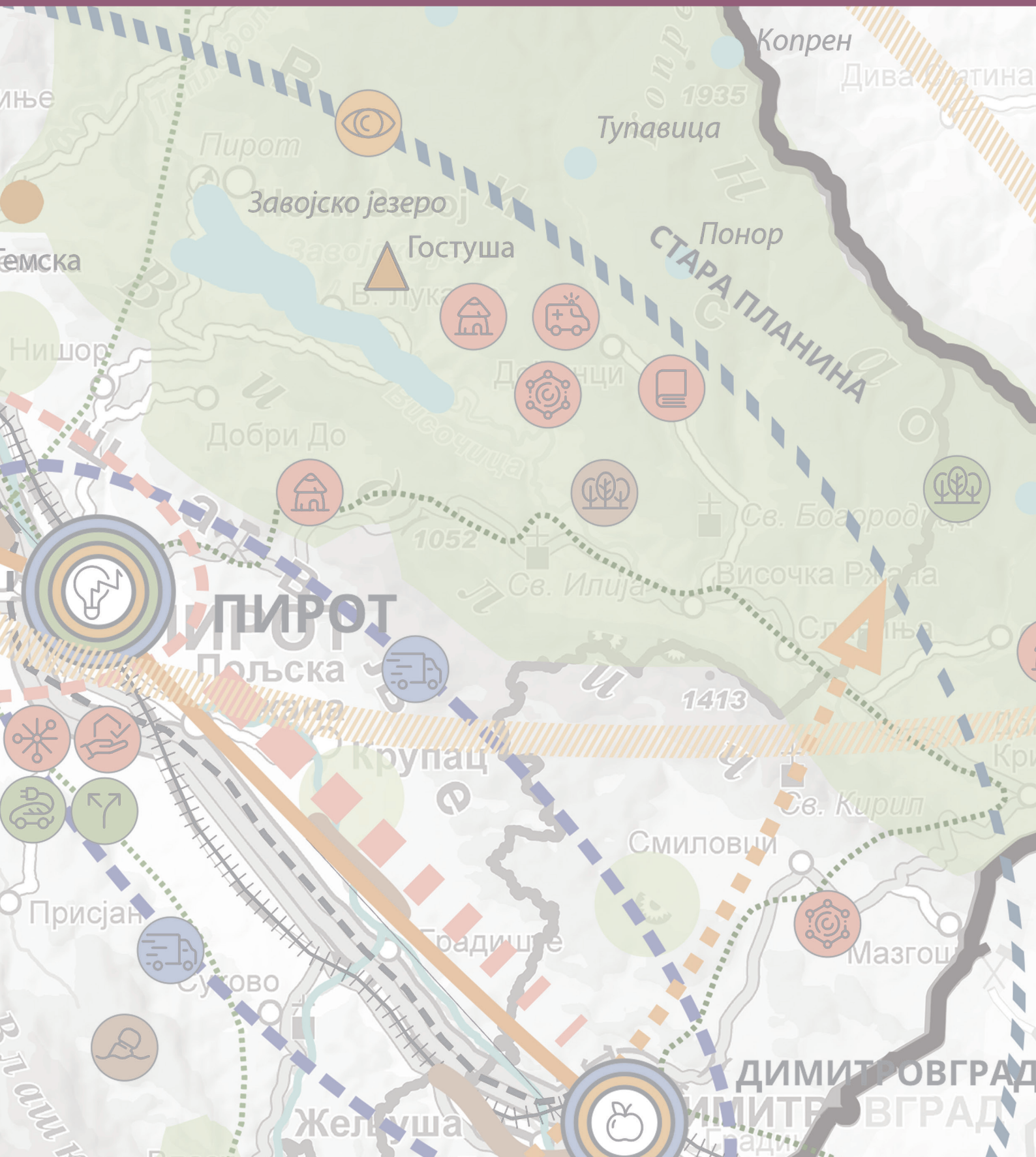


TERRITORIAL STRATEGY OF PIROT AND BABUŠNICA, DIMITROVGRAD AND BELA PALANKA URBAN AREA



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Ministry of European Integration
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

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INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY THE MAYOR OF PIROT

Dear fellow citizens,

In front of you is the Territorial Strategy of Pirot and Babušnica, Dimitrovgrad and Bela Palanka Urban Area, a very important strategic document that will be one of the main guidelines for the development of our District in the coming period.

The document looks at all important segments of development through five priority areas:

- Urban development
- Environment
- Green economy
- Social wellbeing
- Development governance

The preparation of this document required the synchronised work of all four local governments, the engagement of working groups that were formed according to priority areas, the participation of all the bearers of local development from the public, economic and civil sectors, as well as citizens.

The process of creating the document included high transparency, with a permanent invitation to the local community to participate in the adoption of this important document through public consultations, proposals and public discussion. I would especially like to thank the European Union and the experts from the EURO PRO Plus programme, with whose wholehearted help we realised the creation of this document.

The document contains proposals for development projects that are the result of the initiatives and suggestions of all relevant participants who recognised the importance of the Strategy and were involved in the drafting process.

Before us is the challenge and the task of working in the coming years to achieve the goals we have jointly defined, in order to make the environment in which we live and work even better.



Vladan Vasić, M.Sc.

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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, digitalisation 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, public forums and public hearings), v) provision of technical support for consolidation of materials and

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.

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 landscape, cultural and architectural heritage, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and strengthening of urban-rural ties;
- 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 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

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>

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, organised 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.
- **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

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>

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 optimisation 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 realisation 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 (prioritisation). 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.

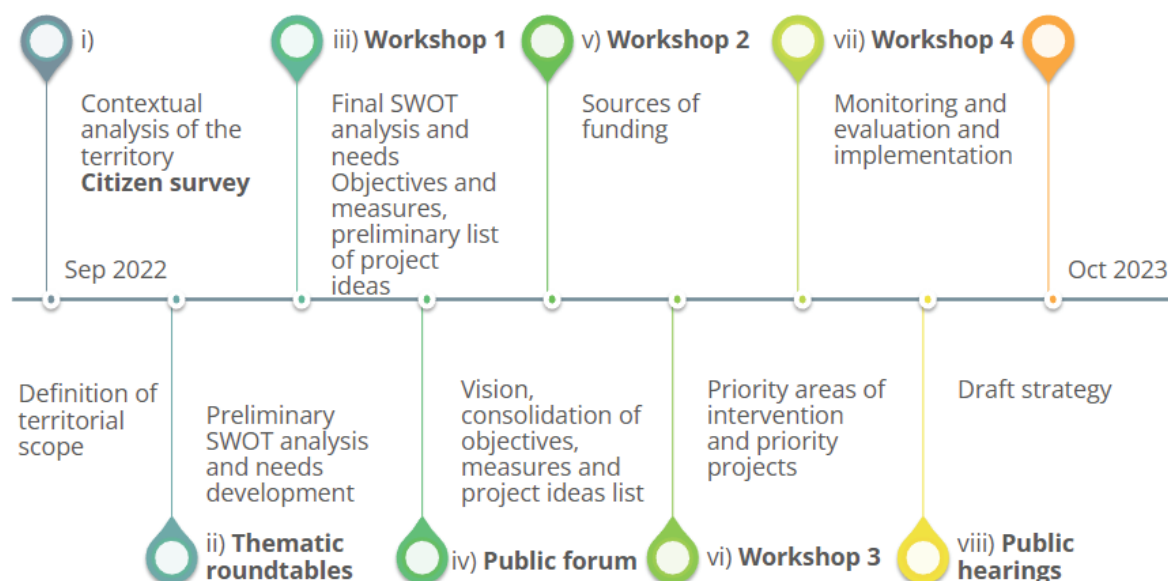
The organisation of the Strategy drafting process implies the coordination of cooperation between different sectors and levels of administration, facilitated communication with the participants of the planning process, the establishment of networks of administration and actors in the covered urban area 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.

