construction and equipping of facilities:
 1. for water supply;
 2. road infrastructure;
 3. for storage and processing of agricultural products.
- The right to incentives is exercised by the local self-government unit, if the investment in question is realized in a populated place with less than 10,000 inhabitants.
- Incentive for the improvement of the system of creation and transfer of knowledge through the development of technical-technological, applied, developmental and innovative projects in agriculture and rural development. A legal entity registered in the Register of Scientific Research Organisations, a research and development center, an innovation center, an accredited faculty, an entrepreneur and a legal entity that meets the conditions for performing advisory and expert work in agriculture are entitled to incentives.
- Incentive to support programmes related to the preparation and implementation of local strategies for rural development (LSRR).
- Incentives include support for programmes, namely:
 1. incentives for preparing LSRR;
 2. incentives for the implementation of LSRR.
- The right to incentives is exercised by the Partnership for Territorial Rural Development (an association of representatives of the public, private and civil sectors of a certain rural area, which was established in accordance with the law regulating associations).
- Incentive for the implementation of activities aimed at increasing competitiveness through the certification of food quality systems, organic products and products with geographical origin.
- Regulation of watercourses and protection against harmful effects of water - undertaking measures and activities for protection against flooding by external and internal waters and ice, protection against erosion and torrents and elimination of the consequences of such effects of water and management of risks from the harmful effects of water, as well as preparation of technical documentation for the above objects.

Other projects implemented by the Ministry, which are financed from other sources:

- The project for competitive agriculture in Serbia - funded by the World Bank. The project refers to the improvement of productivity and promotion of entrepreneurial spirit on family farms, cooperatives, cooperatives, associations and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through financial support and capacity development of advisory services, business and financial planning. The Ministry, through the Administration for Agrarian Payments, is issuing a public call for investments related to improving the

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/>

competitiveness of primary livestock production in the areas of milk production, meat production, beekeeping and aquaculture.

- Instrument of pre-accession assistance for rural development (IPARD) - funds of the European Union. Within the IPARD programme, the following measures were implemented:
 1. Investments in physical assets of agricultural holdings
 2. Investments in physical assets related to the processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products
 3. Ecologically oriented and organic agriculture
 4. Implementation of local development strategies—LEADER approach
 5. Diversification of agriculture.
- Programme for resilience to climate change and irrigation in Serbia - phase II - funds from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The project finances the construction and rehabilitation of critical irrigation infrastructure in local governments.
- The project of integrated development of the Sava and Drina river corridors - funds from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The goal of the Project is to improve flood protection and enable cross-border cooperation in the area of water on the Sava and Drina river corridors. The project finances flood protection, investment in environmental management, dams and related activities in selected priority areas along the Sava and Drina river corridors.
- Construction of the irrigation system - first phase - funds from the Abu Dhabi Development Fund. The project finances the construction, reconstruction, arrangement and rehabilitation of water facilities and irrigation systems, namely regional irrigation hydrosystems and dual-purpose systems in the area of Srem, Bačka and Banat and hydromelioration systems in the area of Šabac, Čačak, Pančevački Rit and Topola.
- Environment and climate - funds IPA programme 2020. Taking measures and activities to protect and improve the quality of surface and underground water through the construction of a wastewater treatment plant for the agglomeration of Loznica; construction of new collectors and reconstruction of existing ones, construction of pumping stations and pressure pipelines and construction of parts of the new atmospheric sewage, as well as through the construction of systems and facilities for the collection, removal and purification of waste water in Sokobanja.

1.1.4 MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION¹⁹⁰

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Incentives for the purchase of environmentally friendly vehicles - subsidized purchases of new vehicles that have an exclusively electric drive, as well as vehicles that run with atmospheric and electric hybrid drive, in order to protect and improve air quality,
- Reducing air pollution in Serbia from individual sources - reducing the release of polluting substances from individual sources into the environment with the aim of implementing measures to improve air quality and undertaking preventive measures

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/>

in segments important for protecting air from pollution, through cooperation with local self-government units

- Protection and preservation of water as a natural resource - preservation of the quality of water as a natural resource, elimination of the consequences of pollution and application of preventive measures prescribed by the law on environmental protection through cooperation with local self-government units.
- Procurement, replacement, reconstruction and rehabilitation of boiler rooms for heating - reduction of the release of polluting substances into the environment, from boiler rooms for heating within the facilities that are under the jurisdiction of local self-government units, with the aim of improving air quality, undertaking preventive measures in segments important for air protection from pollution and protection and improvement of the environment.
- Incentives for management programmes of protected natural assets of national interest - co-financing of management programmes for national parks and protected areas.
- Afforestation for the purpose of protecting and preserving landscape diversity - co-financing the purchase of seedlings and the execution of works for the afforestation of the land with indigenous species of trees and shrubs, on land under the jurisdiction of local self-government units.
- Preservation and protection of soil as a natural resource - prevention or elimination of harmful changes in the soil, which aims to preserve the surface and functions of the soil as a natural resource and to prevent or eliminate harmful changes in the soil that may occur as a result of: erosion processes, reduction content of organic matter in the soil, acidification, salinization and alkalization of soil, soil compaction, landslides and landslides, fires and chemical accidents, pollution.
- Reducing the carbon footprint of local communities by applying circular economy principles - co-financing the development of innovative projects and business models based on circular economy principles that contribute to low-carbon development.
- Integrated management of waste, waste water, chemicals and biocidal products - establishment of a system for regional waste management and improvement of the waste management system, establishment of a system for waste water management at the level of local governments and water protection.
- Rehabilitation and closure of unsanitary landfills - support to local self-government units that are unable to independently finance the rehabilitation and closure of unsanitary landfills on their territory,
- Removal and permanent disposal of hazardous waste - solving the issue of removing hazardous waste in companies undergoing restructuring and bankruptcy, as well as removing other hazardous historical waste.
- Prevention of illegal dumping of waste and removal - by providing support to local self-government units in preventing illegal dumping of waste and preventing the creation of new illegal landfills.
- Waste management and circular economy - support to local governments in the application of innovative technologies and solutions in recycling and reuse of waste, reducing the use of natural resources and improving the quality of the environment through the reduction of emissions of pollutants into the environment.

- Procurement of collection and recycling equipment - raising the capacity of local and regional PCUs in order to increase their efficiency and improve waste management.
- Support for civil society projects in the field of environmental protection - financing of projects in the field of environmental protection carried out by associations and other civil society organisations, which were selected through a competition.
- Incentives for the reuse and utilization of waste - incentives for enterprises to encourage the reuse and utilization of waste as a secondary raw material, or to obtain energy, as well as to encourage the production of biodegradable bags.
- Technical assistance in the preparation of project documentation for infrastructure projects in the field of environment - preparation of the necessary planning and project documentation for infrastructure projects in certain local governments.
- Improvement of infrastructure for environmental protection - construction of waste water treatment facilities including collectors and sewage network.

From other funds, the Ministry realizes the following projects:

- IPA 2010 - Support to municipalities in the Republic of Serbia in the preparation and implementation of infrastructure projects;
- IPA 2017 - Environmental Protection Sector;
- IPA 2018 - Environmental Protection Sector;
- IPA 2020 - Environment and climate;
- Construction of regional centers for waste management - funds of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development;
- District heating project in Kragujevac - funds from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

1.1.5 MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE¹⁹¹

- From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:
- Road transport, roads and traffic safety - development of road transport reflected in easier access to the international transport market
- Railway and intermodal transport - improvement and development of railways (including cable cars) and intermodal transport through the arrangement of railway and intermodal transport systems.
- Realization of infrastructure projects of importance for the Republic of Serbia - and realization of construction and reconstruction projects of traffic infrastructure and infrastructure projects.
- Programme of integral development of Southwestern Serbia - financing of projects in the field of tourism, environment and infrastructure.
- Water supply and waste water treatment program in medium-sized municipalities in Serbia and Green Cities - construction of drinking water treatment plants and waste water treatment plants, as well as rehabilitation and expansion of the municipal water supply, waste water collection and disposal system.

¹⁹¹ <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/projekti>

- Reconstruction of the railway line Nis - Dimitrovgrad.
- Programme of integrated solid waste management in Serbia - improvement of municipal infrastructure for efficient management of municipal solid waste in selected cities.
- Project for the construction of municipal (sewage) infrastructure and infrastructure for the disposal of municipal solid waste - a project with the working title "Clean Serbia", the construction of a sewage network and facilities for the processing of waste water and rehabilitation, reconstruction, recultivation and construction of landfills with solid waste treatment.

From other funds, the Ministry realizes the following projects:

- IPA 2020 - Support for EU integration.
- IPA 2020 - Democracy and Governance.
- The project to improve the trade and transport of the Western Balkans with the application of a multi-phase programmatic approach - funds of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- Rehabilitation of roads and improvement of traffic safety - funds International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- Modernization of the railway sector in Serbia - funds from the World Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

1.1.6 MINISTRY OF MINING AND ENERGY¹⁹²

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Public call for the allocation of funds for the financing of the Programme of Energy Rehabilitation of Family Houses and Apartments implemented by local self-government units, as well as city municipalities.
- Public call for the allocation of funds for the financing of energy efficiency improvement projects in facilities of public importance in local self-government units, as well as city municipalities.
- Energy efficiency and energy management in municipalities in Serbia - systematic and comprehensive energy management through the introduction of the European Energy Award certificate, improvement of the energy efficiency of public buildings in Kruševac and Užice.
- Improving the energy management system to increase investments in the energy efficiency of public buildings in Serbia - reducing GHG emissions through improving energy efficiency and promoting the use of renewable energy sources in public buildings with a special focus on state-owned buildings.

From other funds, the Ministry realizes the following projects:

- Encouraging the use of renewable energy sources - development of the biomass market, funds from the German Development Bank KfW. The project is implemented in the relevant local self-government units that were included in previous justification

¹⁹² <https://www.mre.gov.rs/>

studies based on their own initiative, potential and previously taken steps in order to use biomass and geothermal energy.

- Rehabilitation of the district heating system in Serbia - funds from the German Development Bank KfW. The project envisages the rehabilitation and modernization of 7 heating plants through the implementation of projects in the field of construction/improvement/replacement of thermal energy production facilities, replacement/expansion of heating pipes, improvement/replacement/installation of substations and installation/improvement/expansion of modern SCADA systems.

1.1.7 MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AND FOREIGN TRADE¹⁹³

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Incentives for the development of the national brand of Serbia and the preservation of old crafts - subsidies to economic entities for the development and preservation of traditional crafts.
- Support for programmes of consumer associations and out-of-court settlement of consumer disputes - financing or co-financing of programmes of registered consumer associations, which include activities of providing information, education, advice and legal assistance to consumers, as well as conducting independent research.

1.1.8 MINISTRY OF JUSTICE¹⁹⁴

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Public competition for the allocation of funds collected on the basis of the postponement of criminal prosecution - for projects prepared by natural persons, legal persons, authorities, organisations, public institutions, entrepreneurs, associations, funds, humanitarian organisations, which realize the public interest in the field of health, culture, education, humanitarian work.

1.1.9 MINISTRY OF STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT¹⁹⁵

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support for the development and functioning of the local self-government system - establishment of a better system of local self-government, realization of infrastructure projects of local self-government units, improvement of the work of LGUs and good administration, improvement of the efficiency of the work of local self-government in the area of personnel capacities, modernization of the work of local self-government units in terms of IT and technical equipment.
- Local self-government for the 21st century - support for the implementation of functional analysis and functional organisational models, building and strengthening

¹⁹³ <https://must.gov.rs/>

¹⁹⁴ <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/>

¹⁹⁵ <https://mduls.gov.rs/category/projekti-i-programi/>

the capacities of LGUs, development and improvement of inter-municipal cooperation through the Fund for Inter-Municipal Cooperation.

- Partnership for local development - improvement of service provision in selected municipalities: renovation of public institution buildings, reconstruction/construction of local markets, establishment of a municipal center for monitoring the provision of local services by local public utility companies, reconstruction of public space - (sports fields, parks, pedestrian paths , etc.), construction/replacement of lighting.
- Management of the public administration reform - establishment of unique administrative positions through support to local self-government units and city municipalities whose purpose is to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the work of the authorities, in situations where, in order to exercise one or more rights, the actions of one or more authorities are required.
- Budget fund for the Programme for Local Self-Governments - improvement of infrastructure, work efficiency and quality of life in LGUs.
- Establishing solid coordination mechanisms for the development and functioning of e-Government and rounding off the legal framework and procedures for the development of e-Government - awarding grants to a maximum of 35 LGUs for the development and implementation of procedures and procedures relevant to the introduction of e-Government, training and mentoring support for the provision of e-Government services - Management, and support for data opening.
- Improving the function of human resource management (HRM) in state administration and local self-government through the introduction of new instruments and strengthening the capacity for HRM - Building the capacity of cities and municipalities to implement and improve the function of human resource management in local self-government.
- Improving the sustainability of public finances through reforming and developing public property management - Implementation of LGU projects within the grant scheme for improving public property management at the local level, implementation of 20 packages of direct technical support to municipalities for improving public property management at the local level.
- Improvement of the process of planning and budget preparation at the local level - raising the capacity of LGUs to implement programme budgeting in accordance with the methodology for programme budgeting through the creation of instructional documents for the preparation of the programme budget, the organisation of 24 regional trainings for all LGUs and direct technical support for 12 LGUs selected by competition.
- Raising awareness of the rights of national minorities - encouraging the establishment and effective functioning of councils for inter-ethnic relations at the local level in all municipalities with ethnically mixed populations through trainings and meetings with LGU representatives.
- Empowerment of civil society organisations - competition for the allocation of funds from the Budget Fund for National Minorities for programmes and projects from a specific priority area of funding.

1.1.10 MINISTRY OF HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE¹⁹⁶

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- The rights of national minorities to self-governance - strengthening of civil society organisations and business companies by announcing tenders for financing programmes and projects of organisations whose founders are national councils of national minorities that deal with the protection and promotion of the rights of national minorities in areas where national councils of national minorities are entrusted with the exercise of public powers.
- Encouraging environment for the development of civil society - implementation of measures and activities with the aim of improving the legal, institutional and financial framework for the development of civil society and raising the capacity of public administration bodies and civil society organisations in order to improve mutual cooperation.
- Public competition for financing programmes of associations that contribute to greater involvement of civil society organisations in the creation of gender-responsive policies.
- Competition for civil society organisations, for projects related to the implementation of the Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination Strategy.
- Informative, educational and promotional activities to encourage women and girls to participate in innovative activities related to the digital, circular and green economy through research teams as experts, but also as entrepreneurs in these fields.
- Informative, educational and promotional activities for the increased participation of women in the protection of intellectual property and patents, increasing knowledge and information about the protection of intellectual property and innovation activity.
- Informative, educational and promotional activities for increased inclusion of women and girl soldiers in science and technology parks, innovation incubators and similar centers.
- Competition for financing scientific-research projects in the field of gender equality.
- Programmes and projects by which Roma men and women are informed and educated on the topic of access to rights and preservation of identity.
- Training programmes that include the topics of gypsyism as a form of racism and discrimination for employees of LGUs.
- Campaign to increase the representation of Roma men and women in political decision-making bodies at the local level.
- Formation of local councils for the social inclusion of Roma and Roma women.
- Forming new mobile teams for the inclusion of Roma in all local governments with a significant share of Roma and ensuring capacity building for members of the mobile teams.
- The programme of educational work and other forms of work and services provided by the preschool institution with the aim of supporting families and children up to three years of age.
- Partnership between LGUs, preschool institutions and CSOs in the implementation of programmes to encourage the development and learning of children, as well as the development of parenting skills in the community.

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.minljpdd.gov.rs/>

- Training for employees in public administration bodies on the inclusion of CSOs in the process of drafting, implementing, monitoring the implementation and evaluating the effects of public policies and regulations.
- Training for CSOs to understand the role, competences and functions of public administration and participation in the process of drafting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating public policy documents and regulations.

From other funds, the Ministry realizes the following projects:

- Support for participation in EU programmes - IPA programme funds. Providing financial support to associations and other civil society organisations for the implementation of projects previously approved by the European Union.

1.1.11 MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION¹⁹⁷¹⁹⁸

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support for the effective use of Instruments for EU pre-accession aid and development aid.
- Call for project ideas from the Territorial Strategy for the collection of project concepts within the Integrated Territorial Strategy (Interreg VI-A) Programme Bulgaria-Serbia 2021-2027.

1.1.12 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION¹⁹⁹

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances and co-finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Modernization of the infrastructure of primary and secondary schools, institutions of higher education and institutions of student standards by implementing projects of construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, adaptation, projects to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings by applying energy efficiency measures, projects of investment maintenance of school buildings, as well as the implementation of projects to equip newly built and existing school facilities and institutions and school contents
- Support for the digitization programme in the area of the national education system
- Construction of educational and scientific centers Inclusive preschool upbringing and education The Ministry provides support for integration into the European educational space through the programmes Erasmus+ (Erasmus+), iTwinning (eTwinning), Juridajs (Eurydice), Euroguidance, EPALE, Europass and EOK (EQF).

The Ministry realizes the following projects from the funds of contracted loans and credits:

- Dual Education Training Center, Council of Europe Development Bank funds;
- Associated schools in Serbia B, funds of the European Investment Bank;
- School modernization programme, funds of the European Investment Bank;

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/>

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/pozivi/165/detaljnije/w/0/raspisan-prvi-poziv-za-projektne-ideje-iz-teritorijalne-strategije/>

¹⁹⁹ <https://prosveta.gov.rs/>

- Education for social inclusion, funds from the Development Bank of the Council of Europe;
- Inclusive preschool education and upbringing, funds of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development;
- Student housing in Serbia, Development Bank of the Council of Europe;
- Improvement of university education, Council of Europe Development Bank funds;

Other projects in which the Ministry participates

1. The project of accelerating innovation and encouraging the growth of entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia (SAIGE)

The project to accelerate innovation and encourage the growth of entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia (SAIGE) supports the further reform of the scientific research sector, the strengthening of links between the economic and academic sectors, and the development of innovative companies.

Funds for the implementation of the SAIGE Project were provided on the basis of a joint investment by the Republic of Serbia, i.e. the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development) through a loan and technical support from the World Bank in the amount of 43 million euros and non-refundable financial support from the European Union in the amount of 41.5 million euros .