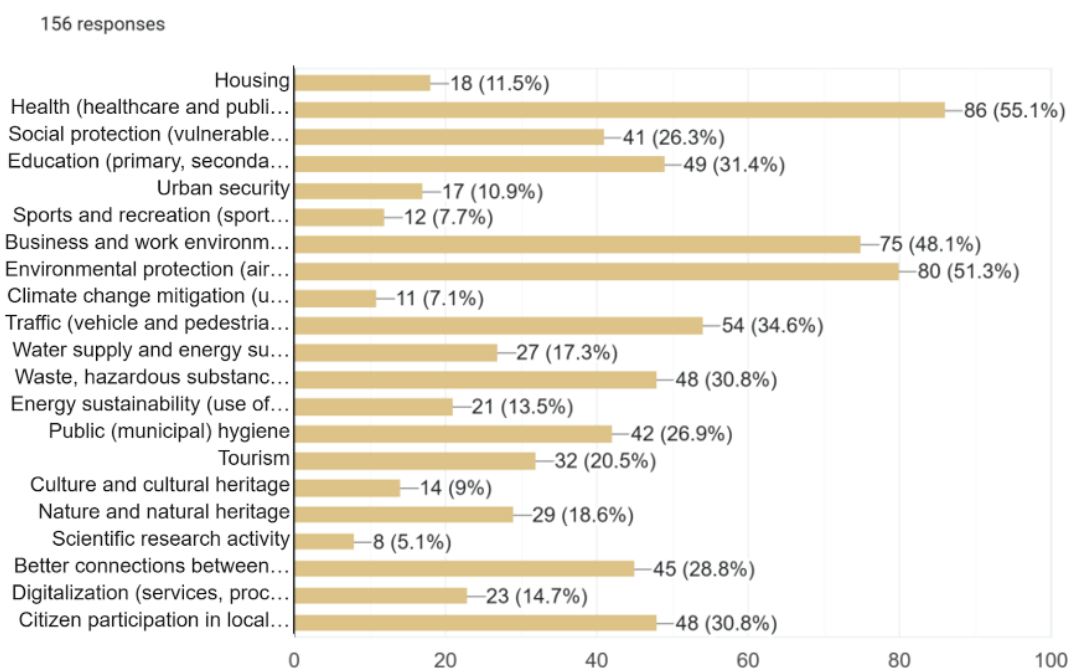


Graphic representation 1: Steps in the strategy development process

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, the results of which were separately presented at the thematic round tables (Appendix 1).

Appendix 1: Citizen survey results

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, 2 and 3: Thematic round tables, preliminary SWOT and contextual analysis, Pirot City Hall, Pirot, 1 and 2 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 4 and 5: Workshop with members of the Development Council and Working Group - proposal of objectives and measures, Pirot City Hall, Pirot, 4 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.

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.



Pictures 6 and 7: Citizen's forum: the formulation of the vision of the development of the urban area, the addition 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", Dom kulture Pirot, Pirot, 17 May 2023.

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, 9 and 10: Workshop on priority areas of intervention and strategic projects, Pirot City Hall, Pirot, 18 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

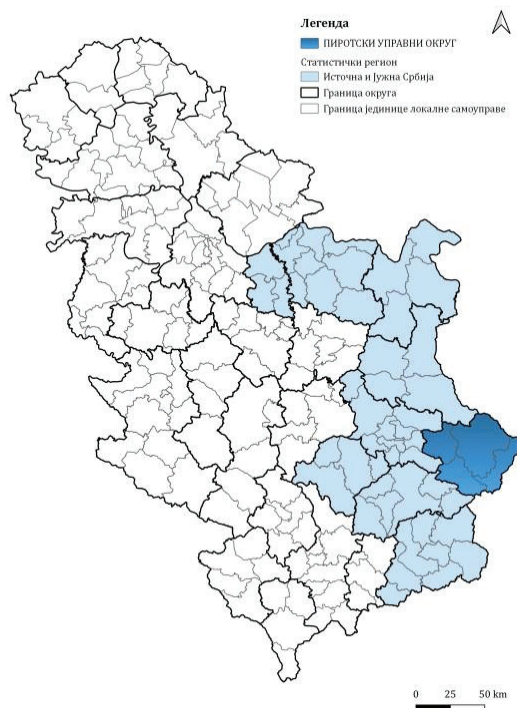
2) in the case of a wider territory: common characteristics – important infrastructure corridors, geography, morphology, industrial capacities; endogenous potential; common needs, problems and challenges and common development plans and initiatives.

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.

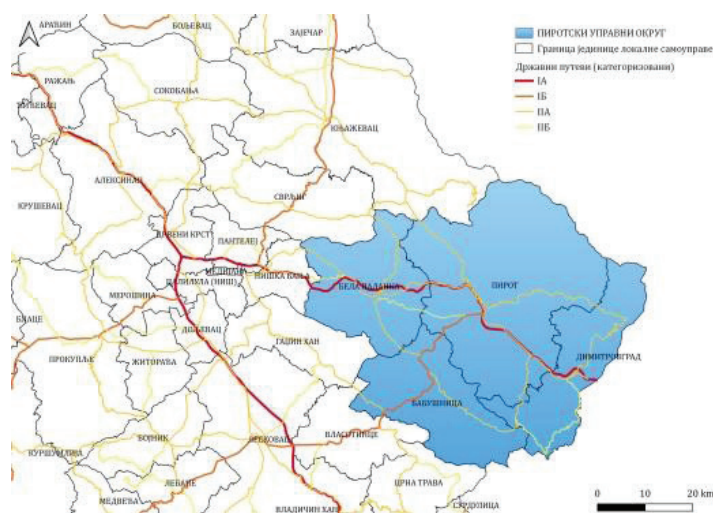
4 TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

The urban area of the City of Pirot completely coincides with the administrative borders of the Pirot administrative district, i.e. the Pirot area. It is located in the southeastern part of Serbia, in the north it borders Zaječar district, in the northwest Nišava district, and in the southwest Jablanica district, in the south and east it mostly borders Bulgaria. This urban area includes Pirot (1,232 km²²) and the municipality of Babušnica (529 km²), Bela Palanka (517 km²) and Dimitrovgrad (483 km²), with a total area of 2,761 km². (Graphic representation 2).



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

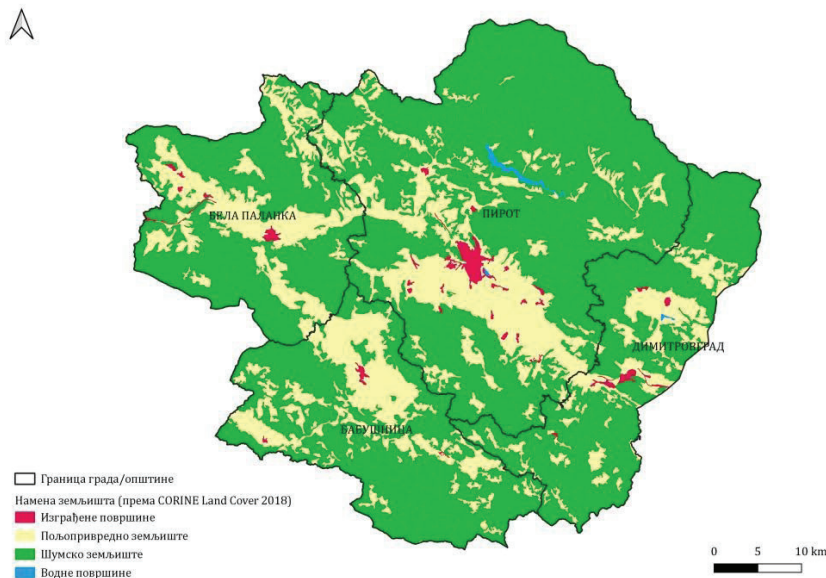
The space is located on an important international transversal - a branch of Corridor 10, which connects Europe with Asia, on the road Belgrade - Niš - Sofia - Istanbul, and on its last section through Serbia (Graphic representation 3). The centre of Pirot Region is 75 km from Niš, and Sofia, and 33 km from the Gradina border crossing near Dimitrovgrad. The position of the City of Pirot on the international transcontinental highway has had an impact on the past development, and even today it represents one of the significant factors of its further economic and cultural development. It is mentioned in old Roman maps from the 2nd century AD as Mutatio Turres, the Greeks call him Pyrgos, while the Serbs give him the name Pirot in the 14th century. Since ancient times, this territory has been an important point in connecting the East and West of Europe and Asia. And although the Balkan Peninsula alone connects Europe with Southwest Asia, its importance is increased by the road through the Nišava Valley.



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 Pirot basin represents the valley of the river Nišava, which flows between the southern slopes Svrljig mountains and Suva Planina. This composite, polygenetic valley is predisposed to the main Nišava fault along which the Niš and Bela Palanka basins were created. Fault lines and zones determine the cutting direction of the Nišava river, first by the lake island, later, the inherited Nišava valley, created by its cutting into the central lake plain. Thus, on the sides of its valley, there are traces of Plio-Quaternary deposits that were formed as remnants of former lake terraces, which were mostly eroded by Nišava, creating six alluvial plains, or river terraces. The extremely large temporal unevenness of the waters (water regimes are torrential, with low water regimes being particularly unfavorable) and unregulated river courses make the degree of flood protection unsatisfactory. The rivers of the Pirot area are mostly mountainous, with the exception of the Nišava river, which is a plain river with certain fluctuations. In the Pirot basin, permanent tributaries of the Nišava are formed by karst springs that erupt along its rim. The springs are fed by the waters of sinkhole rivers, so the Krupačko and Gradiško springs receive water from the sinkhole of the Odorovačka river, while the Bokludža springs, which emerge in the plain of the basin, originate from sinkholes that descend from the Vlaška mountain. The area of the City of Pirot itself is surrounded from the north and northeast by the Stara Planina, with the highest peak Midžor (2,169 m.a.s.l.), the southern and southwestern edge of the Pirot Basin are formed by the branches of the Vlaška Planina (1,442 m.a.s.l.) and Suva Planina (1,809 m.a.s.l.), and the northwest of the Pirot Basin is surrounded by branches Svrljiške mountains (1,334 m.a.s.l.) (Graphic representation 4). The area of the urban area is under the influence of a moderate-continental climate, the main characteristics of which are hot summers and cold winters with sufficient and relatively regular distribution of precipitation throughout the year. The fluvial process is constantly taking place even today, with greater or lesser intensity, with increased erosion in the higher parts of the terrain, that is, accumulation in the lower ones. The great potential of the water area is not used today. Zavoj Lake is a unique water and energy resource. The water in the lake is used for the production of electricity, which is of high A category quality and is considered to be able to supply five million inhabitants. Its future potential is contained in that fact.

According to physiognomy, most of the settlements in the Pirot region belong to the compact or Timok type of spontaneously formed settlements. Nevertheless, the mountain morphology often influenced the formation of a broken type of village, which consists of several hamlets, on slopes and hills, where seasonal livestock settlements were transformed into permanent settlements by the relocation of the population.



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

The number of inhabitants of this urban area according to the 2011 census was 95,123 inhabitants, while a dramatic difference was recorded after the 2022 Census, where the total number of inhabitants was 77,121 with a decrease of about 19% of the population. The situation is similar for all local self-governments. The municipality of Bela Palanka is demographically impoverished by 21%, Babušnica by almost 28%, Dimitrovgrad by 24% and the City of Pirot itself by more than 16%. The number of households is about 2.5% at the level of the functional area/region, while the situation per local governments is similar in Bela Palanka, it is less in Dimitrovgrad (2.3), even less in Babušnica (2.1) and somewhat more favorable in Pirot (2.6). This situation indicates an extremely poor structure of the entire demographic body of the urban area and individual local governments. These are predominantly old households with little capacity for renovation and reproduction. The results of the census by settlements will give a better picture of the spatial distribution of the population and the potential poles of growth/slower decline.

Based on the Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia 2035, the City of Pirot belongs to the category of medium-sized and smaller centres in underdeveloped rural areas and parts of border, hilly-mountainous and poorly accessible traffic areas, which possess development potential, sufficient population size, relatively developed human capital and public-social infrastructure, urban-development continuity, cultural identity and similar, and which are based on secondary development belts and traffic corridors through which they spatially and functionally integrate and achieve connections with other territories and agglomerations in the regional environment (zone of influence greater than 40,000 inhabitants). It is located on the primary development belt of Niš - along the branch of Corridor X, in the direction from Niš to Dimitrovgrad and Bulgaria (Sofia).