The SAIGE project is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Education, the World Bank and the European Union, and the beneficiaries are the scientific community, scientific research organisations, the innovative economy, as well as the Fund for Science and the Fund for Innovation Activities.

The SAIGE project provides support to the competitive programmes of the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia and the best scientific research projects that were chosen based on an independent international selection.

Project activities:

- Support for scientific research

The support includes grants for basic and applied research, which are implemented within the framework of two programmes, the Special Programme for Research on COVID-19 and IDEA.

Through the Programme for Cooperation with the Serbian Diaspora, the SAIGE project finances the connection and cooperation of Serbian science with the community of the Serbian diaspora in order to improve the ecosystem of research, innovation and entrepreneurship in Serbia. The programme should attract promising scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs from the Serbian diaspora community to transfer knowledge and skills through various activities. It will include networking, advisory participation in the creation of strategies, vouchers for exchange of knowledge for Serbian researchers, grants for joint basic and applied research, development and transfer of technologies, protection of intellectual property and commercialization of research.

The project provides technical assistance to the Science Fund in terms of developing new programmes and strengthening internal capacities and procedures.

- Empowerment of innovative startup companies

In order to strengthen the startup community in Serbia, the Innovation Activity Fund, within the SAIGE Project, launched the Catapult acceleration programme.

Through this programme of the Fund, innovative entrepreneurship is encouraged, it provides access to sources of financing for the development of innovative companies and attracts private investments.

Catapult is the first accelerator in Serbia that provides young companies with intensive, three-month mentoring and connections with investors.

The Catapult programme helps innovative, growth-oriented companies to position themselves in the global market, as well as to improve their business development capabilities, which will increase the possibility of attracting private investment.

- Support for the reform of the science and research sector

The SAIGE project supports the reform of scientific and research organisations through the design and implementation of institutional transformation plans by providing incentives, financial and technical support for undertaking the planned steps of institutional reforms.

Through a phased approach, scientific institutes that have expressed interest in transformation and have been approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development to participate in the process, undergo an independent international expert assessment and, based on the assessment results, receive detailed transformation plans, with concrete expected results.

2. Programme of institutional financing of accredited institutes founded by the Republic of Serbia, autonomous province, unit of local self-government and institutes founded by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and Programme of institutional financing of institutes of national importance for the Republic of Serbia.

The programmes regulate issues of importance for their implementation and develop priorities and indicators for evaluating the work of accredited institutes founded by the Republic of Serbia, an autonomous province, a unit of local self-government and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and institutes of national importance for the Republic of Serbia, as well as other issues of importance for the implementation of these programmes including the rights and obligations of researchers at accredited faculties regarding the establishment and duration of the employment relationship.

The aim of these programmes is to strengthen scientific research institutions in order to be more recognizable and competitive at the national and international level, to strengthen research teams for participation in competitive projects, to achieve dynamic development of science, technological development and innovation, to increase the efficiency of the use of resources of the scientific research system.

1.1.13 MINISTRY OF HEALTH²⁰⁰

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Improving the availability of health care for the Roma population - engaging health mediators and supporting projects that are implemented in cooperation with Roma citizens' associations in order to improve the health of Roma men and women.
- Support for the activities of citizens' associations in the field of health care - support for the work of associations that deal with activities of importance for health care, financing the organisation of expert meetings at the regional level, organizing national meetings, meetings with international participation, implementing projects that include certain health care systems, maintaining courses and continuous education.
- Support for the activities of citizens' associations in the field of HIV infection prevention and control - a contracting mechanism with citizens' associations for the selection of implementers, who are engaged on an annual basis based on an open call for submission of project proposals in the field of HIV infection prevention and control,
- Programmes of the Serbian Red Cross - aimed at socially vulnerable populations, especially children, the elderly, refugees and internally displaced persons, and include first aid, preventive health activities, education and training for young people, care for the elderly, psychosocial support for families of missing and kidnapped persons .
- Construction and equipping of state-owned health institutions founded by the Republic of Serbia - investment investment, investment maintenance of premises, medical and non-medical equipment and means of transport, procurement of medical and other equipment necessary for the operation of health institutions, means of transport, procurement of equipment for the development of integrated health information system.
- Public call for project financing for the implementation of programme 1802 "Preventive health care" project 0012 "Support to the activities of citizens' associations in the field of health care".
- Public call for project financing for the implementation of programme 1802 "Preventive health care" project 0010 "Improving the availability of health care for the Roma population".
- Public call for project financing for the implementation of programme 1802 "Preventive health care" project 4013 "Support to the activities of citizens' associations in the field of prevention and control of HIV infection".

The Ministry realizes the following projects from the funds of contracted loans and credits:

- Reconstruction of university clinical centers - funds of the European Investment Bank.
- Health development - funds from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- Programme "Interreg" IPA Romania - Serbia 2021-2027.

²⁰⁰ <https://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/>

1.1.14 MINISTRY OF LABOR, EMPLOYMENT, VETERANS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS²⁰¹

- From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:
- Public call for the allocation of support packages to local self-government units for the improvement of social protection - support to local self-government units for the improvement of the social protection system at the local level and financial support in the form of grants for the establishment/expansion of at least one social protection service.
- Public call for project proposals in the field of veterans-disabled protection - funding of projects by citizens' associations to improve the position of veterans, disabled veterans, civilian war veterans and families of fallen veterans and to improve the area of nurturing the traditions of the liberation wars.
- Public call for project proposals for the investment maintenance of war memorials of importance for nurturing the traditions of Serbia's liberation wars - for the competent Institutes for the Protection of Cultural Monuments
- Public competition for submitting programme proposals to the permanently open competition for the improvement of the position of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Serbia in 2023 - financing of programmes implemented by citizens' associations registered on the territory of the Republic of Serbia.
- Public competition for submitting programme proposals to the Programme competition for the improvement of the position of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Serbia in 2023.
- Carrying out the activities of social welfare institutions - performing entrusted tasks in centers for social work and providing social welfare services in institutions founded by the Republic.
- Support for the work of foster parents - financing placement in foster families on the basis of the allowance for the maintenance of the beneficiary and the allowance for the work of the foster parent.
- Support for the work of social protection institutions - investments in facilities and equipment in institutions and provision of missing funds in order to smoothly carry out activities in cases where problems arise in the settlement of obligations based on the costs of communal services and energy sources, extraordinary and occasional costs based on judicial and administrative proceedings, decision of courts or authorities state bodies.
- Rights of users outside the network of social protection institutions - assistance for job training of asylum seekers, financial assistance for accommodation in special hospitals.
- Support to associations in the field of family and child protection - co-financing of citizens' associations to help children - grants to encourage programmes and activities of public interest in the field of family and child protection.
- Support to associations and local communities - financing of associations and local communities that include the affirmation of various activities aimed at improving social protection in the community.
- Support for associations in the field of veterans and disabled protection - financial support for projects of associations with various programmes, interests and activities

²⁰¹ <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr>

related to the field of veterans and disabled protection, protection of their families, as well as nurturing the tradition of Serbia's liberation wars, based on a public tender.

- Support to companies for the professional rehabilitation of persons with disabilities - wage subsidies for employees with disabilities and funds for improving working conditions in these companies with the aim of strengthening the capacity to carry out professional rehabilitation, employment and maintenance of employment of persons with disabilities.
- Protection of the position of persons with disabilities - a public tender of public importance for the submission of programme proposals for the improvement of the position of persons with disabilities.
- Support for the development of social entrepreneurship - an incentive for the development of social entrepreneurship, which aims to increase the work activation of able-bodied persons who are in the social protection system, less employable unemployed persons in accordance with the regulations in the field of employment and other less employable persons from particularly sensitive categories.

From other funds, the Ministry realizes the following projects:

- Public call for providing comprehensive support for the establishment / improvement of local mechanisms for the inclusion of Roma and Roma women - funds of the IPA 2020 Programme.

1.1.15 MINISTRY OF FAMILY CARE AND DEMOGRAPHY²⁰²

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Public call for the allocation of grants designated for the co-financing of population policy measures and support in the area of family and children to local self-government units.
- Support to associations in the field of family and child protection - co-financing of citizens' associations to help children - grants to encourage programmes and activities of public interest in the field of family and child protection.
- Public call for submission of programme proposals to the permanently open call for grants intended for projects of family law protection of citizens, support for families and children - for the use of grants to non-governmental organisations for projects of family law protection, citizens, support for families and children.
- Public competition for submitting programme proposals to the permanent open competition for the awarding of grants intended for projects of family law protection of citizens, coordination and policy implementation in the field of demography - for the use of grants to non-governmental organisations for projects of family law protection of citizens, coordination and policy implementation in the field of demography.
- Public call for submission of programme proposals to the permanently open call for grants intended for projects of family law protection of citizens, coordination and

²⁰² <https://minbpd.gov.rs/>

implementation of population policy - for the use of grants to non-governmental organisations for projects of family law protection of citizens, coordination and implementation of population policy.

- Public call for submission of programme proposals to the permanently open call for grants intended for projects of family law protection of citizens, support for associations in the field of family and child protection - for the use of grants to non-governmental organisations for projects of family law protection of citizens, support for associations in the field of family protection.

1.1.16 MINISTRY OF SPORTS²⁰³

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Special programmes in the field of sports - financing the activities of organisations in the field of sports that are carried out with the aim of providing security
- conditions for free and safe sports, especially for children, women, young people and people with disabilities.
- Construction and capital maintenance of sports infrastructure - projects of construction, equipping and maintenance of sports facilities in local self-government units from the 4th development group are specially financed.
- Public call for submission of programme proposals, i.e. projects related to the construction of sports facilities for the needs of people with disabilities and adaptation of existing sports facilities to the needs of people with disabilities.
- Public call for submission of programme proposals, i.e. projects in the field of sports through the construction, equipping and maintenance of sports facilities that are important for the development of sports in the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia.

1.1.17 MINISTRY OF CULTURE²⁰⁴

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support for improving the capacity of the cultural sector at the local level - Co-financing of the Cities in Focus programme through a public call that will improve the area of culture and art in local areas, encourage the development of creativity and recognize the specifics of cultural identity and sustainable development of local communities.
- Support for research, protection and preservation of immovable cultural heritage - competition in the field of protection, preservation and use of immovable - architectural and archaeological heritage. Supported projects include work on the preparation of technical project documentation, implementation of technical protection measures and conservation work on immovable cultural assets, research and protection of archaeological sites and work related to the presentation of architectural and archaeological cultural heritage, publication of materials as well as other activities on the protection of immovable inheritance.

²⁰³ <https://www.mos.gov.rs/>

²⁰⁴ <https://www.kultura.gov.rs/>

- Digitization of cultural heritage - financing of the work of institutions in the field of culture, for projects related to equipping laboratories for digitalization of cultural heritage, as well as projects related to the process of digitization of the cultural heritage of the Republic of Serbia and strengthening the infrastructure capacities of institutions.
- Support for research, protection and preservation of intangible and movable cultural heritage - Competition in the field of protection, preservation and presentation of museum heritage, Competition in the field of protection, preservation and presentation of archival materials, Competition in the field of protection, preservation and presentation of old and rare library materials and Competition in areas of protection, preservation and presentation of intangibles cultural heritage.
- Support for the development of library and information activities and the library and information activities of the Association of the Blind of Serbia - Competition in the field of library and information activities for financing the procurement of information and communication technologies for public libraries, publication of professional publications, digitization of library materials, support for the education of librarians, improvement of storage conditions and protection of library and information materials, support for interactive programmes for children and young people.
- Support for the work of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Historical Archives.
- Strengthening cultural production and artistic creativity - public competition for financing and co-financing of projects in all artistic fields / music, drama, dance, visual arts, literature, film, etc., and through cultural activities of sensitive groups/national minorities, persons with disabilities , children, young people. financing and co-financing of the work and programme activities of cultural institutions founded by the RS in the field of musical arts, performing arts /drama, opera, artistic dance and traditional folk art/, film art and audio-visual creativity, and through scientific research programmes in culture and art .
- Support for the development of literary creativity and publishing
- Support for the development of musical creativity - support and stimulation of projects and programmes in the field of musical art, their presentation and affirmation, continuous raising of the level of cultural needs of the population, institutions and engaged individuals.
- Support for the cultural activities of socially sensitive groups - support for projects that contribute to greater social cohesion, fostering intercultural dialogue, developing conditions for the diversity of cultural expressions and identities, and strengthening the availability of cultural content.
- Support for the development of artistic play - financing and co-financing of institutional and independent production, implementation of domestic and international exchange and professional development of artists (participation in conferences or masterclasses) in the field of artistic play.
- Support for the strengthening of theater art - financing and co-financing of institutional and independent productions, implementation of domestic and international exchange and professional development of artists (participation in conferences or masterclasses) in the field of theater art.

- The Capital of Culture of Serbia - strengthening the operational and professional capacities of local self-governments in the field of culture through the preparation of strategic documents for the development of culture (Strategy and Action Plan), support for the improvement of infrastructure, human resources and programmes with the aim of raising them to a higher level.
- Support for the work of institutions in the field of protection and preservation of cultural heritage - preparation of technical project documentation, implementation of technical protection measures and conservation work on immovable and movable cultural assets, research and protection of archaeological sites and work related to the presentation of architectural and archaeological cultural heritage.
- Digitization in the field of protection and preservation of cultural heritage - public tender for financing the work of institutions in the field of culture, for projects related to equipping laboratories for digitalization of cultural heritage, as well as projects related to the process of digitization of the cultural heritage of the Republic of Serbia and strengthening the infrastructure capacities of institutions.
- Public call for the allocation of incentives to an investor to produce an audiovisual work in the Republic of Serbia.
- Competition for financing or co-financing of projects in the field of protection of old traditional crafts and their modern application.
- Competition for financing and co-financing of projects in cinematography for 2023 in the category: pre-digitalization and digitalization of cinema.

1.1.18 MINISTRY OF RURAL CARE²⁰⁵

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support for the development of cooperatives - a public tender for the allocation of grants for old and newly formed agricultural and agricultural cooperatives, agricultural and agricultural cooperatives whose registered activity is rural tourism (tourist cooperatives) or whose registered activity is the production of traffic or the activity of performing old and artistic crafts (crafts cooperatives), that is domestic crafts.
- Support for the organisation of events in the villages of the Republic of Serbia - a public competition for the implementation of the grant award programme can be in the field of dramatic arts, literature, literary skills and other arts (competitions in singing, recitation, acting, painting, etc.), holding sports competitions, promoting , preservation and improvement of old crafts and cultural-artistic heritage, creation of art and domestic crafts, as well as other activities in which the inhabitants of the village can show their knowledge and skills and compete in them.
- Support for the adaptation of multifunctional facilities - adaptation of facilities in rural areas to provide a clinic, pharmacy, post office, club for the elderly, children's club, cinema hall, municipal administration counter, local community office, etc.
- Incentive for the purchase of minibusses for the transportation of the rural population - grants are intended for the purchase of minibusses that can be used exclusively for

²⁰⁵ <https://www.mbs.gov.rs/>

the transportation of the rural population from one village to another village or from the village to the city/municipal headquarters.

- Public competition for the allocation of grants for the organisation of the event called “Miholjski susreti village”.

1.1.19 MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION²⁰⁶

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support for the realization of interests in innovation activity - providing support for the development or significant modification of existing innovative products, technologies, processes and services, in order to encourage the application and commercialization of scientific research results, as well as providing support for the use of modern technologies and the construction of innovative organisations for infrastructural support of innovation activities.
- Support for the digitization programme in the area of the national scientific research system - equipping and maintaining the software resources needed for keeping electronic records.
- Support for the work of NTP Niš.
- Support for education and training of young talents - awarding high school students for the results achieved in national and international competitions and providing scholarships to students for studies in the country and abroad.
- Research and development in the public sector - adaptation of existing buildings and laboratories, construction of science and technology parks in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš; construction of residential buildings for rent to young scientists in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš and Kragujevac, construction of centers of excellence in priority areas (stem cells, nano-sciences, agricultural-biology center, biomedicine), procurement of new capital equipment for research, construction of science centers .

From other funds, the Ministry realizes the following projects:

- IPA 2018 – Competitiveness
- The project of acceleration of innovation and encouragement of the growth of entrepreneurship - SAIGE
- IPA Support for participation in EU programmes
- IPA 2019 - Competitiveness and Innovation

1.1.20 MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND YOUTH²⁰⁷

- From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:
- Support of LGUs in the implementation of youth policy - cooperation with local self-governments in the development of an institutional framework for the improvement of youth policy at the local level, providing support for the formation of youth offices, local youth councils, the development and implementation of local action plans for

²⁰⁶ <https://nitra.gov.rs/>

²⁰⁷ <https://www.mto.gov.rs/>

youth, the formation of sustainable youth clubs and the establishment of local youth services, establishment of KZM work standards and assessment, monitoring and improvement of KZM work.

- Programmes and projects supporting young people in education, upbringing, safety, health and participation - funding or co-financing of programmes and projects aimed at providing support for youth networking and improving the conditions for participation in decision-making through a sustainable institutional framework, based on the needs of young people and in partnership with to young people, raising the awareness of young people about healthy lifestyles, safety and environment.
- Programmes and projects to support youth in employment - financing or co-financing of programs and projects to encourage and stimulate various forms of employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship of young people, developing services and mechanisms that promote employability and employment of young people through intersectoral cooperation and empowering young people to acquire skills for active, responsible and efficient career management.
- Incentives for the construction of infrastructure and superstructure in tourist destinations - financing/co-financing of tourism development projects to encourage the quality of the tourist offer implemented by companies and entrepreneurs registered to perform activities in the field of tourism, as well as registered agricultural farms. Financial support for the realization of these projects is provided by granting loans.
- Incentives for projects of promotion, education and training in tourism - co-financing of tourism development projects, promotion of tourist products and tourist areas of Serbia and encouragement of a receptive tourist-hospitality offer, improvement and implementation of statistical research and methodology of satellite accounts, as well as education and training in tourism.
- Incentives for the improvement of the receptive tourist and hospitality offer - incentives for travel agencies, travel organizers, as a way of support for promotional and marketing activities that are necessary to reach the required level of traffic of foreign tourists.