In the typology of settlements already in 1981, it can be seen that the vast majority of settlements are of the agrarian type, and it is clear that agriculture in the valleys and animal husbandry in the mountain areas had the largest share in production. The larger industrial centres were only the centres of the municipalities (Babušnica, Bela Palanka, Pirot) and the Gulenovci settlement, which is part of the Dimitrovgrad municipality. Changes in the functional types of settlements during the 21-year period between 1981 and 2002 indicate that there was a process of deagrarianisation of a large number of settlements in the district, which in that period was also characteristic on wider levels, including on the level of the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia. In 2002, there were as many as 73 settlements dominated by the secondary sector of activity (34.1% of all settlements). This number speaks about the active process of industrialisation in the district in the observed period. In a large number of suburban and rural settlements near the centres, the second sector of activity dominates. These settlements are located near the municipal centres and tend to gravitate towards the centres, the share of permanent and daily migrations between the village and the city increases significantly, which results in the creation of zones of influence of the largest settlements in the district. Although there are not a large number of settlements in which the largest share of the active population is employed in the third and fourth sectors, there is a big change and a much larger number of inhabitants are employed in these so-called service activities in 2002. Urban settlements and municipal centres no longer belong to the industrial functional type, but industrial-service (Pirot, Babušnica and Bela Palanka) and service-industrial (Dimitrovgrad). Today, the urban area of the city of Pirot has one of the fastest depopulation processes in all of Serbia. According to the 2002 census, there was an unusually large number of very small settlements with less than 100 inhabitants in the Pirot district (94 - 43.9% of the total number), and in 2011, that number increased to 131 (61.2% of all settlements). Also, in the period from 2002 to 2011, the number of inhabitants decreased in 207 out of 214 settlements in the urban area (96.7%). The number of settlements with less than 10 inhabitants increased from 7 in 2002 to 23 in 2011.

The largest companies and industrial plants in the urban area are located in the city settlements and along the main roads, especially along the passenger-railway corridor Nis-Sofia, which passes through Bela Palanka, Pirot and Dimitrovgrad and where the regional axis of development of the Pirot district is formed. The land structure is dominated by agricultural land (69,854 ha), followed by arable land and gardens, orchards (1,752 ha), vineyards (1,658 ha), meadows (13,980 ha) and pastures (32,754 ha). Forests cover about 33.80% of the entire area of the District with 90,151 ha). The economic base is mainly located in the centre of the urban area - Pirot, where the backbone is the Pirot Free Zone with the industrial zone (public private partnership) and the dominant Tigar/Michelin tire factory. Conceptual advantage of the Free Zone Pirot is an outstanding location with numerous traffic advantages. The Pirot basin has great potential for the production of healthy food (today in the world and in our country there is increasing demand for organic food, which is several times higher than the supply). Tourism is an activity with great potential. The trend of increasing the number of tourists and the number of overnight stays has been constant in the last few years, which indicates a high degree of utilisation of attractions and potential, but also an increase in accommodation capacity. The Pirot valley with its hills, as a tourist destination with all the accompanying attractive elements (craftsmen's quarter in Tijabara, revival of the town of Kale, Zavoj Lake with water rich in white fish, Visočica and in

the Belska river rich in brown trout, Stara planina - with its natural, untouched, properties...) is becoming more and more one of the most important destinations on the tourist map of Serbia. The city of Pirot with the tourist destinations of Stara planina and the Jerma Special Nature Reserve belongs to the category of tourist place of category III, with an area of over 1,000 km².

The road network at the level of the urban area is 925 km. The structure is dominated by municipal roads (544 km), about 120 km of class I roads and about 260 km of class II roads.

In addition to everything, the wider, more intensive and better communication and cooperation of institutional, economic and other subjects with actors from the local, regional and European environment and their interest in networking is noticeable. Various forms of civic initiatives, their organisation and participation are also being strengthened and expanded, especially when it comes to issues of sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.

5 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

5.1 SOCIETY

5.1.1 Demographics

According to data from the census conducted in 2022, a total of 77,121 inhabitants live in the territory of the urban area of the City of Pirot and the municipalities of Babušnica, Dimitrovgrad and Bela Palanka (hereinafter: Urban area), of which 49,894 live in Pirot, 9,182 in Babušnica, 8,075 in Dimitrovgrad and Bela Palanka 9,970 inhabitants. Looking at the data from the 2011 census, when 92,479 inhabitants lived in the Urban area, it is evident that the number of inhabitants decreased by 15,358, or 16.6%, for the past 11 years. The most pronounced decrease in the number of inhabitants is in Babušnica, in the amount of as much as 25.39% (in 2011 - 12,307 inhabitants), then in Dimitrovgrad, a decrease of 20.19% (in 2011 - 10,118 inhabitants), in Bela Palanka, a decrease of 17.77% (in 2011 - 12,126 inhabitants) and Pirot, where a decrease of 13.86% was recorded (in 2011 - 57,928 inhabitants). The city of Pirot and its suburbs have a slight decrease in the number of inhabitants, while in other settlements there is an accelerated depopulation and demographic emptying. Three villages on the territory of the town of Pirot were left without permanent residents. In Bela Palanka, the total number of inhabitants is decreasing, with the urban population slightly increasing by 3.35%, and the rural population decreasing by 29%. The decrease in the number of the population is influenced by the birth rate, negative natural increase, as well as pronounced migration of the population. According to the estimate for the year 2021, the rate of live births in the Urban area was 7, the rate of deaths was 24, while the rate of natural increase was -17. Migration of the population throughout the Urban area is very pronounced. The reasons for the departure of the population are mainly of an economic nature. Part of the population goes for temporary work abroad, while there is also permanent emigration to other parts of the country, especially the larger city centres of Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad. There is another form of migration - from the village to the city, which lasts for many years. Internal migrations were such that the number of immigrated persons in the period 2019-2021 amounted to 938 persons in 2019, 882 persons in 2020 and 1,086 persons in 2021. In the same period, the number of displaced persons was 1,167 in 2019, 1,036 in 2020 and 1,224 in 2021.

The area of the Urban area is 2,761 km², with a total of 214 settlements, while the average population density was 29 inhabitants per km² (Pirot 43, Babušnica 18, Dimitrovgrad 18 and Bela Palanka 20 inhabitants per km²). In territorial terms, the higher population density is along the main E-80 corridor, while the mountainous areas of Stara and Suva planina are almost completely empty.

The total number of households according to the 2022 census in the Urban area is 31,047, of which 19,279 are in Pirot, 4,297 in Babušnica, 3,469 in Dimitrovgrad, and 4,002 in Bela Palanka.