1.1.21 MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS²⁰⁸

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Development of ICT infrastructure in institutions of education, science and culture
- Construction of broadband communication infrastructure in rural areas
- Digitization of Serbia's tourist offer - preparation of infrastructural communication and application bases for the implementation of long-term goals of digitization of tourist locations.
- Support for the achievement of public interest in the field of information - co-financing through competitions, media projects, independent productions, associations and organisations engaged in the production of media content for projects that contribute to the diversity of media content and the pluralism of ideas and values, the development of media creativity in the fields of culture, education and science , information and improving the position of all segments of society.

²⁰⁸ <https://mit.gov.rs/>

- Support for informing national minorities in their own language - co-financing through tenders for media projects, productions and associations aimed at informing members of national minorities.
- Support for the information of persons with disabilities - co-financing through the competition of media projects, productions and associations intended for the information of persons with disabilities.

1.1.22 MINISTRY OF PUBLIC INVESTMENTS²⁰⁹

From the RS budget, the Ministry finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Restoration and construction of public purpose buildings and remediation of the consequences of natural disasters - restoration and renovation of public purpose buildings in public ownership.
- Renovation and construction of public facilities in the field of healthcare.
- Renovation and construction of public purpose buildings in the field of education and science.
- Renovation and construction of public facilities in the field of sports infrastructure.
- Renovation and construction of public facilities in the field of social protection.
- Renovation and construction of public purpose buildings in the field of culture.
- Renovation and construction of public facilities in the field of local communal infrastructure.

1.1.23 CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT A PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERDEVELOPED MUNICIPALITIES²¹⁰

From the RS budget, the Cabinet of Ministers without portfolio finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Public call for submission of project proposals to the Programme for financing projects of public interest implemented by associations from the territories of extremely underdeveloped municipalities (units of local self-government from the fourth group).
- Public call for application of projects for the Development Support Programme of extremely underdeveloped municipalities (units of local self-government from the fourth group)
- Support for the implementation of measures of balanced regional development - preparation of project-technical documentation, planning documentation and strategic documents under the jurisdiction of local self-government units.

²⁰⁹ <https://www.obnova.gov.rs/>

²¹⁰ <https://rnro.gov.rs/javni-konkursi/>

1.1.24 CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF COORDINATING ACTIVITIES AND MEASURES IN THE FIELD OF RELATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA WITH THE DIASPORA²¹¹

From the RS budget, the Cabinet of Ministers without portfolio finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Protection of the rights and interests of members of the diaspora and Serbs in the region - co-financing projects of citizens' associations, professional education and legal assistance to the diaspora and Serbs in the region.
- Competition for co-financing of projects that contribute to the preservation and strengthening of ties between the home country and the diaspora, as well as between the home country and the Serbs in the region - support for the organisation of schools, camps (programmes aimed at getting to know the mother country), summer schools of the Serbian language, educational workshops and educations (for the improvement Serbian language classes) intended to preserve the cultural and linguistic identity of children and youth in the diaspora and the region.
- Competition for the co-financing of projects that, with their quality, contribute to the preservation and strengthening of ties between the home country and the diaspora, as well as between the home country and the Serbs in the region.

1.1.25 CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT A PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF EVEN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT²¹²

From the RS budget, the Cabinet of Ministers without portfolio finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Public call for applications for projects for the Regional Growth Promotion Programme in the Republic of Serbia for funds for the co-financing of development documents of regional development and for co-financing of projects of importance for regional growth - the right to use funds for the co-financing of development documents at the level of LGUs and regional areas has one or more LGUs and ARRA or LGUs independently, who participate in projects together.

1.2 AUTHORITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

1.2.1 CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION²¹³

From the RS budget, the Customs Administration finances the project:

- Construction of the complex of the customs office at GP Gradina.

²¹¹ <https://www.mbpdiijaspora.gov.rs/>

²¹² <https://rrrz.gov.rs/extfile/sr/472/%D0%88avni%20poziv.pdf>

²¹³ <https://www.carina.rs/>

1.2.2 ADMINISTRATION FOR FREE ZONES²¹⁴

From the RS budget, the Administration for Free Zones finances the project:

- Promotion, development, control and supervision of free zones - additional benefits of local self-government for investments in the area of the free zone, expansion of the area of free zones, promotion of free zones.

1.2.3 REPUBLIC WATER DIRECTORATE²¹⁵

From the RS budget, the Directorate finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Arrangement and use of water - construction, reconstruction of water facilities for the supply of drinking water and sanitary hygiene needs, plants for the preparation of drinking water, main pipelines and reservoirs, in order to provide healthy drinking water in sufficient quantity for settlements and industry in municipalities and cities.
- Protection of water from pollution - protection and improvement of the quality of surface and underground water, which enables the protection of the environment and human health through the reduced risk of water epidemics, as well as the protection of water sources through the construction and reconstruction of water facilities for the collection, removal and purification of waste water.
- Regulation of watercourses and protection from the harmful effects of water - protection from flooding by external and internal waters and from ice, protection from erosion and torrents and elimination of the consequences of such water effects and risk management from the harmful effects of water.
- Electrification of the irrigation system - construction of the missing power facilities, in order to create the conditions for the connection of facilities of agricultural producers.
- Project of Integrated Development of the Sava and Drina Corridor - financing of flood protection, investment in environmental management, dams and related activities in selected priority areas along the Sava and Drina River Corridor and providing support for the implementation of waterway improvements by demining the right bank of the Sava and Drina River Corridor.
- Construction of irrigation systems - construction, reconstruction, arrangement and rehabilitation of water facilities and irrigation systems, on regional irrigation hydrosystems and dual-purpose systems in the area of Srem, Bačka and Banat and hydromelioration systems in the area of Šabac, Čačak, Pančevački Rit and Topola.
- Completion of the existing network for public water supply in settlements, with its extension to suburban areas - Implementation of the Programme for the Improvement of the Water Supply System in the Cities and Municipalities of Sombor, Vršac, Šabac, Pančevo, Sremska Mitrovica, Loznica, Smederevo, Kraljevo, Jagodina, Trstenik, Aleksinac, Vranje, Piroć Leskovac, Paraćin, Knjaževac, Vrbas and Kikinda.

²¹⁴ <https://www.usz.gov.rs/>

²¹⁵ <https://rdvode.gov.rs/>

Other projects implemented by the Directorate, which are financed from other sources

- Environment and climate - funds of the IPA Programme, protection and improvement of the quality of surface and underground water through the construction of a wastewater treatment plant for the agglomeration of Loznica.

1.2.4 ADMINISTRATION FOR FORESTS²¹⁶

From the RS budget, the Administration finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Sustainable development and improvement of forestry - forest protection, planting of forest trees in autumn of the current year and spring of the following year, forest care, construction of forest roads, production of forest seeds and production of forest planting material.
- Competition for the allocation of funds under the Annual programme of the use of funds for sustainable development and improvement of forestry - the right to the allocation of funds belongs to the owner, that is, the user of forests and forest land, a legal entity and entrepreneur, and a scientific research institution.
- Competition for the allocation of funds under the Annual Programme for the Construction and Reconstruction of Forest Roads - the right to the allocation of funds belongs to the owner, that is, the user of forests and forest land, a legal entity and an entrepreneur.
- Competition for the allocation and use of funds for the sustainable development and improvement of hunting for subsidies in the field of hunting.

1.2.5 ADMINISTRATION FOR AGRARIAN PAYMENTS²¹⁷

From the RS budget, the Administration finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Direct payments - payments that are directly awarded to producers through certain support measures, namely through the milk premium, incentives for crop and livestock production and the realization of recourse.
- Measures of rural development - increase in competitiveness (including reaching a higher level of added value and quality standards, as well as risk management), improvement of the environment, diversification of income and improvement of the quality of life in rural territories.
- Public call for submission of applications for exercising the right to incentives in agriculture and rural development.
- Credit support in agriculture - through subsidizing a part of the interest rate for approved loans in the field of agricultural production, intended for the development of animal husbandry, farming, fruit growing, viticulture, vegetable growing and flower growing, as well as various forms of investments and procurement of agricultural machinery and equipment.
- Special incentives - incentives for the production of planting material and certification and clonal selection, incentives for the implementation of breeding programmes, in order to

²¹⁶ <https://upravazasume.gov.rs/>

²¹⁷ <https://uap.gov.rs/>

achieve breeding goals in animal husbandry, as well as incentives for the implementation of scientific research, development and innovation projects in agriculture.

Other projects implemented by the Administration, which are financed from other sources:

- The project of market-oriented agriculture - funds of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, intended for the financing of a grant scheme for agricultural producers and the establishment of a unique information system of the Ministry of Agriculture and its constituent bodies.

1.2.6 AGRICULTURAL LAND ADMINISTRATION²¹⁸

From the RS budget, the Administration finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Support for the development of agricultural land - financial support through tenders for the performance of works in the area of development of agricultural land through: melioration of meadows and pastures, cultivation of agricultural land, construction of irrigation systems, construction of drainage systems.
- Competition for the distribution of funds for the execution of works on the protection, arrangement and use of agricultural land.
- Support for the protection and use of agricultural land - financial support through tenders to local self-government units and scientific institutions for the development of programmes, projects and study research works of importance for LGUs and the Republic of Serbia.

1.2.7 NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION²¹⁹

From the RS budget, the Academy finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Professional training in public administration - preparation, implementation and development of general professional training programmes and training programmes for managers and employees.
- Strengthening the professional capacities of civil servants in their positions.

1.2.8 DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF SERBIA²²⁰

- Public call for participation in the competitiveness development support programme - financing of projects to increase the level of use of standards in production and business organisation, product certification, management systems and increase the use of other services in the field of quality infrastructure.
- Public call for participation in the Programme for the Improvement of Cooperation and Capacity Building at the Regional and Local Level - financing of projects for the improvement of economic and regional development through the strengthening of inter-institutional cooperation and the capacity of accredited regional development agencies and local self-government units.

²¹⁸ <https://upz.minpolj.gov.rs/sadrzaj/>

²¹⁹ <https://www.napa.gov.rs/>

²²⁰ <https://ras.gov.rs/>

- Public call for the allocation of incentive funds in order to attract direct investments in the automation of existing capacities in the area of the food industry.

1.2.9 PORT MANAGEMENT AGENCY²²¹

From the RS budget, the Academy finances the following programme activities and projects:

- Public call within the cross-border and transnational cooperation programme “Transnational Danube Programme” (INTERREG) for financing coordination projects for priority areas within the EU strategy for the Danube region.

1.3 FUNDS

1.3.1 DEVELOPMENT FUND OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA²²²

- Investment loans to clients who need funds to finance the purchase of equipment, machines, plants, then the construction or purchase of production or business premises.
- Permanent working capital required for financing current obligations that arise in the regular business activities of the end user of the loan, and refer to the procurement of raw materials and materials, supplies, as well as other production costs, receivables from customers, obligations to suppliers.
- Loans for business entities operating in underdeveloped and extremely underdeveloped areas.

1.3.2 FUND FOR INNOVATION ACTIVITY²²³

The Fund supports the development of innovations through appropriate instruments of financial, technical and advisory support, with the aim of empowering innovative companies and strengthening the connection between research and development on the one hand and the business sector on the other, respecting the highest ethical, financial and business standards and practices.

- **Voucher programme in the 4S areas** - The “Innovation Vouchers” programme is a simple financial mechanism that enables small and medium-sized enterprises to, using the services of the scientific research sector, raise the level of innovation of their products and become more competitive on the market. The maximum amount approved for the innovation voucher is up to 800,000 dinars, that is, the innovation voucher covers up to 60% of the total costs of the service. Innovation vouchers are awarded on the basis of a public call.
- **Science and business cooperation programme in the areas of 4S** - aims to advance industrial research by encouraging private sector enterprises and public sector (majority state-owned) scientific research organisations to carry out joint research and

²²¹ <https://www.aul.gov.rs/>

²²² <https://fondzarazvoj.gov.rs/cir>

²²³ <http://www.inovacionifond.rs/cir/>

development projects with the idea of creating new or improving existing commercially viable products and services, like and innovative technologies with significant impact on future development and market potential. Beneficiaries of the funds are consortia developing new commercially applicable technologies, services and products in the priority areas of smart specialization. Consortia must be composed of at least one private company and one public scientific research organisation, and may have a maximum of five members. Through this programme, the Fund for Innovation Activities awards co-financing in the maximum amount of up to 300,000 euros per project, i.e. a maximum of 70% of the total project budget, with mandatory co-financing of the consortium in the amount of at least 30% of the total project budget, when the main member of the consortium is a micro or small company.

- **Programme for financing development and innovation projects of companies in the areas of 4S** - the innovation co-financing programme is intended for companies from the 4S area that need significant financial resources for the realization of the development cycle of technological innovations and covering the high costs for the transfer of research into a commercially viable product. The applicants are micro, small and medium-sized private companies established in the Republic of Serbia, which develop a technological innovation for which there is a market need and have the potential to create new intellectual property, as well as a competitive position in the global and domestic environment. The amount allocated by the Fund cannot exceed the amount of 300,000 euros, and the implementation of the projects can last no longer than 24 months. The funds allocated by the Fund for Innovation Activities within this programme cover a maximum of 60% of the total approved project budget, while at least 40% must be provided by the applicant (enterprise) from other private sources, independent of the Fund.
- **Accelerator and subprogramme intended for startups in the 4S area** - the programme will consist of two components: one for the early stage (idea) and the other for companies in the scale-up stage (increasing the volume of business). Each component will include 20 companies (teams of two founders) per year, selected on a competitive basis by participating investors (including business angels, early-stage venture capital funds, etc.). Each component will have intensive training and mentoring programmes lasting two to three months. The program will be implemented with the support of the World Bank in the amount of 8,000,000 dollars.
- **Proof of concept, programme for researchers from scientific research organisations** - this measure is intended to support innovations from the earliest stages of development, created in scientific research organisations. This program provides financial and mentoring support to determine the emergence of a new product, process or technology with commercial potential. Thanks to this programme, project teams that have been approved for funding will have a mentor at their disposal for product definition, business model development and future development.
- **Early Development Programme** - is intended for private companies that develop a technological innovation for which there is a need on the market and that have the potential to create new intellectual property. The goal is to provide financing for the

development of innovative technologies, products and services with market application to encourage innovative entrepreneurship and enable business survival during the critical phase of research and development. The applicant can be a private micro or small company owned by a Serbian majority, established in the Republic of Serbia and no older than five years at the time of application, as well as a team consisting of a maximum of five members. The allocated funds can cover a maximum of 70% of the total approved project budget, while the amount of funding from the Fund for Innovation Activity cannot exceed 80,000 euros for projects lasting up to one year. At least 30% of the total approved project budget must be provided by the applicant (enterprise) from other private sources, independent of the Fund.

1.3.3 FUND FOR SCIENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA²²⁴

The primary goal of establishing the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, as a special organisation, is to provide support for scientific research activities and development activities in the Republic of Serbia, management and provision of financial resources, as well as providing professional support to researchers from accredited scientific research organisations in the realization of scientific projects within the programme announced by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia. Programme activities of the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia are implemented through the following published programmes:

- **Programme for excellent projects of young researchers (PROMIS)** aims to involve young researchers in scientific research work, to strengthen the professional capacities of young researchers, to train young PhDs in project management, to train young researchers to apply for other research projects, especially in the European Union, to create new project teams, as well as to provide support for excellent ideas and scientific research work that will affect society and the economy. The programme to support the development of projects in the field of artificial intelligence is designed to encourage the excellence and relevance of scientific research in the Republic of Serbia in the field of artificial intelligence, to encourage the application of the results of scientific research in the field of artificial intelligence in the development of the economy of the Republic of Serbia, to promote the excellence and development of human resources in the field of artificial intelligence for science and economy of the Republic of Serbia and promotes international cooperation in the subject domain of science and innovation.
- **Serbian science cooperation programme with the diaspora** - vouchers for knowledge exchange, aims to enable the establishment of scientific cooperation with the diaspora for the purpose of improving and exchanging knowledge, establishing or improving scientific cooperation, joint work on scientific research and research and development problems and challenges, publication of joint works and patents, support for the development of new services, product commercialization, technology transfer, network expansion and cooperation with the diaspora, as well as the preparation of proposals for joint projects for applying to foreign funds.
- **IDEA programme** aims to finance projects based on excellent ideas that may in the future have a significant impact on the development of science and research, the

224 <https://fondzanauku.gov.rs/>

economy and/or society as a whole, the involvement of excellent researchers in scientific research work, the strengthening of the professional capacities of researchers and the creation of new project teams.

All programmes implemented by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia through public calls should ensure a high scientific level, innovative results, competitiveness at the international level and relevance in relation to the challenges of society as a whole. Funds for the work of the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia are provided from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, and additional funds are provided through an international agreement with the World Bank.

1.3.4 CENTER FOR THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE (CPN) ²²⁵

The Center for the Promotion of Science is a public institution, with the aim of promoting science and technology through cooperation with research and educational institutions in the country and around the world, with the private sector, the media, and state authorities. The role of CPN is to establish a link between science and society by bringing together all relevant actors and the general public in the process of research and innovation. The ultimate goal is the integration of society into research processes in order to gain the best possible insight into the needs of citizens and to face social challenges as adequately as possible.

From 2011, until 2020, the Center for the Promotion of Science through a public call finances projects for the promotion and popularization of science on the territory of the Republic of Serbia. In the indicated period, a total of 527 projects were approved and financed, and 113,445 million dinars were allocated for these purposes. From 2020, the Center for the Promotion of Science is specifically financing projects that are implemented through the established network of 15 science clubs⁵⁸ at regional centers for professional training (1,855 million dinars).

1.4 BANKS

1.4.1 Erste Bank A.D. ²²⁶

- Financing of the public sector - local self-government and public enterprises.
- Financing of renewable energy projects.
- Financing of investment projects based on the principles of project financing.
- Support programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises to open and maintain sustainable businesses.

1.4.2 UniCredit bank ²²⁷

- Financing of companies dedicated to improving the social impact of their business as well as employment opportunities for different categories of women, young people and segments of the population that face greater obstacles to entering the labor market.

²²⁵ <https://www.cpn.edu.rs/>

²²⁶ <https://www.erstebank.rs/sr/Pravna-lica>

²²⁷ <https://www.unicreditbank.rs/rs/pi.html>

- Qualified investments and investments in energy efficiency related to improving the energy efficiency of buildings and the industrial sector.
- The COSME programme is intended for small and medium-sized enterprises, according to the EU segmentation, with the aim of supporting the strategy for sustainable and comprehensive growth.