In the age structure of the population of 18-64 years, the working-age population prevails with 59%, however, the participation of even 26% of the population over 65 years of age and only 15% of the population under 17 years of age is worrying. Some remote mountain villages are on the way to extinction, and some are no longer inhabited. Other social indicators indicate

that the largest number of households with two members (26%) is in urban areas, that is, 34% in rural areas, and with three-member households, 21% in urban areas and 13% in rural areas, and a high number of single-member households, which is 18% in urban areas and 31% in rural areas. The largest number of families has one child, a total of 54.04%, while the number of families with two children is 41.29%. The number of marriages concluded in 2021 is 301, and the number of divorced marriages is 102.

5.1.2 Social inclusion and social protection

Average salary of inhabitants

The average salary of employees without taxes and contributions in the Urban area in 2021 was RSD 58,257, which is about 88% compared to the national average, which was RSD 65,864. The difference in earnings between urban and rural areas is particularly pronounced. There are also noticeable differences in earnings between local governments within the Urban Area. The highest average salary is in Pirot and amounts to 61,372 RSD, in Babušnica 52,242 RSD, Dimitrovgrad 50,409 RSD, and the lowest in Bela Palanka and is 48,708 RSD.

Social protection services

Social assistance services provided to users are diverse, but not the same throughout the Urban area. Most of the services provided are help at home, daycare for children with developmental disabilities, personal companionship for children with developmental disabilities, exercise of the right to material support, exercise of the right to social protection services and other rights. In addition to these services provided by the local self-government and the Centre for Social Work, users are provided with other types of help and support through the Soup Kitchen, the Red Cross and the non-governmental sector. In 2020, the total expenditures of users of budget funds for social protection in the Urban area amounted to RSD 389,518,000, i.e. 6% of the total budget, which is RSD 4,719 per inhabitant. The amount per inhabitant is lower than the national average, which is RSD 6,238. The total number of social welfare beneficiaries on the records of the Centre for Social Work in 2021 is 12,383, of which women are more represented than men, 6,265 women and 6,118 men. The share of social protection beneficiaries in the total population is 15.3% and is higher than the national average of 10%.

A social protection system has been developed in Pirot, however, there is a pronounced need for new social protection services, especially in rural areas, especially social-educational and counseling-therapeutic services, but also services to help the elderly, as well as the need for shelters for socially vulnerable categories of the population (victims of violence, the homeless, the old and infirm, residents in a state of immediate social need, etc.). Social protection services provided in the territory of the municipality of Bela Palanka are the Club for the elderly and retired, the Club for providing educational content to people with developmental disabilities, and help at home for adults and children with disabilities and developmental disabilities. There is a demand for the service of a child's personal companion, shelters for victims of violence and day care for children with disabilities, while the needs for services for the elderly and infirm and partially for persons with disabilities are partially met. The municipality of Babušnica allocates the largest percentage of funds for child and social protection, about 15% of the total budget. In Babušnica, two social protection services are implemented, help in a home for the elderly

and a personal companion for a child, and there is a need for new services, such as day care for children with disabilities, social-educational and counseling-therapeutic services, social housing, a nursing home and other services. In Dimitrovgrad, in addition to basic social assistance and services, there are also so-called innovative social services - an inclusive playroom, help at home for people with developmental disabilities and the elderly, a hyporehabilitation centre for children with developmental disabilities. The number of financial social assistance beneficiaries is relatively small compared to the number of the poor (with incomes below the poverty line) due to administrative restrictions, which indicates the need for better social services for these beneficiaries.

Endangered zones, security

The available summary data for the Urban area related to the execution of criminal acts/ judiciary are such that there are a total of 37 juvenile offenders (14-17 years old) who were sentenced to criminal sanctions according to the place of execution. 409 persons of legal age were convicted according to the place of execution, and 112 persons of legal age were convicted of theft according to the place where the crime was committed.

5.1.3 Housing

Housing offer

The total number of apartments registered in 2022 in the Urban area is 58,621, of which 29,976 are in Pirot, 11,387 in Babušnica, 7,343 in Dimitrograd and 9,915 in Bela Palanka.

Compared to the 2011 census, the number of apartments in Pirot increased by 1,129 units, or 3.9%, but there is still a high demand for apartments. As many as 90.35% of households live in their own apartments, while 2.78% live in subtenant conditions. The most numerous are apartments with an area between 61-80 m², while the smallest number of apartments with an area of 151 m² or more. In 2022, 15 apartments were built (apartments for which a use permit was issued) with an average square footage of an apartment of 57 m². In 2019, 136 apartments were built, with a total area of 10,399 m². The number of apartments built per 1,000 inhabitants in Pirot in 2019 was 2.5, while in the Republic of Serbia, 3.6 apartments were built per 1,000 inhabitants. Since the 2011 census, 765 apartments have been built in Bela Palanka, increasing the fund by 8.4% in 2022, while the average housing space per inhabitant is 30 m². The need for social housing is expressed in the area where the Roma population lives. There are social apartments in social housing buildings, which make up 2% of the total housing stock. The demand for apartments in Babušnica is increasing, and there is especially a need for social apartments among socially disadvantaged families. A large increase in the number of apartments was recorded for a total of 2,705 units, or 31.1%, compared to the census from 2011, when there were 8,682 apartments. According to the 2011 census, Dimitrovgrad had 6,847 apartments, while now that number has increased by 496, or 7.2%. There is a certain "surplus" of housing space, which refers to a considerable number of family houses in which no one lives permanently, but which are not for sale. At the same time, there is a lack of apartments, which leads to an increase in the prices of that type of real estate. The need for social housing and rent subsidies for residents with lower incomes was expressed, with no housing issue resolved.

The price of housing

According to data for the first half of 2022, the average price of an apartment per square meter at the national level was RSD 200,989, while the average price in the Urban area was RSD 92,520 per m², which represents an increase of 5.6% compared to the second half of 2021. In Bela Palanka and Dimitrovgrad, the average price per square meter of an apartment is RSD 35,000.

Illegal construction

The number of illegally built buildings, based on requests for legalisation, in the territory of the city of Pirot is about 11,000. The total number of residential buildings in the territory of the municipality of Bela Palanka is 12,663, of which the number of illegally built buildings is about 1,395. According to the data of the construction inspection, it is estimated that the trend of construction of illegally built buildings is decreasing.

5.1.4 Social standard facilities

Social infrastructure

Social protection activities are carried out in the Urban area through institutions and organisations, which provide various services to their users. The most important institutions are Centres for Social Work, which were established by local self-governments and in which the right to material security, allowance for help and care of another person, placement in an institution or another family, as well as the right to social work services is realised. Apart from the Centre for Social Work, local self-governments can be the founders of other institutions dealing with social protection.