1.4.3 Banca Intesa²²⁸

- Loans for the improvement of energy efficiency - the loan is intended for investments in the installation of insulation, installation of new windows, doors, heat pumps, solar panels, replacement of lighting and numerous other energy-efficient solutions.
- Intesa Casa green loans - housing loan for the purchase of energy-saving apartments, with an energy passport of category A or B.

1.4.4 NLB Komercijalna banka²²⁹

- ECG Investment loans are intended for financing energy efficient measures, measures for renewable energy sources, inclusion projects, circular economy.
- Investment loans are intended for financing the purchase of equipment, machines, vehicles, financing the purchase, construction of business premises for own use, refinancing of investment loans in other banks, refinancing of own investment - legalization of built objects - other investments in fixed assets for the purpose of carrying out activities.

1.4.5 Bank Poštanska štedionica²³⁰

- Investment loans are intended for financing the long-term investment needs of companies. It can be investment in fixed assets, vehicles, plants, machines, equipment, construction or purchase of business premises, refinancing of own investment.
- Roma entrepreneurship promotion programme, loans to small and medium-sized companies whose founders are residents of Roma nationality, as well as to entrepreneurs of Roma nationality.

1.4.6 ProCredit bank²³¹

- Credits for energy efficiency.
- Business loans for solar panels.
- Grants for new machines.

²²⁸ <https://www.bancaintesa.rs/>

²²⁹ <https://www.nlbkb.rs/>

²³⁰ <https://www.posted.co.rs/>

²³¹ <https://www.procreditbank.rs/>

2 INTERNATIONAL SOURCES

2.1 EUROPEAN UNION FUNDS

2.1.1 IPA - INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE

Since 2007, the European Union (EU) has provided financial support to the countries of the “Western Balkans” through the unique Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), which united all previous pre-accession financial assistance instruments: PHARE, SAPARD, ISPA, CARDS. In the period 2021-2027. 14.162 billion euros will be made available to all IPA beneficiaries. Total budget for the period 2014-2020. in 2015 it amounted to EUR 11.668 billion, and Serbia was allocated around EUR 200 million in non-reimbursable aid from the IPA 2015. Total IPA budget for the period 2007-2013. was 11.468 billion euros. In the period 2007-2013. 1.4 billion euros was allocated to the RS.

2.1.1.1 INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE IPA 2021-2027.

Following the political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council of the EU regarding the IPA III instrument, the Regulation on the IPA III instrument for the period 2021-2027 was adopted on September 15, 2021. The general objective of IPA III is to support the beneficiaries in the implementation of political, institutional, economic and social reforms necessary for their alignment with the values and rules of the EU and the achievement of EU membership. In addition, the regulation contains a list of specific objectives grouped into five categories (so-called “Windows”).

- 1) Rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy (15.1%);
- 2) Good governance, alignment with EU acquis, strategic communication and good neighborly relations (16.6%);
- 3) Green agenda and sustainable connectivity (42.4%);
- 4) Competitiveness and inclusive growth (22.3%);
- 5) Territorial and cross-border cooperation (3.5%).

In order to achieve a balanced distribution of funds among IPA beneficiaries, the European Commission (EC) proposed the principle of “fair distribution” to be measured during the entire period of implementation of IPA III (2021 - 2027), and not on an annual basis. However, in addition to the aforementioned principle, access to funds will be based on criteria such as: compliance with the strategic framework and the IPA III programme framework, the readiness of projects / programmes for implementation and their expected impact and progress in the process of European integration with special attention to the rule of law. , fundamental rights and good governance.

The existing IPA structures should serve as a basis for the efficient use of this instrument as well as other potential sources of EU funds. In this way, as well as the implementation of the IPA programme based on the model of indirect management, the strengthening of capacities necessary for the transition to the use of Cohesion Policy funds will continue. The main partners in the planning and programming process of the IPA III instrument will be, as before, the National IPA Coordinator and the EU Delegation²³².

²³²<https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/instru->

2.1.1.2 IPA II - INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE 2014 - 2020

IPA II represents the framework for EU pre-accession support for the period 2014-2020. One of the changes in the programming and implementation of the IPA II instrument in relation to IPA I in the period 2007-2013. refers to the structure of the IPA II program, in which instead of the 5 components, which were characteristic of IPA I, policy areas were introduced ("*policy areas*"). The policy areas within IPA II are: reforms as part of preparations for EU membership and building institutions and capacities; socio-economic and regional development; employment, social policies, education, promotion of gender equality and development of human resources; agriculture and rural development, and regional and territorial cooperation.

About 200 million euros of non-reimbursed aid was intended for Serbia from the IPA 2015, from which projects in the fields of energy and transport, rule of law, state administration reform and agriculture would be financed. For the period 2014-2020, pre-accession aid in Serbia had two main pillars: Democracy and the rule of law and Competitiveness and development.

2.1.1.3 INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE IPA 2007-2013.

Implementation of IPA 2007-13. was intended to provide financial assistance through five channels (known as "*components*"): transition assistance and institution building; cross-border cooperation ("*Cross border cooperation*"- CBC); regional development; human resource development and rural development.

2.1.1.4 EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA 2021-2027

Territorial cooperation programmes²³³ or Interreg programmes represent financial support for the cooperation of border territories of neighboring states (cross-border cooperation) or the cooperation of parts or whole states (transnational and interregional cooperation) to solve issues of common interest - environmental protection, waste management, provision of services in various sectors, cultural and economic cooperation, tourism, traffic, etc. The basis for implementing the programme is a seven-year operational programme or cooperation programme that consists of an analysis of the territory covered by the programme, the challenges faced by that territory and an analysis of which of those challenges can be overcome through cooperation with institutions from other parts of the country covered by the programme.

In the financial period 2021-2027. year, Serbia participates in ten programmes of European territorial cooperation, namely: Hungary-Serbia, Romania-Serbia, Bulgaria-Serbia, Croatia-Serbia, Serbia-Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia-Montenegro, Serbia-North Macedonia, IPA Adriatic-Ionian programme, the Programme for the Danube Region and the URBACT Programme. Also, there is a possibility that additional territorial cooperation programmes will be approved for Serbia during this financial perspective.

The following text shows the programmes that are available to cities and municipalities of the EU PRO plus programme (all except the Hungary-Serbia cross-border cooperation programme).

ment-za-pretpriustupnu-pomoc-2021-2027/

https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance/how-does-it-work_en

233 https://www.mei.gov.rs/upload/documents/publikacije/Brosure%20nove/22/Programi_evropske_teritorijalne_saradnje_u_RS_2021-2027.pdf

2.1.1.4.1 ROMANIA - SERBIA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMESupport area²³⁴

Priority 1: Environmental protection and risk management

The specific objectives within this thematic priority are:

- Improving the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution;
- Promotion of renewable energy in accordance with the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001. including the sustainability criteria set out therein;
- Promotion of energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions i
- Promoting adaptation to climate change and disaster risk prevention, adaptability in line with ecosystem-based approaches.

Priority 2: Social and economic development

The specific objectives within this thematic priority are:

- Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through the development of accessible infrastructure, as well as strengthening adaptability for distance and online education and training;
- Ensuring equal access to health care and improving the adaptability of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family and community-based care and
- Strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation.

Priority 3: Increasing border management capacity

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Strengthening the institutional capacity of public authorities, especially those authorized to manage a certain territory and interested parties.

Financial sources

IPA	74,566,827.00 euros
Total (IPA + co-financing)	87,725,678.82 euros

2.1.1.4.2 BULGARIA - SERBIA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMESupport area²³⁵

Priority 1: Competitive border region

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Improvement of sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and creation of new jobs in SMEs, including productive investments.

234 <https://www.romania-serbia.net/>235 <http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/>

Priority 2: Integral development of the border region

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Encouraging integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security in non-urban areas.

Priority 3: A more resilient border region

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience taking into account ecosystem-based approaches.

Financial sources

IPA	32,398,938.00 euros
Total (IPA + co-financing)	38,116,397.65 euros

2.1.1.4.3 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME CROATIA - SERBIA

Support area²³⁶

Priority 1: working for a smarter programming area

The specific goal within this thematic priority is:

- development and improvement of research and innovation capacities and adoption of advanced technologies.

Priority 2: working for a greener programme area that is resistant to climate change

Specific goals within this thematic priority are:

- Promotion of renewable energy in accordance with the directive on renewable energy (EU) 2018/2001, including the sustainability criteria specified therein;
- Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches.

Priority 3: Coworking for a healthier and more inclusive programme area

The specific goal within this thematic priority is:

- Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering the resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care.

Priority 4: Coworking for more sustainable and socially innovative tourism and culture

The specific goal within this thematic priority is:

- Highlighting the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation.

²³⁶ www.croatia-serbia.com

Financial sources

IPA	38,281,653.00 euros
Total (IPA + co-financing)	45,037,238.82 euros

*2.1.1.4.4 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME SERBIA - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA*Support area²³⁷

Priority 1: Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Develop and promote joint tourist offers based on cultural and natural heritage

Priority 2: Investing in youth, education and skills

The specific objectives within this thematic priority are:

- Improve youth activism and youth socio-economic participation
- Increase the employability of certain groups by providing new skills.

Financial sources

IPA	14,000,000.00 euros
Total (IPA + co-financing)	16,223,529.41 euros

*2.1.1.4.5 SERBIA - MONTENEGRO CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME*Support area²³⁸

Priority 1: Encouraging employment, labor mobility and social and cultural inclusion in the programme area

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Improve the quality of public health and social services to include marginalized groups in the programme area.

Priority 2: Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Improve and promote a jointly coordinated cross-border tourism offer based on protected cultural and natural heritage.

Financial sources

IPA	8,400,000.00 euros
Total (IPA + co-financing)	9,734,117.65 euros

²³⁷ <http://srb-bih.org/>

²³⁸ www.cbcsrb-mne.org

2.1.1.4.6 SERBIA - NORTH MACEDONIA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMESupport area²³⁹

Priority 1: Employment, labor mobility and social and cultural cross-border inclusion

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Improvement of social and cultural inclusion and health

Priority 2: strengthening tourism and cultural and natural heritage

The specific objective within this thematic priority is:

- Improvement of cultural and natural heritage towards the sustainable development of tourism.

Financial sources

IPA	8,400,000.00 euros
Total (IPA + co-financing)	9,734,117.65 euros

2.1.1.4.7 ADRIATIC - IONIAN TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMMESupport area²⁴⁰

Priority 1 – Support for a smarter Adriatic-Ionian region

- Development and improvement of research and innovation capacities and adoption of advanced technologies
- Developing skills for smart specialization, industrial transition and entrepreneurship

Priority 2 – Support for a greener Adriatic-Ionian region more resistant to climate change

- Promoting adaptation to climate change and disaster risk prevention, building resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches
- Promoting the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy
- Improving the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
- Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility, as part of the transition to a net zero carbon economy

Priority 3 - A more connected Europe with better mobility (CP 3)

- Development and improvement of sustainable, climate-resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility

Priority 4 - Support for the management of the Adriatic-Ionian region (ISO1 - Better management of Interreg)

- Support for the management of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and the institutional capacities of authorities.

²³⁹ <https://eu.rs-mk.org/>²⁴⁰ www.adrioninterreg.eu

Financial sources

ERDF (EU Member States)	65,848,129.00 euros
IPA	70,840,386.00 euros
Total EU funds (ERDF+IPA)	136,688,515.00 euros
Total co-financing	24,121,502.65 euros
Total programme	160,810,017.65 euros

*2.1.1.4.8 TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR THE DUNAVIS REGION*Support area²⁴¹

Priority 1 – A smarter Danube region

- Specific objective 1.1 Development and improvement of research and innovation capacities and use of advanced technologies
- Specific objective 1.2 Developing skills for smart specialization, industrial transition and entrepreneurship

Priority 2 – A greener Danube region with low carbon emissions

- Specific objective 2.1 Promotion of renewable energy in accordance with Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including sustainable criteria defined by the directive
- Specific objective 2.2 Promotion of capacities for adaptation to climate change in the Danube region and management of natural disasters at the transnational level in relation to ecological risks, taking into account ecosystemic approaches
- Specific objective 2.3 Sustainable, integrated, transnational water and sediment management in the Danube river basin, ensuring a good quality and quantity balance between water and sediment deposits
- Specific objective 2.4 Protection and preservation of biodiversity in ecological corridors and eco-regions of transnational importance in the Danube region

Priority 3 – Socially oriented Danube region

- Specific objective 3.1 Accessible, inclusive and effective labor markets
- Specific objective 3.2 Quality, accessible and inclusive services in education, training and lifelong learning
- Specific objective 3.3 Strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation

Priority 4 – Better management of cooperation in the Danube region

- Specific objective 4.1 Support the management of the EUSDR
- Specific objective 4.2 Strengthening institutional capacities for territorial and macro-regional management.

241 www.interreg-danube.eu

Financial sources

ERDF (EU Member States)	165,424,228.00 euros
IPA	30,000,000.00 euros
NDICI (neighboring countries of the EU)	19,623,629.00 euros
Total EU contribution	215,047,857.00 euros
Total programme	268,809,822.00 euros

2.1.1.4.9 URBACT PROGRAMME

URBACT²⁴² is one of the programmes of interregional cooperation. The goal of the programme is to encourage sustainable integral urban development in cities across Europe, and the projects are implemented by municipal administrations in partnership forming cooperation networks. URBACT's mission is to enable cities to work together and develop integral solutions to urban challenges, by networking, learning from each other's experiences, drawing lessons and identifying good practices to improve urban policies.

Support area

Priority: Promoting integral sustainable urban development through cooperation

- Specific objective: Improving the institutional capacity of local government, especially those who have a mandate to manage a certain territory, as well as other interested parties.

Financial sources

ERDF (EU Member States)	79,769,799.00 euros
IPA	5,000,000.00 euros
Total IPA	5,160,000.00 euros

2.1.1.5 WESTERN BALKANS INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK (WBIF)

Investment framework for the Western Balkans²⁴³ (The Western Balkans Investment Framework - WBIF) encourages socio-economic development and the process of accession to the European Union throughout the Western Balkans, by providing financial resources and technical assistance for strategically important investments. It represents a joint initiative of the European Union, international financial institutions (EIB, EBRD, CEB, KfW, AFD and WB), bilateral donors and the Western Balkan Six. The investment framework for the Western Balkans is considered the main regional instrument for providing support in the preparation and implementation of strategically relevant projects in the field of transport, energy, environmental protection and social infrastructure in "countries in the EU accession process". From February 2014 to December 2021, Serbia was awarded: 30 grants for technical assistance with a total value

²⁴² <https://urbact.eu/>

²⁴³ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/investicioni-okvir-za-zapadni-balkan-western-balkans-investment-framework-wbif/>

of over 54 million euros; 6 investment grants worth 134.45 million. EUR, whereby the total investment value of the co-financed infrastructure projects amounts to 605 million. euros.

Table: Overview of investment grants by sector

	Traffic	Investment amount. grant
1	Modernization of the railway line Nis-Dimitrovgrad-border with Bulgaria section: Sićevo-Staničenje-Dimitrovgrad	43,730,000 euros
2	Modernization of the Niš-Dimitrovgrad railway - border with Bulgaria - electrification and signaling	27,770,000 euros
3	Construction of the highway route E80 Niš-Medare (Phase I Niš-Pločnik)	40,600,000 euros
	Environment	
4	Makiš - extension of the drinking water processing plant	2.940865 euros
	Energy	
5	Construction of the 400 kV transmission line Kragujevac - Kraljevo with raising the voltage level to 400 kV at the Kraljevo 3 substation, Trans-Balkan Corridor - Phase I: Section II	6,600,000 euros
6	Construction of a new double 400 KV transmission line Obrenovac - Bajina Bašta, with the reconstruction of the existing Obrenovac and Bajina Bašta substations and raising the voltage level of the Bajina Bašta substation to 400 kV	12,800,000 euros
7/ 8	2 regional projects - part of the Regional Programme for Energy Efficiency for the Western Balkans	2 investment grants in the amount of 28,765,972 euros

In 2021, a document titled “Strategic Orientation of the WBIF for the Western Balkans (EFSD+)” was presented. This document includes: policy context, legal basis and instruments, including the new EU connectivity strategy called “Global Gateway”, guiding principles and a description of the areas of intervention that will be supported through the European Fund for Sustainable Development plus (eng: The European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus EFSD+ and budget guarantees as well as combining loans and grants for the public and private sectors. Recommendations of the so-called of informal expert working groups (NRG) for accelerating the implementation of WBIF projects, the Green Agenda and socially responsible public procurement, information was provided on the addition of the Regional Energy Efficiency Programme (REEP+) in the amount of over 100 million euros, information on priorities for support in the following period, rates of co-financing of projects with EU investment grant funds.

2.1.1.6 IPARD III

Within the instrument for pre-accession assistance IPA III period 2021-2027, which applies from January 1, 2021, there is also a special Programme IPARD III²⁴⁴ for support in the field of rural development. The EC has established a budget in the amount of 288,000,000 euros for this Programme for the period 2021-2027. The governing body of IPARD submitted the final version of the IPARD III programme to the European Commission on January 21, 2022. Of the 13 measures offered by the EC to the candidate countries for EU membership, the Republic of Serbia decided to implement seven measures within the IPARD III programme. In relation to the IPARD II programme and measures accredited so far, the following measures will be available to users:

- Measure 4 - Agroecology - climate and organic agriculture;
- Measure 5 - Implementation of local rural development strategies - LEADER approach;
- Measure 6 - Investments in rural public infrastructure.

It is planned to introduce new sectors through the IPARD III programme, such as the fishing sector, the sector for the processing of grains and industrial plants, and within Measure 7, in addition to the rural tourism sector, new sectors are planned, namely: Direct sale of agricultural and local products and service sector in rural areas.