In the City of Pirot, in addition to the Centre for Social Work, a very important organisation in the social protection system is the Red Cross. As part of its social activities, the Pirot Red Cross has a Soup Kitchen programme for over 600 beneficiaries, and it is also involved in the activities of the strategy for encouraging births. Pirot lacks a Home for the elderly, the construction of which is planned, and a private preschool institution will be opened in 2023. Taking into account the very unfavorable social and economic situation in Bela Palanka, the care that the Centre for Social Work takes of vulnerable categories of the population is of great importance for improving the quality of life of the local residents. The total number of users of the services of the Centre for Social Work is 2,225 people, of which 370 are minors.

Health infrastructure

Social care for the health of the population at the level of the Urban Area is carried out in accordance with the national policies and programs of health care and public health. Health care is organised on two levels, primary and secondary, which are interconnected and cooperate in providing health care to citizens. The total number of doctors in the Urban area is 228, that is, 2.8 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants, which is less than the national average of 3.0 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants.

Health care for the population of the city of Pirot at the primary level of health care is provided by the Pirot Health Centre, the Pirot Pharmacy and the Institute of Public Health Pirot, and at the secondary level of health care by the Pirot General Hospital. The plan is to build a new ambulance building and a location has been determined that will be more accessible to all citizens of Pirot.

The Bela Palanka Health Centre deals with the prevention and treatment of all residents in 46 settlements of the Bela Palanka municipality. There are 7 dispensaries and 4 dispensaries in the form of health centres on the territory of the municipality. Most of these dispensaries do not meet the basic spatial conditions for the provision of health services and the protection of rural residents, so their urgent reconstruction and adaptation is needed in order to improve the spatial conditions and harmonise them with health care standards. Private health care is not organised on the territory of the municipality. In Babušnica, the arrangement of certain village clinics is also needed, while there is no private sector in the provision of health services. The number of health infrastructure facilities meets the needs of the population in Dimitrovgrad.

Educational infrastructure

The number of preschool education institutions in the Urban area in 2021 is 4, with a total of 20 facilities. The coverage of children aged 0-3 years in preschool education is 24.3%, which is much lower than the national average (34.3%), while the coverage of children aged 3 years until starting preschool education is 61.2%, which is lower than the national average (65.8%). Out of a total of 1,940 children admitted to preschool education, 1,845 are from the urban area, while only 95 are from other settlements.

There are 12 elementary (main) schools in the Urban area, of which 7 are in urban settlements, and 5 in other settlements, with a total of 48 school branches. The net rate of inclusion in primary education is 93.7%, which is identical to the national average. There are a total of 9 secondary schools, in which the enrollment of children is 80.9%. The high school graduation rate is 84.9%, which is slightly lower than the national average of 86%.

Of the educational institutions, in Pirot there is one preschool institution, four elementary schools, one school for children with disabilities, one elementary school for music education. There are a total of five secondary schools, Gymnasium, School of Economics, Technical School, Dairy School, Secondary Vocational School and one university - Academy of Technical and Educational Vocational Studies - Department Pirot. On the territory of the municipality of Bela Palanka, there is a preschool institution, two primary and one secondary school. There is a need to harmonise the dual education programme and the three-year profiles that exist in the Bela Palanka high school with the entrepreneurs with whom the students would do professional practice. In Babušnica there is one preschool institution, five primary schools and two secondary schools. There is a need to open a textile course in high school, for the needs of the local economy. In Dimitrovgrad there is one preschool institution, one primary school and one gymnasium. There is a need for the education of persons with a hospitality profile, considering the significant number of employees in that field, who do not have formal education of that type.

Cultural and scientific infrastructure

The city of Pirot is the founder of the National Library, the “Čedomir Krstić” Gallery, the House of Culture, the Pirot National Theater, the Ponišavlje Museum and the Historical Archive in Pirot, which have their own regular programs and activities and actively contribute to a more diverse cultural life of the local community. In Bela Palanka there is the “Remezijana” Cultural Institution and the “Vuk Karadžić” National Library, while in Babušnica there is also a Cultural Centre and a Library. Among the cultural institutions in Dimitrovgrad there is the “Detko Petrov” National

Library and the Dimitrovgrad Culture Centre. The most important cultural manifestations are the Art Colony “Paganovo Monastery”, the Meeting of Native Writers “Meeting under the Old Linden Tree”, the Folklore Festival “Nišavski Horovod”, the Theater Festival “Balkan Teatarfest”, Pisfest. This is an area with a large number of artists, especially painters.

Sports infrastructure

In the city of Pirot, many sports facilities have been built and reconstructed, the “Kej” Sports Hall, an indoor swimming pool, a youth stadium, school sports halls, mini pitch courts, a field with artificial grass, tennis courts, trim trails, a city ski resort, a city ice rink, an adrenaline park, a city shooting range, open sports fields, gyms, sports and recreation complex with an open pool. These sports facilities are managed by the Public Institution Sports Centre Pirot, whose founder is the city of Pirot, and all facilities are available to athletes, clubs, children and youth, recreationists, people with disabilities. One of the sports facilities that is missing is a new standardised track and field that would enable high-quality athletics, the organisation of higher-level athletics competitions, the performance of school physical education, etc. The Sports Centre - Banjica is in charge of the organisation and implementation of sports events in Bela Palanka. The institution includes a sports hall, the city stadium “Rajko Mitić” and the Ecological Recreation Centre of Banjica. ERC Banjica has: a swimming pool, 2 tennis courts, a beach volleyball court with bleachers, bicycle paths, a children’s park with equipment. Within the complex there is also a mini golf course, and in the coming period, the construction of a field for small sports (handball) and a car camp for tourists and campers is planned. In Babušnica, there is a need for the construction of a sports hall, as well as the construction of stands near the soccer field, the construction of a mini pitch field and the arrangement of other sports fields. On the territory of the municipality of Dimitrovgrad there are 14 sports clubs, organisations, societies, associations classified into 13 sports branches. Sports centre “Park” is a sports complex consisting of a city football stadium, open courts for basketball and handball, which is also used for indoor football, with an asphalt surface, as well as sports halls. There is no shortage of sports facilities.

5.2 ECONOMY

5.2.1 General economic trends and the labor market

Employment and employee mobility

According to data for the year 2021, the registered number of employees in the urban area according to the municipality of work was 21,274, and according to the municipality of residence 24,522. Of this number, 14,150 are men (57.7%), while 10,372 are women (42.3%). In the period from 2019-2021, the number of employees according to the municipality of residence shows a slight increase, both for women (9,946 - 10,119 - 10,372) and for men (13,956 - 13,852 - 14,150). Registered employees according to the municipality of residence in relation to the number of inhabitants shows a slight increase in percentages for both men (32.9 - 33 - 34.4) and women (24.1 - 24.9 - 25.9) in the period 2019-2021. The number of registered employees in relation to the number of inhabitants (per 1,000 inhabitants) in the urban area is 30, while that number is higher at the level of the republic and is 33. In 2021, the largest number of registered employees according to the municipality of work 15,428 and according to the municipality of residence

17,051 is in Pirot, followed by Bela Palanka, where the number of registered employees according to the municipality of work is 1,696, according to the municipality of residence 2,657, then Babušnica, in which the number of registered employees according to the municipality of work is 2,062, according to the municipality of residence 2,495, and finally Dimitrovgrad, where the number of registered employees according to the municipality of work is 2,088, according to the municipality of residence 2,319. In 2020, the total number of registered employees in Pirot was 14,974, where 11,960 people were employed by legal entities, 2,913 were entrepreneurs, self-employed persons or employed by them, and 102 persons were registered as individual farmers. Out of the total number of employees in Pirot, 58% are men and 42% are women. The total number of employees was drastically reduced compared to the period 10 or more years ago, as a result of failed privatisations and inadequately implemented company restructuring processes, but positive developments were recorded after 2015. The largest number of employees in Pirot works in the processing industry sector (5,992), and together with employees in the trade sector, it makes up more than half of the total number of employees. There is a qualified workforce that responds to the needs of economic trends. Persons without primary education - participate with 33% in total unemployment, persons aged 50 and over - participate with 43.6% in total unemployment, long-term unemployed with 63%. During 2020, a total of 4,031 people (1,934 women) were employed and employed in the records of the Branch of the National Employment Service in Pirot, which is about 5% less than in 2019.

In Pirot, there is organised public transport that meets the needs of daily trips to and from work. The timetable and the location of the bus stops were determined in cooperation with the representatives of the companies that work in the Pirot industrial zone, and employees who work in the Pirot City Hospital (which is outside the city centre), public institutions and private shops within the central city area were also taken into account. In other municipalities, there is no urban or suburban transportation for employees. In Bela Palanka, in 2020, a total of 1,740 people were employed, of which 462 were entrepreneurs, 20 were agricultural producers, while 1,258 were employed by legal entities. In 2018, the number of unemployed (617) decreased compared to 2017 (780), while in 2019, unemployment jumped again to as many as 910, which is an increase of almost 48%. A possible reason for this is the construction of the highway on Corridor 10, when a significant number of local residents were engaged by contractors and subcontractors, which was completed in 2019. There is no qualified workforce that meets the needs of economic trends. In Dimitrovgrad, in 2020, a total of 2,503 people were employed, of which 535 were entrepreneurs, 44 were agricultural producers, while 1,924 were employed by legal entities.

At the level of the Urban area in 2021, the number of registered unemployed was 9,079. The number of registered unemployed per 1,000 inhabitants was 113, which is significantly higher than the average of the republic, which is 67. The highest absolute number of registered unemployed is in Pirot, 4,858, where the number of registered unemployed per 1,000 inhabitants is 93, followed by Bela Palanka, with 1,951, the number registered unemployed per 1,000 inhabitants 191, Babušnica has 1,191 unemployed, while the number of registered unemployed per 1,000 inhabitants is 128 and Dimitrovgrad with 1,079, i.e. 125 unemployed per 1,000 inhabitants. Most of the unemployed are in the age group from 30 to 54 (52%), from 55+ (30%), and from 15 to 29 18%. Only in the age group of 55+ are there more unemployed men than women.

5.2.2 Economy and business environment

Business entities

According to data from 2021, the number of active companies on the territory of the Urban Area was 769, while the number of active entrepreneurs was 2,333. The number of defunct/newly established companies in 2019 was 123/53, in 2020 57/42, in 2021 34/39, while the number of defunct/newly established entrepreneurs in 2019 is 272/348, in 2020 243/274, in 2021 287/323.

Pirot has the largest number of active companies - 490 and 1,461 active entrepreneurs, followed by Dimitrovgrad, with 138 active companies, 258 active entrepreneurs, Bela Palanka, 79 active companies, 328 active entrepreneurs, Babušnica, active companies 62, number of active entrepreneurs 286.

Pirot is a city of significant potential, a long tradition in industrial production and craftsmanship, local brands and a spirit that supports innovation and the new. Good economic activity and a positive social product, traditionally developed entrepreneurship, local branded products, the existence of the leading free zone in Europe, the presence of foreign investors, as well as the support of the City and the simplicity of procedures represent the strongest strength of economic development. Support to the business community in Pirot is provided by the Office for Local Economic Development, Regional Development Agency South, District Chamber of Commerce Pirot and others. Pirot is one of the few towns in Serbia that has its own local “brand” products, namely Pirot cheese, Pirot carpet and Pirot pressed sausage. The backbone of the Pirot industry is made up of two giants from the rubber industry, namely “Tigar Tires” and “Tigar a.d”, which are the only large companies in the territory of the city and together employ around 4,500 people. “Tigar Tires” is engaged in the production of passenger and scooter tires and is an important driver of the economic development of not only the city, but also the entire country. Average investments of about 10 million euros per year and a large volume of exports, about 90% of total production, speak in favor of this.

Commercial zones

There are three industrial zones in Pirot and the Free Zone “Pirot”. According to its results, this is the most successful Free Zone in Serbia, but also in Europe for 2018. For construction within the boundaries of the Free Zone, users are exempted from payment of fees for the arrangement of urban construction land, fees and costs of the city administration and issuance of documentation, issuance of conditions for connection to infrastructure networks, issuance of consent for connection to infrastructure networks, connection to infrastructure networks. The Pirot Free Zone covers 140 hectares and includes “greenfield” and “brownfield” locations. 67 trading and 19 manufacturing companies operate in the regime of the Pirot Free Zone, including large, medium and small enterprises employing around 6,000 workers.

5.2.3 Tourism and culture

Tourist infrastructure

According to data for 2020, the Urban Area was visited by 9,579 domestic and 5,356 foreign tourists. Domestic tourists had a total of 20,336 overnight stays, or 2 overnight stays on average, while foreign tourists had 9,831 or 2 overnight stays on average. Accommodation facilities in

the Urban area consist of hotels, motels, lodgings and private facilities for accommodation in the city and in the countryside. In Pirot, the number of categorised accommodation facilities of the private type is constantly increasing, thanks to the incentives of the city, which relate to equipping, renovating and purchasing various equipment for facilities that are categorised or will be categorised and whose activity will be aimed at providing accommodation facilities to tourists. Incentives refer exclusively to private accommodation facilities and aim to increase the quality and quantity of accommodation facilities in the city and its surroundings.