2.1.1.7 MULTI-USER IPA

The development of regional cooperation is one of the important prerequisites in the EU accession process, and at numerous summits between the EU and the Western Balkans, it was confirmed that the rapprochement of the EU will go hand in hand with the development of regional cooperation. In addition to individually supporting candidate countries and potential candidates for membership, the EU provides financial and technical support with the aim of realizing common (regional) priorities of the beneficiaries of the IPA II instrument. This support is provided from the Multi-user IPA instrument²⁴⁵ (Multy Beneficiary IPA), whose goal is to improve regional cooperation and solve issues of general interest for all IPA beneficiaries. In accordance with the relevant EU procedure, the main guidelines in the process of defining regional projects/actions are presented in the document EU Programme Framework for IPA III, which defines the general priorities, measures and areas that will be financially supported as part of this instrument in the period 2021- in 2027 The support provided under this IPA III component is focused on four priority areas:

- support for regional investments;
- support for territorial cooperation through the implementation of cross-border and transnational cooperation programmes;
- support to regional structures and organisations and
- horizontal support to the common priorities of the beneficiaries from the region.

244 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/ipard-iii/>

245 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/src/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/visekorisnicka-ipa/>

2.1.1.8 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COHESION POLICY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (IPA 2015)

Project “Development of the Cohesion Policy Management System in the Republic of Serbia”²⁴⁶ is financed with EU funds through the IPA for 2015 in the amount of almost 2.7 million euros. It aims to prepare the state administration of the RS for the effective implementation of the Cohesion Policy (KP) of the EU. The basic purpose of the project is to improve the capacities of institutions in the RS at the national and sub-national level for efficient preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects financed from structural funds and the cohesion fund of the European Union. It consists of three basic components:

- establishing a legislative and institutional framework for the implementation of KP;
- preparation of relevant planning and programme documents for the implementation of KP, i
- raising the capacity of institutions and bodies nominated for the implementation of KP, as well as partners and potential users at the national and subnational level.

In this way, the project should also contribute to the successful implementation of the measures defined by the Action Plan for negotiation chapter 22, which is the basic criterion for the opening of this chapter. The implementation of the project began in July 2019 and will last a total of 36 months. The main user and coordinator of the activity is MEI.

2.1.1.9 EU PRO PLUS

EU programme for local development - EU PRO Plus²⁴⁷ contributes to a more balanced socio-economic development of 99 local governments in two regions: Šumadija and Western Serbia and Southern and Eastern Serbia. The programme works on improved management of territorial development, economic growth and improved social infrastructure and social cohesion.

For this three-year programme, which began in January 2021, the EU has allocated funds in the total amount of 40 million euros, initially 30 million for contracted development activities and an additional ten million aimed at supporting local governments, small businesses and the health system in recovery from the consequences caused by the covid 19 pandemic. The programme is led by MEI, a implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

The direct beneficiaries of the EU PRO Plus programme are MEI, 99 local governments, local government structures, regional development agencies, other business support organisations, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). The end users of the programme are residents of 99 cities and municipalities.

EU PRO Plus is based on the National Priorities for International Aid in the RS until 2025 (NAD), crucial for economic and social development and the EU integration process, while it especially contributes to the preparation for meeting the requirements from Chapter 22 of the EU acquis - Regional Policy and coordination of structural instruments. EU PRO relies on the good practices and achieved results of its predecessors, the development programmes EU PROGRES, European PROGRES and EU PRO.

²⁴⁶ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/projekti-ministarstva-za-evropske-integracije/razvoj-sistema-za-upravljanje-kohezivnom-politikom-ipa-2015/>

²⁴⁷ <https://www.euproplus.org.rs/onama/o-programu>

2.1.2 PROGRAMMES OF THE UNION

Union programmes²⁴⁸ represent a series of integrated measures that are intended to strengthen cooperation between the member states of the European Union and candidate states in various fields. The programmes of the Union are financed from the common budget of the EU, with funds intended for the development of various priority areas: environmental protection, energy, transport, development of entrepreneurship, competitiveness, culture, education, etc.

The Republic of Serbia signed the Framework Agreement on participation in European Union programmes on November 22, 2004. Participation in Union programmes is an opportunity for the RS to become familiar with EU policies, European institutions, laws and their application in practice, as well as value systems and EU functioning mechanisms. According to EC rules, competent domestic institutions - ministries, associations, organisations, offices - are responsible for the participation of the RS in Union programmes, which have a mandate for this. The coordination of participation in each individual programme of the Union for which the Republic of Serbia has paid a financial contribution to the general budget of the EU is entrusted to the national contact points from the respective national institutions. MEI coordinates the process of European integration in the Republic of Serbia, which includes cooperation with relevant ministries regarding negotiations for appropriate negotiation chapters as well as in the management of EU programmes, from which it follows that MEI is responsible for reporting to the Government and informing the public about all international development assistance, including and Union programmes. In the previous period, the Republic of Serbia participated in thirteen programmes of the Union, and from June 30, 2023. can also participate in the Digital Europe programme:

2.1.2.1 DIGITAL EUROPE

Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)²⁴⁹ is a new programme financed by the EU and aimed at connecting digital technologies to business, citizens and public administration. In June 2023, the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Serbia was signed on Serbia's participation in the European Union's Digital Europe programme for the period until 2027.²⁵⁰ On the basis of this agreement, legal and natural persons with residence or headquarters in Serbia will be able to apply for project financing in the European Union and will be on an equal footing with subjects from full member countries when it comes to granting grants from EU funds. IT companies and scientists will be able to apply for the following areas of digitization: artificial intelligence, High Performance Computing (HPC), advanced digital skills, and the development and application of digital capabilities and interoperability. The total value of the Digital Europe programme is estimated at 7.5 billion euros.

2.1.2.2 HORIZON EUROPE

Horizon 2020 is the EU's largest integrated programme for research and innovation, bringing together all programmes previously funded by the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP7) and

248 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/programi-unije/>

249 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/digital-programme>

250 <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/716373/potpisan-sporazum-o-ucescu-srbije-u-programu-digitalna-evropa.php>

the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT). By bringing together innovation and research, the programme seeks to make progress in three priority areas: Excellence in Science, Industry Leadership and Societal Challenges. The programme is intended to build a society and economy in the EU based on knowledge and innovation. It is planned that - through the mobilization of additional funds for research, development and innovation, including the allocation of 3% of GDP for research and development throughout the EU by 2020 - the goals related to research and development will be achieved. The ultimate goal of this financial instrument is to create an innovative Union - by supporting the development of world science, removing barriers to innovation and making it easier for the public and private sectors to work together.

2.1.2.3 SME COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME – COSME

The programme for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises is a programme for the promotion of the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. The goals of the programme are: strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, encouraging entrepreneurial culture and promoting the establishment and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises. Measures also supported by this programme include project writing trainings, activities that enable access to new markets, as well as the promotion of as many transnational partnerships as possible. The programme also supports educational exchange between entrepreneurs (*Erasmus* for young entrepreneurs). As part of this programme, 1.4 billion euros were allocated from the budget for companies, so that they could access loans more easily. This objective is implemented through direct financing or by providing loan guarantees.

2.1.2.4 PROGRAMME FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

The programme for employment and social innovation aims to reach a high level of quality and sustainable employment, while ensuring adequate social protection and social inclusion. Also, the programme helps to prevent and reduce poverty, as well as to improve working conditions in the period from 2014 to 2020.

2.1.2.5 ERASMUS

Erasmus is a European Union programme that provides funding for cooperation projects in three areas: education, youth and sports. In the broadest sense, the Erasmus programme in the field of education has the following priorities: to promote and support the development of all levels of education, to strengthen the links between formal, non-formal and informal learning, to strengthen the connection between education and the world of work, to create additional values for the European area of education, to connect member countries in defining educational policies. The focus of the Erasmus programme is to strengthen the potential of young people for active participation in civil society, the development of leadership skills, solidarity and understanding between cultures. From 2014 until now, educational institutions and youth organisations from Serbia have been coordinators or partners in projects with a total value of over 83 million euros. So far, according to available data, 7,644 individuals from educational institutions, organisations and institutions dealing with youth and non-governmental

organisations have been on exchanges in Erasmus member countries. It is responsible for the implementation and promotion of the Erasmus programme in the RS Tempus Foundation.

2.1.2.6 CREATIVE EUROPE

Creative Europe is an EU programme to support the culture and media sectors. The programme consists of two sub-programmes: Culture - for the promotion of the cultural sector and the Media programme - for the support of the audiovisual sector.

Through the Culture sub-programme, the cooperation of cultural and creative organisations between different countries is promoted, initiatives are supported to translate and promote literary works throughout the European Union, as well as to develop networks that enable the competitiveness and international activity of the cultural and creative sector. Platforms for the promotion of new artists and the encouragement of European programmes for cultural and artistic works are also being established. The sub-programme Culture includes four competitions: European cooperation projects, European platforms, European networks and Literary translation projects.

The Media Programme finances activities that include: the development of the European audiovisual sector, respecting and presenting the European cultural identity and heritage, the promotion of European audiovisual works within and outside the borders of the EU, strengthening the competitiveness of the audiovisual sector, facilitating access to financing and the promotion of the use of digital technologies. This fund will finance the European Capital of Culture and the European Heritage Label, as well as European awards for literature, architecture, heritage protection, film art and pop and rock music.

2.1.2.7 EUROPE FOR CITIZENS

The Europe for Citizens programme aims to promote European identity and European citizenship. It is intended for citizens' associations, civil society organisations and local self-government units. The general objectives of the programme are the financing of projects aimed at a better understanding of the EU, its history and diversity, as well as the promotion of European citizenship and the improvement of civic and democratic participation at the EU level. The Europe for Citizens programme is divided into two areas: European memory and democratic engagement, and civic participation. The goal of the first area is awareness of historical continuity, common European values and goals. The purpose of the second area is to support the democratic participation of citizens in life and development in Europe.

2.1.2.8 EUROPEAN HEALTH PROGRAMME III

The programme is the main instrument used by the EC to implement the EU health strategy. The main goals of the programme are to improve the health system and reduce inequality in providing/receiving health care. The programme provides support in four areas: 1) Health promotion, healthy lifestyle and disease prevention; 2) Protect EU citizens from serious cross-border threats to health; 3) Contribution to the creation of innovative, efficient and sustainable healthcare systems and 4) Easier access to better and safer healthcare for EU citizens.

2.1.2.9 FISCALIS 2020

Fiskalis 2020 is a programme that deals with the exchange of information and experiences between the tax authorities of European countries. The goal of the programme is to, in partnership with other European countries, develop a trans-European information system and build a network between users of national authorities. The programme supports the fight against tax evasion and avoidance, the planning of tax policy and the implementation of EU legislation in the field of taxation. This is achieved through the exchange of information, support for administrative cooperation and the increase of the administrative capacities of the participating countries, with the aim of reducing the administrative burden of tax authorities and harmonizing costs for taxpayers.

2.1.2.10 CUSTOMS 2020.

Customs 2020 is a programme that supports the cooperation of customs authorities between EU member states and candidate countries. The goal is to improve their efficiency, by achieving better cohesion, in order to avoid damaging the Customs Union. The programme supports the following measures: joint actions, seminars and workshops, project groups, teams of experts, building administrative capacities in customs administrations, studies, information campaigns, development of IT skills, training for developing the necessary professional skills and knowledge in the field of customs.

2.1.2.11 CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The aim of EU activities in the field of civil protection is to support efforts to prevent disasters and ensure the readiness of civil protection units to act in cases of disasters - at the national, regional and local levels. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism offers RS numerous opportunities for cooperation: application of tools for monitoring and early warning systems, participation in joint trainings and exercises, exchange of experts, participation in disaster prevention projects, direct communication with other civil protection authorities, exchange of information and best practices, etc.

In the new financial perspective from 2021 to 2027, most of the Union's programmes are the successors of the previous programmes, but changes, new programmes, new rules for implementation, monitoring and reporting, as well as new criteria for participating in the programmes have also been introduced.

2.1.2.12 INSTRUMENT FOR CONNECTING EUROPE

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) aims to support the achievement of EU policy objectives in the transport, energy and digital sectors, and in relation to trans-European networks, enabling or accelerating investments in projects of common interest, as well as supporting cross-border cooperation in the production of renewable energy. It aims to maximize synergies between the sectors covered by the CEF and other EU programmes.

2.1.2.13 RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

The overall goal is to contribute to the creation of an area in which the rights of persons contained in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union are promoted and protected. Specifically, this programme should promote the rights deriving from European citizenship, the principles of non-discrimination and equality between women and men, the right to the protection of personal data, the rights of the child, the rights deriving from the consumer legislation of the Union and from the freedom of doing business in the internal market.

2.1.2.14 EUROPEAN INSTRUMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) aims to support the promotion of democracy and human rights in non-EU countries. The key objectives are: improving respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, strengthening the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reforms, supporting and strengthening the international and regional framework for the protection of human rights, justice, the rule of law and the promotion of democracy, building trust and increasing reliability and transparency of democratic elections process, especially through the monitoring of election processes, etc.

2.1.3 COHESION POLICY AND OTHER FUNDS

Cohesion policy²⁵¹ (KP), also known as Regional Policy, represents the EU's main investment policy, which contributes to creating new jobs, improving the quality of life of citizens and increasing the overall economic development of both member states and the EU as a whole. It is also an expression of solidarity, given that support is directed to less developed regions and EU member states - with the aim of strengthening the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the Union. In December 2013, the legal framework for KP for the period 2014-2020 was established. year. For the mentioned period, the budget of the KP amounted to 351.8 billion euros, and it was distributed among 28 member states. RS will be able to use funds from the mentioned funds when it becomes a member of the EU. Negotiations for the accession of the RS to the EU in the area of KP, in terms of the fulfillment of requirements and principles, and preparations for its effective implementation, are conducted through Chapter 22 - Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments. The Government of the RS adopted the Action Plan, which is a benchmark for opening negotiations under Chapter 22²⁵². The EU project "Development of the EU Cohesion Policy Management System in Serbia" is being implemented for the implementation of activities and support for making the necessary

²⁵¹ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/koheziona-politika/>

²⁵² The key decisions and/or activities within Chapter 22 for the next period are: 1) Preparation of the negotiating position that will also reflect the new legal framework for the KP EU (first unofficial draft prepared); 2) Preparation and adoption of a law that will create a legal basis for the establishment of a system for the management of KP EU funds and the preparation of programme documents (a working group was formed, a draft of the structure of the law was prepared); 3) Identification of institutions that will be the main bearers of tasks and responsibilities in the context of the management of cohesion policy funds in Serbia - management and intermediary bodies for the first goal of the KP "Investments for jobs and growth" (an option document for establishing an institutional framework for management has been prepared KP funds for the purpose of "Investments for jobs and growth"); 4) Making a decision on the number and structure of programmes that Serbia will prepare for the European Fund for Regional Development, the European Social Fund+ and the Cohesion Fund; 5) Continuation of investment in capacities at the local and regional level, in cooperation with regional development agencies (in continuity).

decisions (see 2.1.8). In addition, the “EU Programme for Local Development - EU PRO Plus” is implemented, which promotes the concept of integral urban and territorial development and contributes to the development of LGU capacities for balanced socio-economic development and the improvement of territorial development management, economic growth and improved social infrastructure and social cohesion (see 2.1.1.9). The use of KP funds depends on the ability of users from the public and private sectors - such as local governments, companies, the civil sector, etc. to use these funds. MEI actively cooperates with other institutions at the national and local level, in order to enable these subjects to use the mentioned funds²⁵³.

2.1.3.1 NEW COHESION POLICY 2021-2027 (ERDF, ESF, CF)

New cohesion policy of the EU²⁵⁴ contributes to the strengthening of economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU. It aims to correct imbalances between countries and regions. It fulfills the political priorities of the Union, especially the green and digital transition. In relation to the previous programme period, novelties were introduced. The new EU Cohesion Policy for the period 2021-2027 strengthens the urban dimension (EC, New Cohesion Policy, 2021-27). The adopted five policy objectives focus on the following topics:

- 1) competitive and smart Europe (with a focus on innovation, digitalization, economic transformation and support for small and medium-sized enterprises);
- 2) green Europe (with the implementation of the Paris Agreement and investment in the energy, low-carbon transition towards an economy with net zero carbon emissions, renewable energy sources and the fight against climate change);
- 3) connected Europe (equipment with strategic transport and digital networks);
- 4) inclusive Europe (achieving social rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills acquisition, social inclusion and equal access to health and social care), and
- 5) Europe closer to the citizens (with support for the development of local strategies and sustainable urban development).

The new goal of “Europe closer to citizens” was introduced into the main political framework as an increased commitment to integral territorial development and includes the encouragement of sustainable urban development. Local actors are given opportunities to take the lead in recognizing and solving various challenges, but above all, to use their endogenous (locally specific) development potentials.

Through these goals, significant investments in urban areas are mobilized. At least 8% of the funds of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in each member state will be

²⁵³ In this sense, special priority is given to cooperation with the Development Agency of Serbia (Sector for Regional Development) and the network of accredited regional development agencies, which represent a link between the central and local levels and a means for the active participation of local governments in the processes of planning and identification of development priorities on the one hand sides and preparation of projects that should be supported from the funds of the mentioned funds in in order to realize the defined priorities. This is particularly evidenced by cooperation in the field of cross-border cooperation, which confirms the importance of continuous support to local self-governments. For this reason, MEI concluded the Agreement on cooperation in the field of European integration with the Development Agency of Serbia and Agreements on cooperation with regional development agencies, trying to ensure their active participation in the processes that should ensure the efficient absorption and use of EU development funds at the local level. In this way, in accordance with the best European practice, as well as the expressed mood of regional development agencies, long-term cooperation with the aim of sustainable local development is ensured.

²⁵⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/2021-2027_en

invested in priority projects that the cities themselves define based on the local strategy of sustainable urban development.

Asset priorities

- The European Regional Development Fund will support the investments of all 5 policy objectives, but 1 and 2 are the main priorities;
- The main priority of the European Social Fund+ is 4;
- The Cohesion Fund supports policy objectives 2 and 3;
- The Just Transition Fund provides support within dedicated specific objectives;
- Interreg programmes have 2 additional policy objectives at their disposal (Article 14 of the Interreg Regulation): “Better cooperation in development management” and “A safer and more secure Europe”.

The basic instruments through which support is implemented and directed to specific programmes and operations are:

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF)

It provides support to EU member states and their regions with the aim of eliminating major regional inequalities and achieving self-sustaining growth. First of all, it is aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of the economy - through investments in research, development and innovation, investments in production and infrastructure, urban and local development, improving the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises and supporting the transition to an economy based on low carbon dioxide emissions in all sectors.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF)

It provides support to EU member states and their regions in achieving employment policy goals. It is aimed at investing in human resources through supporting the employment of as many people as possible, encouraging equal access and equal opportunities for everyone, encouraging entrepreneurship and activation on the labor market, integrating immigrants, ensuring gender equality, fighting poverty, strengthening social inclusion, improvement of education and lifelong learning. Through the Youth Employment Initiative from the ESF, activities aimed at people under the age of 25, who are not employed, are supported in education or training.

COHESION FUND (CF)

It provides support to the least developed EU member states whose GNI per capita does not exceed 90% of the EU-27 average. Large projects in the field of transport infrastructure and environmental protection are financed from this fund. In the programme period 2014-2020, it provides support to the following member states: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

2.1.3.2 HELP

In 2014, the EC established the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the crisis in Syria - the Madad Fund²⁵⁵ (EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis, the “Madad Fund”). The original goal of this fund was to support refugees from Syria and their countries of residence (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey). The fund was later expanded to include refugees and migrants from other vulnerable countries, as well as support for non-EU countries affected by the migrant crisis, which gave RS the opportunity to apply for funds. For the RS, in 2016 and 2017, from the funds of the Madad fund, support was approved for the financing of current operational costs, nutrition, provision of health services and access to education for migrant children and improvement of the conditions for the accommodation of refugees and migrants in reception centers - primarily in cooperation with by the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and social issues, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and the Ministry of the Interior, as well as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

2.1.3.3 EU SOLIDARITY FUND - FSEU

The EU established the Solidarity Fund²⁵⁶ (FSEU), with the aim of providing support to member states and countries that are in the process of negotiations for EU membership to more easily overcome the consequences of large-scale natural disasters. This expresses European solidarity with regions and countries within Europe that are affected by natural disasters. By covering parts of public expenditures, the FSEU contributes to the efforts of countries to implement activities for the reconstruction of the country and the rehabilitation of damage caused by natural disasters.

The Republic of Serbia, as a country in the process of negotiations for EU membership, submitted an application for funds from the EU Solidarity Fund on July 30, 2014, in order to repair the damage and restore the areas affected by the floods of May 2014.²⁵⁷ Since the EU has adopted amendments to the regulation establishing the EU Solidarity Fund and its purpose is extended to cases of general threat to public health, the RS submitted an application for support from the EU Solidarity Fund in 2020. After a detailed assessment of applications for support from the EU Solidarity Fund, on March 11, 2021, the EC proposed to the European Parliament and the Council the mobilization of EUR 530 million in non-reimbursable support for 17 member states and 3 candidate states for membership in order to support measures to combat the coronavirus, of which Serbia should have received almost 11.9 million euros of non-refundable support from this Fund. Based on the decision of the EC and the accompanying communication, the Ministry of Finance, with the support of the MEI, initiated the process of determining which costs will be submitted for the allocated funds, given that it was designated as the coordinating body for this phase of the process during the preparation of the application²⁵⁸.

255 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ostali-fondovi/>

256 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ostali-fondovi/>

257 On December 17, 2014, the European Parliament and the Council approved the proposal of the decision of the European Commission, which allocated funds to Serbia for rehabilitation and reconstruction of the areas affected by the May floods in the amount of 60.2 million euros (60,224,605 euros).

258 http://www.obnova.gov.rs/uploads/useruploads/Documents/Solidarnost_na_delu_preview.pdf

2.1.3.4 REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME

Regional housing programme²⁵⁹ is a joint initiative of four countries - Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro - which aims to provide permanent housing solutions for the 27,000 most vulnerable refugee families (74,000 individuals) in the region. Of these, 16,780 families (about 45,000 individuals) are in Serbia. The programme is implemented as part of the "Sarajevo Process", based on the "Belgrade Declaration", which was signed in 2011 by the ministers of foreign affairs of the four beneficiary countries of the programme. These countries were the most affected by the war conflicts of the 1990s and therefore have a significant refugee population. In the RS, the Programme is implemented on the basis of the Framework Agreement, concluded on October 25, 2013, between the RS and the Development Bank of the Council of Europe. The agreement regulates the basic settings of the programme, the implementation mechanism, the obligations of the participants in the programme and the amount of funds that will be engaged. The Programme is managed by the Development Bank of the Council of Europe, which administers a multi-donor fund formed for the purpose of implementing the Programme. The largest donor of this fund is the EU, which provides the largest part of the funds through the multi-user and national IPA. The total announced contribution to the EU fund is 235 million euros. Other donors are USA, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Norway, Turkey, Cyprus, Hungary, etc. The entire programme is under the jurisdiction of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the RS. Through the Programme, a large number of different housing solutions are provided: the allocation of building material packages, the construction of prefabricated houses, the purchase of rural houses and the construction of residential buildings. In this way, it is ensured that refugee families solve their housing issue in the way that suits them best in their current place of residence, bearing in mind that the Programme is implemented in over 120 municipalities in the Republic of Serbia. The donation agreement for the first subproject in the amount of 2,212,500 euros was signed in 2014. The following 8 donation contracts and associated amendments in the total value of EUR 169,930,645 (of which EUR 137,398,681 are donations from the Fund) were signed by the national IPA coordinator. These agreements collectively foresee the provision of a total of over 7,700 housing solutions²⁶⁰.

2.1.4 GREEN AGENDA FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS

After signing the Sofia Declaration, the heads of state and government from the Western Balkans reached an agreement with the EU on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Green Agenda²⁶¹, which paves the way for them to realize the economic and investment plan for the region worth 30 billion euros. They committed to put sustainable development, resource conservation, nature protection and climate action at the center of all economic activities and to align with EU goals. The Council for Regional Cooperation (RCC) was in charge of coordinating the drafting of the document, and it was adopted in Slovenia at the EU Summit - Western Balkans. In the Action Plan for the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans for the period up to 2030, the most important segments are the collection of greenhouse gas

259 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ostali-fondovi/>

260 www.regionalhousingprogramme.com; www.kirs.gov.rs

261 <https://balkangreenenergynews.com/rs/usvojeni-akcioni-plan-za-zelenu-agendu-za-zapadni-balkan-donosi-devet-milijardi-evra-grantova-rok-za-uskladjivanje-s-eu-ets-om-2024-godine/>

emissions, plans for the gradual cessation of coal use, regional integration, pollution control and environmental protection.

The investment package consists of nine billion euros in grants and 20 billion euros of investments, which will be implemented through the new Western Balkans Guarantee Facility. The countries of the region should implement economic and social reforms as well as strengthen the rule of law, the EU leaders stated and also pointed to the benefits for competitiveness and digital transition.

The EU announced that together with the 600 million euros that the European Commission will propose as part of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), it will make available 1.1 billion euros by the end of the year for the implementation of the Economic and Investment Plan. The Western Balkans has the task of declaring energy and climate aspirations that will match the EU's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 55 percent by the end of the decade, as well as other related goals, for which a massive transformation is necessary. The countries of the region will have to overcome the challenges that come with the gradual cessation of the use of coal, such as unemployment, disruptions in the economy and labor migration, the declaration from the summit states. Decarbonization will be achieved "through the use of fuels from renewable sources or fuels with reduced carbon emissions," the document states. Leaders of the 27-nation bloc have pledged to provide technical and financial assistance to develop a carbon charging system in the context of the Carbon Cross-Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which is essentially a carbon tax on imported goods and electricity.

The action plan for the Green Agenda has five pillars:

- 1) Decarbonization
- 2) Circular economy
- 3) Cleaning from pollution
- 4) Sustainable agriculture and
- 5) Protection of nature and biodiversity.

In the decarbonization part, the indicative deadline for harmonization with the European Climate Law and the adoption of the vision of achieving climate neutrality is 2025, and 2024 is set for harmonization with the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) and the introduction of other carbon charging instruments. The countries of the Western Balkans have agreed to include among the priorities, which they will finance, energy efficiency measures, the abolition of coal subsidies and programmes to combat energy poverty.

The segment of the circular economy implies that by 2023 at the latest, strategies will be developed that will encompass the entire product life cycle. Governments have pledged to raise awareness of waste prevention and separation and sustainable consumption.

On the pollution cleanup front, measures include the ratification of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols by 2025. The implementation of air quality strategies and the construction of the necessary infrastructure for the processing of waste water by 2030 at the latest are also planned.

As for sustainable agriculture, the indicative time frame sets 2026 as the horizon for adopting standards on food safety, plant and animal health and welfare, and waste management, as

well as supporting organic and pollution-free food cultivation and reducing the amount of synthetic chemicals products in food production. Among the measures in agriculture will have to be the use of renewable energy sources and the reduction of emissions.

The countries of the region have taken responsibility for the preparation of plans for the restoration of the forested landscape until 2024, including a financial component.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS-BANKS

2.2.1 DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CEB²⁶²

Council of Europe Development Bank²⁶³ (BSE) is a multilateral development bank with a social orientation. It was founded in 1956 in order to solve the problems of refugees, and later expanded the range of activities to the entire field of social development. RS joined this international bank in 2004. BSE provides concessional (favorable) loans and consulting services for socially oriented investment projects in the areas of:

- Sustainable and inclusive growth;
- Integration of refugees, displaced persons and migrants i
- Environmental protection.

Cooperation between RS and BSE is achieved primarily through projects financed through favorable loans such as: improvement of educational and scientific infrastructure and provision of accommodation for young researchers, reconstruction of housing infrastructure (landslides), construction of housing units for families affected by the earthquake in Kraljevo, construction and equipment new ones prison capacities in Pančevo and Kragujevac, etc. In addition to its own funds intended for lending, BSE also has funds entrusted to it for management by other donors. In this sense, as part of the response to the migrant crisis, the RS made available the “Fund for Migrants and Refugees”, through which the most urgent needs of migrant centers in Šid, Kanjiža and Preševo and other places are financed. In addition, the bank participates in the Investment Framework for the Western Balkans (see 2.1.1.5) and in this sense is responsible for part of the grants granted to the RS from this instrument, and is also in charge of managing the Regional Housing Care Programme intended to solve the housing problem of refugees (see 2.1.3.4), whose biggest user is the RS.

2.2.2 EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK EIB

European Investment Bank²⁶⁴ (EIB) is an EU financial institution that plays a significant role in financing long-term investment projects. Outside the borders of the EU, the bank supports projects that contribute to economic development in countries that have signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement or a cooperation agreement with the EU or one of its members. The EIB provides support primarily through loans, but also through technical assistance, guarantee schemes and microfinancing. Loans are granted to the state as well as the private

²⁶² <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/bilateralni-i-multilateralni-partneri/po-medjunarodnim-organizacijama/>

²⁶³ www.coebank.org

²⁶⁴ <http://www.eib.org/>

sector. Beneficiaries of loans in a broader sense can be municipalities and cities, ministries, state-owned companies, but also private companies and large corporations.

In accordance with the mandate defined by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU, the EIB finances investments in the RS through loans (whereby the EIB can cover up to 50% of project costs), concluded directly with the project holder (individual loans) or indirectly, mainly through other banks (intermediate loans). In practice, individual loans are approved for strategically relevant projects and programmes worth more than 25 million euros, while intermediate loans are credit lines to banks and financial institutions intended to help finance small and medium-sized enterprises and local projects with justified investment programmes or projects worth up to 25 million euros. Loans are approved to support projects that are economically justified in the areas of transport, energy, environmental protection, industry and services, health and education, research and development, information and communication technology.

Currently, current projects in the Republic of Serbia financed by the EIB are:

- Construction of the Niš - Pristina highway. So far, the Republic of Serbia, with the support of the EIB, has received about 5 million through the Investment Framework for the Western Balkans. euros of grants.
- Modernization of the railway line Nis - Dimitrovgrad. Thanks to the support of the EIB, 44 mil. EUR of grants from WBIF, while in December 2017 another 28 million was approved. euros for the second phase of this project.

2.2.3 EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT EBRD

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development²⁶⁵ (EBRD) is has been active in RS since 2001. In the past period, the bank implemented more than 200 projects with a total value of around 4.24 billion euros, of which 62% were implemented in cooperation with the public sector, while 38% were implemented in cooperation with the private sector. The activities currently carried out by the EBRD are in accordance with the Strategy for Serbia approved by the Board of Directors in April 2014, and are focused on three key areas:

- The competitiveness of the private sector through the provision of financial and technical assistance primarily to the sector of small and medium enterprises. In this area, support to the private sector takes place directly through the provision of financial support, most often in the form of investment lending or securing working capital, or indirectly through financial intermediaries (such as banks). Technical assistance is reflected in the provision of consulting services or advice from experienced advisors, or the development of local advisory capacities.
- Stabilization of the financial sector through support to banking and non-banking institutions. In this area, the EBRD is focused on providing long-term financing for the banking sector and developing special products that would enable the marketing of special financial products, such as loans for energy efficiency and investment in renewable energy sources.

²⁶⁵ <http://www.ebrd.com/home>

- Development of sustainable public enterprises, including investment in energy, traffic and utility infrastructure. The bank also provides support for the preparation and implementation of major infrastructure activities in the energy, environment and transport sectors, through lending or a combination of loans and grants - independently or in cooperation with other partners such as the EU.

2.2.4 WORLD BANK WB

The activities of the World Bank, as a development partner in the Republic of Serbia, are defined by the document Framework for partnership for 2016-2020, with the main goal of supporting the process of accession of the Republic of Serbia to the EU, by creating a competitive and inclusive economy. The priority areas of development in this document are:

- fiscal and macroeconomic stability,
- strengthening management capabilities and institutional capacities,
- reform of public enterprises,
- improvement of business conditions,
- infrastructure development i
- labor market reform.

This cooperation is currently taking place through the implementation of projects worth more than 1.8 billion dollars, in the following areas: transportation, improving the business environment, competitiveness and employment, health, flood prevention and reconstruction, risk management, financial sector reform, public sector improvement, improvement of public enterprises i preschool education.

Recently approved projects²⁶⁶ у периоду 2021-2023 cy: Catalyzing Long Term Finance through Capital Markets, Improving public financial management for the green transition, First Serbia Green Transition Programmatic Development Policy Loan, Scaling-Up Residential Clean Energy (SURCE) Project, Serbia Local Infrastructure and Institutional Development Project, Public Sector Efficiency and Green Recovery DPL.

Programme Green, living and resilient cities in Serbia²⁶⁷

In June 2021, the World Bank launched the Green, Living and Resilient Cities Programme in Serbia, together with the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, to strengthen sustainable and resilient urban development²⁶⁸. This activity is part of the World Bank's Global Umbrella Programme for Sustainable and Regional Development (SURGE) and is supported by the Swiss Confederation through the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The

266 https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-summary?lang=en&countrycode_exact=YF

267 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/serbia/brief/green-livable-resilient-cities-in-serbia-programme>

268 Serbian cities are of vital importance for national economic growth. However, in order to become drivers of regional development and poverty reduction, they need to be better managed in order to increase their ability to live and the quality of life of their citizens. Improved strategic urban development and management can help cities in Serbia to fully utilize their potential and play a key role in supporting the country's green transition. The Government of Serbia recognizes the importance of cities for the national economy. In 2019, the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (SOUR) was adopted, followed by an action plan in March 2021, establishing a comprehensive and integral programme for the next phase of urban development in Serbia. This programme provides Serbia with a unique opportunity to advance towards the green transition at the sub-national/municipal level, foreseen by the EU Green Deal. It also fits with the World Bank's strategic direction for post-COVID-19 recovery in line with the World Bank's Green, Resilient Inclusive Development (GRID).

four-year technical assistance began in 2022 and will support selected cities in Serbia in the planning and implementation of sustainable, low-carbon and resilient urban development programmes, while providing national level policy recommendations and proposed actions to facilitate the implementation of the RS Sustainable Urban Development Strategy. A detailed analysis will also help to identify challenges in the municipal solid waste management sector. The programme aims to respond to existing gaps at the national level and to support selected cities to improve their capacities:

- To better plan, prepare and implement high-impact city-level investments that promote sustainable, low-carbon urban development and urban resilience, and
- Deepening the knowledge base and policy dialogue towards more inclusive, sustainable, resilient and green urban development, including lagging regions.

2.2.5 GERMAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (KfW)

KfW is Germany's leading development bank²⁶⁹. During the 1960s, the bank expanded its activities to the international level by implementing German financial cooperation with developing countries on behalf of the German government. At the end of 2021, the balance amount was about 550 billion euros, and the annual approved funds worldwide exceed 130 billion euros, of which about 12 billion euros are in development cooperation. The main goals are to improve the economic and social living conditions of people, reduce poverty and protect the climate and the environment. The German federal government, as an institution of public law, owns 80% of the bank's capital, while the remaining 20% is owned by the German federal states. KfW supports RS in achieving goals and fulfilling obligations related to the EU accession process with a special focus on climate and energy, as well as sustainable development of urban infrastructure. An overview of the projects implemented in Serbia is available at the following link <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/mapa-projekata/>

Regional Challenge Fund (RCF)

Regional Fund for Challenges²⁷⁰ (RCF) is a financial mechanism established with the aim of increasing employability, especially of young people. The fund strengthens the competitiveness of companies in the economies of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) through the financing of investments in equipment and infrastructure for selected cooperative or dual education projects that are carried out in partnership with professional educational institutions and companies. Funds are awarded after bidding (challenge) at the regional level.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) allocated 64.43 million euros for the RCF, and the Government of Switzerland, represented by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), co-financed an additional 9.7 million Swiss francs. The funds were entrusted to the German Development Bank (KfW), and the project is implemented by the Chamber Investment Forum of the Western Balkans (WB6-CIF), a joint initiative of chambers of commerce from the region.

²⁶⁹ <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/kfw/>

²⁷⁰ <https://rcf-wb6.org/sta-mi-radimo/?lang=me>

RCF supports projects jointly implemented by vocational training institutions and partner companies, which engage or plan to engage in cooperative education and training activities. Projects can receive support for the development of new programmes or the expansion and improvement of existing programmes. Grants are awarded to consortia that have successfully passed the two-phase selection process.

RCF provides financial and follow-up support to selected consortia for:

- Infrastructural works and equipment for facilities within institutions for vocational training and training
- Training of teachers from vocational training institutions, trainers in companies and coordinators for cooperative education and training (in vocational training institutions and in companies), required for the implementation of the funded training programme
- Advisory support during project planning and implementation

More than 1,500 training places will be offered through the supported projects. Up to 19,776,650 euros will be invested in projects implemented by institutes and companies for professional training. Each project will be supported by grants from EUR 150,000 to EUR 600,000.

2.3 BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION, DONOR PROGRAMMES

2.3.1 UNITED NATIONS TEAM IN SERBIA

The United Nations (UN) has been present in the Republic of Serbia (former Yugoslavia) since the beginning of the crisis in the region, in the early 1990s. The United Nations team in Serbia²⁷¹ has been cooperating with the Government of the RS since the beginning of the 2000s. The UN team in Serbia currently includes 20 agencies, funds and programmes, both resident and non-resident, who work together to improve national development priorities in accordance with the 2030 Agenda and 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The team is coordinated by the permanent coordinator of the UN, and works according to the principles of the Framework for cooperation of UN nations for sustainable development with the RS 2021-2025, signed between the Government of the RS and the UN Team in Serbia. The framework represents a path towards three strategic priorities:

- 1) Serbia uses the full potential of a green, sustainable and inclusive economy - Increasing opportunities for all and risk management;
- 2) Well-being, social justice and human potential are at the heart of systems, policies and practices - Everyone has equal opportunities, throughout life, to realize their full potential;
- 3) Building trust and mutual responsibility through the rule of law and respect for human rights and obligations - Encouraging transparency, fairness and effectiveness

Milestones:

- Serbia adopts and implements strategies to combat climate change and protect the environment, which increase the community's resilience, reduce the carbon footprint and enhance the positive effects of investments at the national level;

²⁷¹ <https://serbia.un.org/sr/about/about-the-un>

- Natural and cultural resources are managed in a sustainable manner;
- Fair economic and employment opportunities are fostered through innovation;
- Universal and inclusive access to quality, social and protection services has been improved;
- Skills, education and opportunities are improved to ensure fair outcomes for all;
- Mobility and demographic transition become vectors of positive change and prosperity for all people;
- All people, especially the more vulnerable, benefit from the realization of human rights, gender equality and improved rule of law in accordance with assumed international obligations;
- All people benefit from effective governance and meaningful civic engagement.

The Sustainable Development Goals are a global call to action to prevent poverty, protect the environment and climate, and ensure that all people live in peace and prosperity. The UN in Serbia is working on the implementation of 17 sustainable development goals.

In the period from 2011 to 2015, the UN team in Serbia provided assistance worth more than 230 million dollars. In June 2017, a new Development Partnership Framework (RDF) was signed between the Government of the RS and the UN Team in Serbia for the period 2016-2020. The new strategy is fully aligned with the Government's national priorities, the EU Accession Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda. The value of the new UNDAF-and for the period 2016-2020. for Serbia, it is estimated at 170 million dollars, not including the funds set aside for emergency situations such as the refugee/migrant crisis.

2.3.2 DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION BETWEEN GERMANY AND SERBIA

Development cooperation between Germany and Serbia²⁷² started immediately after the democratic changes in 2000. Since then, GIZ has been present in Serbia with one central office in Belgrade and a larger number of project offices. By order of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ provides support to Serbia in the process of approaching the European Union, strengthening the efficiency of the economy and strengthening democratic structures. GIZ implements programmes and projects²⁷³ from the following areas:

- sustainable improvement of the economy and employment;
- good governance;
- environment.

²⁷² <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/giz/>

²⁷³ The following projects are being implemented in Serbia: Rural development through integrated forest and water resources management in Southeast Europe; Waste management, circular economy and green job opportunities; Energy efficiency in public buildings; Development of a sustainable bioenergy market; Social rights for vulnerable groups; Public administration reform; Social services for disadvantaged population groups; Promoting EU Integration in the Western Balkans; Open regional funds for South-East Europe – legal reform; Open regional funds for South-East Europe – modernisation of municipal services; Public finance reform; Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe – Biodiversity; Open regional funds for South-East Europe – Energy Efficiency; Economic Diversification of Rural Areas; Zoran Djindjic Internship Programme of German Business for the Countries of the Western Balkans; Programme „Migration for Development“; Private sector development in disadvantaged regions; Sustainable recruitment of nurses; Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe – Foreign Trade; Western Balkans School Exchange Scheme; Dialogue on Employment Creation, Initiative and Dual Education; Supporting young people in rural regions of Serbia; Strengthening Rule of Law in Serbia (giz.de)

Serbia also benefits from GIZ's regional projects. The Open Regional Fund for Southeast Europe, which brings together several countries, supports measures implemented in the areas of legal reform, counseling in the field of foreign trade, modernization of communal services, as well as energy efficiency, biodiversity and integration into the European Union.

2.3.3 FRENCH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY AFD

French Development Agency²⁷⁴ opened a regional office in Serbia in 2019, which is responsible for the entire Western Balkans, as well as a representative office in Albania. The group finances, supports and accelerates the transition to a more harmonious and resilient world for the common good - climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality, education and health, thereby contributing to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Activities are aligned with the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. This means that each project is evaluated according to its compliance with the implementation of the strategy of low-carbon development and long-term resilience. This principle is based on a clear fact: sustainable development and the fight against poverty cannot be separated from the fight against global warming and the protection of the environment or biodiversity.

With 5.2 billion euros approved for the year 2021 for the financing of climate projects, AFD is one of the main international financial institutions that support this type of projects, so that 55% of financial engagements have a direct impact on the fight against climate change and its mitigation consequences. In Serbia, AFD provided EUR 51 million for the reconstruction of railway infrastructure, capacity building and modernization of the sector, as well as EUR 50.5 million to support environmental reforms (implementation of Serbia's climate obligations in accordance with the Paris Agreement and the EU accession process). In cooperation with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), the French Development Agency also contributes to the improvement of urban infrastructure in Serbia, through a valuable project (loan). 265.2 million euros (300 million US dollars).

Project "Development of local infrastructure and institutional strengthening of local self-governments of the Republic of Serbia"

Project holder²⁷⁵ is the Government of the Republic of Serbia/Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure. The goal of the project is to improve the capacity of local governments to manage sustainable infrastructure, as well as to improve access to economic and social potential in a climate-conscious manner, in accordance with the obligations arising from the Sofia Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, adopted in 2020. as well as in accordance with the goals, measures and activities defined The strategy of sustainable urban development of the Republic of Serbia until 2030 and the Action Plan for its implementation. The project will primarily provide investments and technical support for the sustainable improvement of local roads and mobility, as well as the overall resilience of local governments to climate change. Each local self-government will be entitled to a certain amount of funds, according to a formula that takes into account the number of inhabitants,

²⁷⁴ <https://rs.ambafrance.org/AFD-4148>

²⁷⁵ <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/projekti/razvoj-lokalne-infrastrukture-i-institucionalnog-jachanja-lokalnih-samouprava-republike>

area, level of development, as well as vulnerability to climate change. The expected start of the project is June 2022, while the completion of the project is expected in November 2028.

- The project is structured through the implementation of activities divided into three basic components:
- Component 1: Climate Smart Mobility
- Component 2: Strengthening capacity to provide services in the field of infrastructure
- Component 3: Project management and awareness raising

Together with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, AFD supports the expansion of infrastructure for solid waste management, through a loan of 150 million euros. Investments in the Western Balkans amount to more than 630 million euros, to which should be added support for two regional projects. The first project is dedicated to improving the quality of life in cities thanks to the “Smart City” programme. AFD also supports the RISE project, which provides support to young entrepreneurs from the Western Balkans, in cooperation with the Regional Office for Youth Cooperation (RYCO).

2.3.4 DONATION PROGRAMMES

Japan

The strategic framework of development cooperation with the RS is defined in the Japanese Development Cooperation Charter of February 2015. Priority areas of Japan’s bilateral development assistance to the RS²⁷⁶ are:

- Environmental protection,
- Health and social protection and education i
- Entrepreneurship and support to small and medium enterprises.

Some of the examples of assistance that Japan provides to the RS are: non-project donations in the form of Japanese products, projects for the basic needs of the population (POPOS projects) which include one-time assistance such as the reconstruction of school buildings and kindergartens, the delivery of medical equipment and ambulances, garbage collection vehicles and containers, tanks, special vehicles for transporting people with special needs, etc., but also consulting assistance from Japanese experts since 2009 through the volunteer programme of the Government of Japan. Japan also provides concessional loans (yen loans), so the project “Construction of a desulfurization system at the Nikola Tesla Thermal Power Plant” will be realized from the funds of one of the loans.

Kingdom of Denmark

Denmark provides its development assistance to beneficiaries in most cases bilaterally, but also multilaterally mainly through the UN, EU institutions and the World Bank. Development cooperation strategy of the Kingdom of Denmark with the Republic of Serbia²⁷⁷ it is defined within a broader regional concept - the Danish Neighborhood Programme for Eastern Europe. Since 2017, with the completion of two large programmes financed by Danish bilateral grant aid in the

²⁷⁶ <https://www.jica.go.jp/balkan/english/office/index.html>

²⁷⁷ <http://serbien.um.dk/en/danish-cooperation/danish-cooperation-with-serbia/>

south of Serbia and the adoption of a new Danish development aid strategy, the Republic of Serbia has ceased to be the so-called Danish “partner state” and since then there has been no significant bilateral development aid from the Kingdom of Denmark to the Republic of Serbia, given that the focus of Danish development aid in Europe is directed towards Ukraine and Georgia.

Kingdom of Norway

The Kingdom of Norway is one of the largest bilateral donors to the RS, whose support from 2008 to today amounts to more than 100 million euros. Norway provides assistance to Serbia through the Bilateral Cooperation Programme, the Embassy’s Fund for Small Projects, as well as direct grants to civil society organisations²⁷⁸. In January 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between MEI RS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway, which refers to bilateral cooperation through projects and which defines the basic principles of cooperation between the two ministries with the aim of supporting Serbia’s integration into EU structures through projects that contribute to reform processes and the development of supported sectors in accordance with the requirements of the European integration process.

Kingdom of the Netherlands

Dutch development aid to the Republic of Serbia²⁷⁹ has in the past years been focused on supporting the development of the agricultural sector, environmental protection, the private sector, employment, the rule of law, assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons, and the building of institutional capacities. During 2019 and 2020, no new projects were contracted, and within two programmes - MATRA and the Human Rights Fund, which aim to help civil society organisations and the justice and internal affairs sectors, the Embassy of the Netherlands spent a total of 831,116 EUR. As part of the ORIO programme, the project Collection and treatment of waste water in Leskovac is being implemented in the Republic of Serbia. The total budget of the ORIO programme for the project in Leskovac is EUR 7.91 million.

Kingdom of Sweden

Sweden has adopted a new Strategy for supporting reforms in Serbia, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2021-2027²⁸⁰. Financial support according to the new strategy for 2021-2027 amounts to 560 million euros, of which 500 million are distributed to the Western Balkans and 60 million to Turkey. Sweden’s total grant so far amounts to around 283 million euros. Sweden will continue with the trend of supporting the financing of programmes and projects in the RS in the amount of 12 million euros annually. The largest amount of non-reimbursed aid per sector in the period from 2000 to today was allocated by Sweden to the environmental protection sector in the total value of around 43 million euros. Among the ongoing projects, the following stand out:

- The PEID project (Priority Environmental Infrastructure for Development), through which support to the environmental protection sector continues - providing technical

²⁷⁸ <https://www.norway.no/en/serbia>

²⁷⁹ <https://www.netherlandsworldwide.nl/countries/serbia>

²⁸⁰ <http://www.swedenabroad.com/sr-Latn-RS/Embassies/Belgrad/>

assistance to the Ministry of Environmental Protection, in order to prepare potential projects for financing in the coming period. The main goal is the creation of project-technical documentation for large infrastructure projects. The budget of the project is around 3 million euros.

- EISP 2 project (Environmental Infrastructure Support Project), which provides support to the Ministry of Environmental Protection in the implementation of smaller components of large infrastructure projects as well as in identifying potential projects in the field of environmental protection so that they are ready for the preparation of the necessary project-technical documentation. The project budget is around 2.9 million euros.
- The continuation of the project dealing with preparations for negotiations under Chapter 27 takes place through the ENVAP 3 project - Environment Accession Project (September 2016 - March 2021), where the budget is around 3 million euros.

People's Republic of China

The legal basis for cooperation between the RS and the People's Republic of China is the Agreement on t of the People's Republic of China, which is signed annually.²⁸¹ The priority areas of development cooperation are health, education, energy and security. In the past few years, several projects in the field of healthcare were implemented, which provided medical equipment for hospitals and health centers throughout the country. The People's Republic of China also provided significant support in terms of flood defense. The Government of the People's Republic of China also facilitated professional training by organizing seminars in various fields for representatives of institutions at the national and local level, chambers of commerce, small and medium-sized enterprises, universities, and hospitals.

Republic of Austria

Through development aid projects, the Republic of Austria supports the RS policy aimed at the prospect of EU accession²⁸². Projects were implemented in the areas of regional development, education, environmental protection, agriculture, health, entrepreneurship development, social protection, strengthening of management capacity at the local level, as well as support for civil society organisations. The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) as the implementing agency of the Republic of Austria applies European standards in the implementation of various EU programmes/projects:

- Implementation of the EU programme entitled "Socio-economic development of the Danube region in the Republic of Serbia", financed from EU funds - The project consists of several components, including the construction and renovation of infrastructure, such as the construction of a water supply system in the municipality of Veliko Gradište, as well as rehabilitation Golubac Fortress, for which the Republic Austria provided 1,800,000 euros in grants.

²⁸¹ <http://rs.chineseembassy.org/srp/>

²⁸² <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/>

- Regional project to support the implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans - The overall goal of the project is to improve the transition of the Western Balkans towards modern, resource-efficient and competitive economies. The specific goal is to support the implementation of the Green Agenda, which achieves the commitment to transforming the economy in a sustainable way and achieving climate neutrality by 2050. The total budget of the project is 11,000,000 euros. The regional project was started in 2022.

According to the volume of allocated funds, the Republic of Austria is the third largest bilateral donor participating in the financing of WBIF, with funds provided in the amount of 17.9 million euros cumulatively, in the period 2009-2020. year.

Republic of France

Based on the Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Cooperation, the French government provides support to the RS in public policies in the EU accession process. According to the agreement between the Governments of Serbia and France on the French Development Agency and PROPARCO signed in 2019, the AFD office in Belgrade functions as a regional office for the Western Balkans and has been fully operational since 2019. In accordance with the aforementioned Agreement, AFD Group provides financial support, such as grants and guarantees for long-term loans to the state, local governments, public and private companies and financial institutions, as well as subsidies, in accordance with the rules of foreign exchange operations of the RS. The areas of cooperation are:

- Development of the metro system in the city of Belgrade - At the end of November 2020, an agreement was signed between the governments of Serbia and France on cooperation in the field of priority infrastructure projects, investment value of 581 million euros, which foresees that 454 million will be invested in the construction of the first line of the Belgrade metro euros. It is envisaged that French companies will provide the metro compositions and carry out work on the “electromechanical part”, while Chinese companies will carry out construction work. The official start of works on the development of the metro system began in 2021, with the execution of preparatory works and works on filling the ground, construction of collectors at the location of the planned Depot (terminal) in Makiško polje.
- In the energy sector, an amount of up to 127,000,000 euros is foreseen. for the automation of the medium voltage electrical distribution network
- Within the Programme, the so-called “green development loans” RS has at its disposal a credit arrangement of 300 million US dollars from the World Bank, KfW and AfD group. The estimated funds of the AfD group are in the amount of 90 million US dollars.
- In the field of environmental protection, the city of Belgrade chose the company BeoČistaEnergija d.o.o. (consisting of a consortium consisting of the French company “SUEZ” and the Japanese company “ITOCHU”) as a partner within the Public-Private Partnership, for the project of construction and financing of a waste-to-energy plant in Vinci. The Vinca project includes rehabilitation of the existing landfill, construction of a new storage center according to European standards and an incineration unit with the production of electricity and heat (incinerator).

- In the third quarter of 2021, the law was adopted on the confirmation of the Loan Agreement in the amount of 50,000,000 euros, between the AFD Group and the RS for the implementation of reforms aimed at the so-called “green recovery” through the Programme Loan for Public Policies “Urban Environments Resilient to Climate Change”. An integral part of the Programme is a grant in the amount of 500,000 euros for the needs of technical support to the Government of Serbia, which includes the development of a Road Map for climate activities at the national and local self-government levels (Smederevo and Užice). Support was provided for the drafting of by-laws of the Law on Climate Change and the assessment of capacity building.

Republic of Greece

The Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HiPERB) is a programme of Greek development assistance within the framework of which the Government of the Republic of Greece has designated grants for six Balkan countries - the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania²⁸³. The target sector of this aid programme is infrastructure modernization, especially in the transport sector. Two extremely important projects for Serbia that are supported by the HiPERB plan are the construction of Corridor 10.

Republic of India

The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) is implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of India as a bilateral aid programme of that country to friendly countries. This programme mainly targets developing countries, including RS, which are offered free training courses in India for various technical and professional occupations, as well as the possibility of faster and easier adaptation to an increasingly globalized world.²⁸⁴ In the period from 2013 to the end of 2019, approximately 80 civil servants of the RS attended ITEC courses (from 2008 to today there are about 167 experts, representatives of the government and private sector) in various fields and scientific disciplines, including information and communication technologies, expenditure management, entrepreneurship, the WTO area, banking and finance, renewable energy sources, issues related to climate change, legislation, improving the English language, etc.

Republic of Korea

The Knowledge sharing programme (KSP) is implemented in cooperation with the Korea Development Institute (KDI) and aims at institutional development and strengthening the capacities of employees in state administration bodies of partner countries. The programme provides consultations focused on the needs of partner countries, which are carried out through a series of joint research works, trainings, consultations, which are held alternately in Korea and partner countries. This is how the following programmes are implemented:

²⁸³ <http://www.mfa.gr/serbia/sr/the-embassy/>

²⁸⁴ www.itecgoi.in

- KOICA Fellowship programmes - KOICA partner programmes - The primary goal of this programme is additional education for technical skills and knowledge, as well as capacity building for sustainable socio-economic development;
- Master's studies (KOICA Scholarship Programme - Master's Degrees) - postgraduate (master's) studies;
- Serbian-Korean IT Access Center (SKIP Center) - opened in Belgrade in 2017, and a second SKIP center is planned in Niš, intended for free IT training for citizens, civil servants and start-up companies

Republic of Poland

Polish development cooperation in Serbia²⁸⁵ implemented through small development projects, which are implemented by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland with local partners. The main goal is to implement projects that will improve the living standards of the local population. Within the framework of the system of small grants, the initiatives of small development projects that bring positive effects on the daily life of local communities are carried out. Bilateral aid can be used by institutions from the public finance sector, research institutes, non-governmental organisations and persons from the private sector. Partners in projects are usually local non-governmental organisations, public institutions or local governments. The projects implemented in Serbia in the period 2007-2020 had a total value of 253,856 euros. At the third session of the "Belgrade Conference" held in Warsaw in 2019, three parallel panels took place: environmental protection, judicial system and communication in the field of European integration.

Republic of Singapore

During the 1970s, Singapore began to share its experiences with partner countries around the world through various programmes. These programmes were brought under a unified framework when the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) was established in 1992. The cooperation programme is a series of courses, programmes, seminars, workshops, consultations, as well as study visits in a number of areas organized by the Government of Singapore and aims to share with partner countries Singapore's experience in acquiring important technical skills and knowledge that are of vital importance for the economic and social progress of a country. SCP training areas include education, environment (climate change, environmental protection...), transport and infrastructure, economy and economy, social issues (social entrepreneurship and innovation, social cohesion, empowerment of people with disabilities and special needs...), health, cyber security, sustainable development (renewable energy, sustainable cities, energy efficiency and emission reduction), state administration and digital government. Candidates for training programmes can be civil servants - managers of narrower internal units in public administration institutions as well as civil servants in position, unless otherwise indicated.

²⁸⁵ www.belgrad.msz.gov.pl

Republic of Slovenia

Technical assistance activities²⁸⁶ are focused on supporting the institutions of the Republic of Serbia in the process of European integration, including support in harmonizing regulations, harmonizing procedures in the work of our institutions with EU standards, improving the quality of services, improving organisational structures through the transfer of the experience of Slovenian institutions and organisations. The amount of funds allocated for development aid is determined annually by the Development Plan of the Republic of Slovenia. Currently, a project called “Help in preventing corruption” is being implemented, which aims to improve the conditions for ensuring transparency and accountability in the functioning of public sector institutions in the RS, as well as strengthening the capacity for effective implementation of legal competences of institutions in the fight against corruption. The project holder is the Anti-Corruption Agency, and the total value is 95,580 euros.

Republic of Turkey

The legal framework for cooperation with the Republic of Turkey in the field of donor, development and humanitarian aid in emergency situations is represented by the Agreement between the governments of the two countries on technical and financial cooperation²⁸⁷ from 2009. With its signing, the Turkish Agency for Cooperation and Coordination in the RS (TIKA) officially began its work, through which cooperation with the institutions of the RS is directed and achieved. Priority areas that are supported through the programme of development cooperation with education, health, agriculture, culture, historical heritage and tourism. The total estimate of the realization of the development assistance funds of the Republic of Turkey amounts to over 37 million euros.

Important examples of support through donor funds are: the reconstruction and equipping of the General Hospital in Novi Pazar, the Center for the Protection of Children, Infants and Youth “Zvečanska”, the reconstruction of the High Court building in Novi Pazar, works on the restoration of Ram Fortress near Veliko Gradište, works on to the restoration of the “Sultanija” Mosque Valide” in Sjenica, construction and reconstruction of several elementary schools in Novi Pazar. During 2020 and 2021, most donor funds were directed through projects in the field of health, environmental protection, media, education, culture, sports, humanitarian aid, cultural and historical heritage, as well as support in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Federal Republic of Germany

Bilateral development cooperation between the Federal Republic of Germany and the RS has been ongoing since 2000. The Republic of Serbia was granted over 1.8 billion euros in development aid from the funds of the German Ministry for Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the funds of the Ministry of the Environment, the Stability Pact and others in the form of grants and soft loans. Financial support projects are implemented by the German Development Bank (KfW), while technical assistance projects are implemented by the German Cooperation Agency²⁸⁸ (GIZ). In the past period, German development aid funds in the RS

²⁸⁶ www.belgrade.embassy.si

²⁸⁷ <http://www.tika.gov.tr/en>

²⁸⁸ <http://www.belgrad.diplo.de/> and www.nemackasaradnja.rs

were directed to the implementation of projects and programmes in three priority areas: 1) public infrastructure (energy and water) - electricity and thermal energy supply, water supply, sewage infrastructure (wastewater management); 2) sustainable economic development and employment - improvement of legal frameworks in the field of finance and economy, development of the financial sector, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, support for secondary vocational education and training reforms and 3) democracy, state administration, civil society - support for the development of decentralized administration, efficient and results-oriented, especially in the domain of improving transparency, the rule of law, the justice system and balancing the forces of different parts of the state administration, as well as helping in the preparation for accession negotiations and supporting the EU accession process over the last few years. In terms of the volume of approved funds and the significance of the achieved results, the Federal Republic of Germany undoubtedly represents the most important bilateral development partner of the Republic of Serbia.

In addition to projects implemented at the national level, FR Germany provides both financial and technical assistance to regional projects and programmes. Regional financial cooperation is implemented through the following cooperation instruments: 1) Regional instrument for support of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency; 2) European Fund for Southeast Europe and 3) Green Fund for the Development of Southeast Europe. Regional technical cooperation is implemented through three regional programmes: 1) Open regional fund for Southeastern Europe; 2) Regional programme for the establishment of the Danube Center of Competence to strengthen the region of the lower reaches of the Danube and 3) Cross-border cooperation in the field of social inclusion of persons who are victims of human trafficking.

United States of America

Development cooperation with the United States of America (USA) is implemented through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The legal basis for cooperation is the assistance agreements between the RS and the USA for better functioning of the administration and a more competitive market economy. Priority areas of development cooperation between the RS and the USA include the development of local self-governments, development of small and medium-sized enterprises, institution building, rule of law, European integration and strengthening of the civil sector. Significant projects within the framework of better functioning of the administration²⁸⁹ are: “Rule of Law” (*The Rule of Law project*), “Strengthening the media system” (*Strengthening of the media systems*), “Strengthening resilience to the refugee crisis” (*Enhancing Local Resilience to Refugee Crisis*). Significant projects within a more competitive market economy²⁹⁰ are: “Support for the development of the private sector in southern and southwestern Serbia” (*Private Sector Development Project*) and “Project for a competitive economy” (*Competitive Economy Project*).

289 <https://www.usaid.gov/serbia/democracy-human-rights-and-governance>

290 <https://www.usaid.gov/serbia/economic-growth-and-trade>

Slovak Republic

Cooperation between the Slovak Republic and RS²⁹¹ focuses on supporting the transformation process, implementing reforms, including public finance reform, increasing the involvement of the private sector in development cooperation, and supporting reconciliation and dialogue between communities. In the past period, Slovakia provided aid to Serbia through the Slovak Development Agency “Slovak Aid”. In the following period, the focus of bilateral development cooperation with Slovakia will be the transfer of experience related to the integration of countries into Euro-Atlantic structures, the encouragement of innovation and the start-up of enterprises, assistance in the digitalization of public administration, support for small and medium-sized enterprises in connection with employment, with a focus on female entrepreneurs, as well as integration of socially marginalized citizens. The Slovak Republic also participates in the implementation of projects financed under the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

United Kingdom

Within the development cooperation between the RS and the United Kingdom²⁹², representatives of the British Embassy in RS play an active role in the process of coordinating development aid. The Good Governance Fund (GGF) is a multi-year programme and part of this fund is available to Serbia to support reforms in the following areas: rule of law (judiciary, fight against corruption, human and minority rights, etc.), public administration, economy and business environment, strengthening freedom of expression. The Good Governance Fund operates through three channels: 1) The Strategic Support Fund (SSF), which targets pilot projects and civil society organisations, through the provision of direct grants. Supported projects focused on priority areas of the GGF Fund: from improving the business environment to strengthening government accountability and freedom of expression; 2) International Financial Institutions (IFIs) channel, which is designed to support reforms through cooperation with international financial institutions. The most significant resources are focused on the development of e-Government (the project “Digital transformation” and the project “Open Data”), implemented with the help of UNDP and the Office for Information Technologies and Electronic Administration of the Government of the RS, and 3) the Management Fund (MOF), which managed by a consortium led by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), and includes technical assistance for projects developed in cooperation with state institutions.

Swiss Confederation

The state of Switzerland has been present in Serbia since 1991. So far, financial support amounts to 350 million euros. The Government of the Swiss Confederation has two institutions in its composition that are responsible for development aid. Swiss agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC, engl. *Swiss Development Agency, SDC*) is attached to the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is in charge of development assistance related to the support of capacity building projects, technical assistance, i.e. the so-called “soft” projects aimed at reforming

291 <http://www.mzv.sk/belehrad>

292 <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-belgrade.sr>

the administrative and general social system. State secretariat for economic affairs (SECO, Engl. *State Secretariat for Economic Affairs DRY*), of the Swiss Ministry of Economy is responsible for development projects that are exclusively of an infrastructural nature.

The new Strategy for the period 2018-2021 is focused on the areas of management, economic development and sustainable energy sources. Switzerland decided on 95 million euros, which is 10% more in relation to the previous strategic period:

- In the area of management, support in the amount of 36 million euros will be provided to legislation at the republican and local level in order to strengthen the position of representative bodies, as well as their supervisory role. Attention will be focused on the capacities of local self-governments in managing public finances in order to improve the overall quality of services to citizens and the business sector. Support to civil society will have a stronger role with the aim of strengthening ties between civil society organisations and citizens in order to increase their participation and ensure a voice in the decision-making process;
- In the area of economic development and employment, support in the amount of 45 million euros it is intended to improve the macroeconomic framework, business environment and inclusive policies to overcome inequality. Attention will be focused on local economic development, trade promotion, youth employment, dual education and private sector development with the aim of sustainable development and quality employment, especially in rural areas;
- In the area of self-sustainable energy and resilient cities, support in the amount of 14 million euros it is intended to strengthen the exploitation of renewable energy sources, the application of energy efficiency measures and the strengthening of capacities for management and planning of infrastructural activities. Additionally, support in this area will be extended to activities that will contribute to the development of self-sustainable cities, with the aim of reaching national goals of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. Switzerland provided support in strengthening capacities for migration management, improving capacities for reception, registration of asylum seekers and approval of an innovative housing model for migrants on the territory of Serbia in the amount of 2 million euros.

Organisation HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation²⁹³ implements in Serbia “Social Sciences for a better society”, “Act for a Stronger Civil Society”, “Building Economies Where All Can Prosper” projects. In 2023, HELVETAS and Transparency Serbia published the results of the Local Participation Index (LIPA) survey.²⁹⁴ where it is pointed out that the citizens of Serbia are not sufficiently involved in the process of making decisions, regulations, decisions on spending money from local budgets, in public discussions and other mechanisms of LGU functioning. This index classifies municipalities and cities into six clusters. None of the 44 local governments in Serbia included in the research is in the rank of the highest cluster, the so-called “full participation”, and the average grade, that is, the average level of participation index in Serbian municipalities is only 26.4 percent, which is in the range of “basic participation”. According to

293 <https://www.helvetas.org/en/eastern-europe/what-we-do/where-we-work/partner-countries/serbia>

294 <https://n1info.rs/biznis/istrazivanje-gradjani-nedovoljno-ukljuceni-u-odluke-o-trosenju-novca-na-lokalu/>

the LIPA research results, only one JLS has a “high” level of participation (above 60 percent) - and that is the city of Užice. LIPA results from 30 percent to 45 percent (moderate level of participation) have 14 LGUs, among which Veliko Gradište and Sombor are the best. The average index of 26.4 percent, which is in the range of “basic participation”, has almost half of LGUs (20 of them), and less than 15 percent (low level of participation) has nine municipalities.

ANNEX 5 - DECISIONS ON ADOPTION OF THE TERRITORIAL STRATEGY

На основу члана 2. став 1. тачка 1), члана 10 став 2. тачка 1) и члана 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему Републике Србије („Службени гласник Републике Србије“, број 30/2018) и члана 40. Статута општине Гаџин Хан („Службени лист града Ниша“, број 10/19 и 101/19 и 89/22)

Скупштина општине Гаџин Хан, на седници одржаној дана 27. јуна 2024. године, доноси

ОДЛУКУ О УСВАЈАЊУ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША И ОПШТИНЕ СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЏИН ХАН

Члан 1.

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општине Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан.

Члан 2.

Текст Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општине Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан саставни је део ове одлуке.

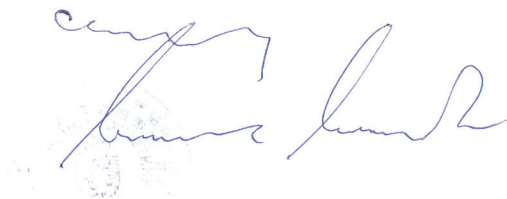
Члан 3.

Ову одлуку објавити у „Службеном листу Града Ниша“.

Број:06-134/2024-II
У Гаџином Хану, дана 27.06.2024. године

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ ГАЏИН ХАН

ПРЕДСЕДНИК,
Славиша Ивковић, с.р





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На основу члана 2. став 1. тачка 1), члана 10. став 2. тачка 1) и члана 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему Републике Србије ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", бр. 30/2018) и члана 40. Статута општине Мерошина ("Службени лист града Ниша", бр. 5/2023-пречишћен текст),

Скупштина општине Мерошина на седници одржаној дана 20.06.2024.године доноси

ОДЛУКУ
О УСВАЈАЊУ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА
НИША И ОПШТИНА СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЦИН ХАН

Члан 1.

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан.

Члан 2.

Текст Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан саставни је део ове Одлуке.

Члан 3.

Ову Одлуку објавити у „Службеном листу града Ниша.“

Број: 02-567

У Мерошини, 20.06.2024.године,

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ МЕРОШИНА

Председник,
Оливер Илић


На основу члана 2. став 1. тачка 1), члана 10. став 2. тачка 1) и члана 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему Републике Србије („Службени гласник Републике Србије“, број 30/2018) и члана 37. став 1. тачка 7) Статута Града Ниша („Службени лист Града Ниша“, број 88/2008, 143/2016 и 18/2019),

Скупштина Града Ниша на седници одржаној дана 25.04. 2024. године, доноси

ОДЛУКУ

О УСВАЈАЊУ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША И ОПШТИНА СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЏИН ХАН

Члан 1.

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан.

Члан 2.

Текст Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гаџин Хан саставни је део ове одлуке.

Члан 3.

Ову одлуку објавити у Службеном листу Града Ниша.

Број: 06-408/2024-12-02
Датум: 25.04.2024.

СКУПШТИНА ГРАДА НИША



Образложење

Правни основ за доношење Одлуке о усвајању предлога „Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гадин Хан“, садржан је у члану 2. став 1. тачка 1), члана 10. став 2. тачка 1) и члану 38. став 3. Закона о планском систему Републике Србије („Службени гласник Републике Србије“, број 30/2018), који прописује да се иста усваја од стране Скупштине јединице локалне самоуправе на предлог надлежног извршног органа јединице локалне самоуправе.

Чланом 37. став 1. тачка 7) Статута Града Ниша („Службени лист Града Ниша“, број 88/2008, 143/2016 и 18/2019), прописано је, између осталог, да скупштина Града Ниша доноси прописе и друге опште акте.

Градско веће Града Ниша, донело је Закључак о утврђивању времена, места и начина спровођења јавне расправе о нацрту „Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гадин Хан“, број: 1516-30/2020-03 од 17.10.2023. године.

Након одржане јавне расправе, сачињен је и Извештај о спроведеној јавној расправи о нацрту „Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гадин Хан“, а затим је дана 05.04.2024. године сазвана је седница Савета за израду предметне стратегије.

Стратегија ће допринети напретку у области интегралног одрживог приступа планирању развоја и подизању капацитета за спровођење територијалних иницијатива као и уравнотеженом друштвено економском развоју, подржавањем економског раста, унапређењем социјалне инфраструктуре и друштвене кохезије, уз усмереност на добро управљање, дигитализацију и иновације, аспекте животне средине и климатских промена и родну равноправност. Стратегијом се тежи да се постигне територијална кохезија кроз уравнотежен економски регионални развој и унапређење људског капитала.

Са аспекта урбаног развоја, овом стратегијом створиће се нови односи и синергија између Града Ниша и претежно руралних подручја партнерских локалних самоуправа, посебно када су у питању замагљене (нејасне) функционалне поделе: да Град Ниш постане паметнији, зеленији, повезанији и отворенији према околним руралним срединама и да сиромашна подручја партнерских општина преузму нове индустријске функције које ће оживети њихове привреде и смањити урбани и еколошки притисак на Град Ниш. Акценат ће бити на привреди којој је потребна високообразована и квалитетна радна снага, уз развој научноистраживачких и техничко-технолошких капацитета. Истовремено, ово су предуслови за заустављање трендова иселавања, постизање боље демографије и побољшање квалитета живота, како у урбаним, тако и у руралним подручјима предложене територије.

За реализацију Стратегије нису потребна додатна финансијска средства из буџета Града Ниша.



На основу чланова 12., 49. и 50. Закона о планском систему („Службени гласник РС“ број 30/2018), чланова 20. и 32. Закона о локалној самоуправи („Службени гласник РС“, број 129/2007, 83/2014 - др. закон, 101/2016 - др. закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021 - др. закон), Стратегије одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 47/2019), Меморандума о разумевању број 1606/2022-01 од 26.05.2022. године и члана 40. Статута општине Сврљиг („Службени лист града Ниша“ број 21/2019), Скупштина општине Сврљиг, на седници одржаној 12.04.2024. године, доноси

ОДЛУКУ

О УСВАЈАЊУ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА НИША И ОПШТИНА СВРЉИГ, МЕРОШИНА И ГАЦИН ХАН ЗА ПЕРИОД 2023-2034.ГОДИНЕ

Члан 1.

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан за период 2023-2034 године.

Члан 2.

Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Ниша и општина Сврљиг, Мерошина и Гацин Хан и Извештај о спроведеној јавној расправи су саставни део ове Одлуке.

Члан 3.

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у „Службеном листу града Ниша“.

I Број: 022-17/2024

У Сврљигу, 12.04.2024. године

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ СВРЉИГ

ПРЕДСЕДНИК
Милан Михајловић