The tourist offer of Pirot and its surroundings includes natural wealth (Stara Planina, Jerma River Valley, Zavoj Lake, Sićevo Gorge, Venera Valley, Lužnica Valley, Jama Bezdanka, Zvonačka Spa, Belopalanačka cave Jovina, Petrlaška cave, waters, forests, etc.), Stara Planina Nature Park and Jerma Special Nature Reserve, waterfalls, rivers, lakes, canyons, gorges and caves, etc. The urban area has an extremely rich cultural heritage (recognizable in the autochthonous and partially visible Ottoman architecture - the village of Presek, Ostatovica), the traditions and customs of this region of Serbia, the Pirot dialect, Pirot carpet weaving and elements from the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Serbia, the Serbian medieval fortress The town of Momčilo, the Ponišavlje Museum, the stone village of Gostuša, along with the incredible tastes and specialties of the Stara Planina cuisine and local gastronomy. Pirot is the holder of the European EDEN award - an exceptional European Destination for Tourism and Local Gastronomy, with many famous brands around the world in the form of Pirot cheese, đubek, Pirot pressed sausage, Stara Planina lamb, Stara Planina honey, cheese, local wine and brandy. Local specific products are also Pirot brands - Pirot pressed sausage, Pirot cheese and Pirot carpet. These brands are accompanied by events that take place every year and are attended by tourists and visitors in large numbers, and whose aim is to preserve traditions, technology and production of these products. Just a few kilometers from Bela Palanka, in the village of Oreovac, there is the "House on the Rock" which is over 12 meters high and as such represents a unique building in Serbia. In the village of Tamnjanica is the largest lavender plantation in Serbia and one of the largest in this part of Europe. The complex is called "Tamnjanica eco plantation", and there is also a distillery within the complex. Belopalanačko vrelo represents the most beautiful part of Bela Palanka, where the well-known gastro-tourism event "Dani banice" is held. The Old Oak is located in the village of Divljana and is more than a thousand years old; it was planted by the vassals of the Macedonian emperor Samuil. Several events are organised in the municipality of Babušnica, the most important of which are the Vurdijada, the International Ascent of Ruj, the Ascent of the Golemi Stol, Lužnički Megdan, Todor's Saturday, May 2 on Šanac, Pantelejš in Gorčinac, Children's Educational and Research Camp in Strelac, etc.

Cultural heritage

The most important cultural contents of Pirot is the medieval fortress of Momčilov Grad and the Ponišavlje Museum, as well as other cultural monuments and cultural values protected by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, as well as monasteries and churches located in the city and in the wider area of the city. On the territory of today's Bela Palanka, St. Nikita Remezijanski (330-340) was born - bishop, missionary, church writer. The Church of the Ascension of the Lord was built in 1910, in the Hansen (Byzantine) style, in which there is a fresco of St. Nikita Remezijanski and it is believed that this fresco exists only in Bela Palanka in Serbia. In the centre of Bela Palanka is an archaeological site, i.e. a basilica from the Roman-

Byzantine era, which in the 2nd century served as an assembly, where important issues for Remesiana were resolved, while after the adoption of Christianity, the Roman basilica was converted into a church..

5.3 URBAN ENVIRONMENT

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

The urban area has elements of identity in its urban centres that are very recognizable and authentic. The main stages of development of Pirot are: Roman, Byzantine, Serbian, medieval until the fifteenth century, Oriental Turkish until 1877, Serbian-Yugoslav until 1935, Yugoslav from 1935 until 1956, the Yugoslav development period of industrialisation from 1956 until 1991 and the latest period from 1991-2004 year. All these time periods had an impact on the organisation and way of building the urban fabric, and that is why there are different types of settlement within it, namely: housing in the old city fabric, where there are still elements of the oriental Turkish and post-Turkish matrix with its specificities of spatial organisation, construction system and street significance; as well as planned family housing based on the principle of organised construction with regular blocks and streets and narrow plots; high-density multi-family housing. Illegal housing construction or housing on the city border with specific construction conditions occurs predominantly in the system of single-family houses. The expansion of the city in different periods of time had different basic directions, namely: in the earlier stages of development, the direction of expansion was along the Nišava river until 1953. After that along the roads still with an emphasised linear form, while in the last stages, the city has pronounced tendencies of star development, where all the approach directions are affected. In the period from 1877 to 1953, the growth of the city was slow, and then a period of accelerated urbanisation and sudden expansion of the built fabric of the city began. In the period 1987-2004 the most frequent changes were made by thickening and reconstruction of the existing tissue. Today, the transformation and adaptation of the city settlement of Pirot is adapted to the modern needs of the development of new technologies and industries (business complex, Pirot Free Zone, catering, etc.)

On the territory of today's Bela Palanka, there was a city of Remesiana, founded around 280 BC, as a way station. The fortified part of Remesiana was roughly the size of today's Bela Palanka. The area, rich in mines, allowed Remesiana to become the centre of Christianity in the area and the seat of Bishop Niketa. Wars and devastation never passed by. Huns, Bulgarians, Turks. She changed her names: Izvor, Mehmed - pasha Palanka, Musa - pasha Palanka. After liberation from the Turks, it got the name Bela Palanka. The main phase of the territorial development of Bela Palanka was in the period from 1919 to 1930. Other settlements have similar development dynamics with a mixture of numerous influences throughout history. Renewal of neglected and used parts of the settlement, densification instead of expansion, protection of natural heritage (special nature reserve and nature park threatened by the expansion of industrial plants) by carefully choosing solutions that will stop excessive cutting of forests and devastation of agricultural land will contribute to better and more sustainable urban development.

5.3.2 Urban area

Network of settlements

According to the Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035, the urban area is a territory of variable scope, which, in addition to the urban centre, consists of surrounding settlements and rural areas, which are connected to the centre by daily labor migration and other population movements conditioned by functional dependence on the centre. Depending on the demographic size, traffic availability and functional capacity, urban areas are hierarchically organised. Depending on the number of functionally connected urban centres, urban areas can be polycentric, and morphologically they are recognised as metropolitan areas, urban agglomerations, urban areas with different influential zones and urban centres of rural areas.

The backbone of the urban system of Serbia will be larger urban centres and urban areas with a clearly established hierarchy of centres, but an important part of the urban system will be represented by medium and smaller centres in underdeveloped rural areas and parts of border, hilly and mountainous areas that are poorly accessible by traffic, which have development potential, sufficient population size, relatively developed human capital and social infrastructure, urban development continuity, cultural identity and the like. Medium-sized and smaller centres are based on secondary development belts and traffic corridors through which they spatially and functionally integrate and achieve connections with other territories and agglomerations in the regional environment.

One of such planned centres is Pirot, which represents an urban area with an influential zone with more than 40,000 inhabitants. Such types of urban area must improve their functional capacity as a priority; to encourage the development of the economy, the services of public services and institutions and provide access to basic services for the elderly population; enable the complementarity of agriculture and tourism; attracting investments; seasonal use of facilities for the needs of tourism, etc. They also have a great chance as networking centres for small centres in the rural areas that surround them. Pirot represents a centre that has significant perspectives in cross-border cooperation, connecting and joint action/interest integration with areas inside and outside of Serbia, and European programs and development funds enable and motivate such forms of cooperation. Pirot will have an important importance as an urban centre on one of the planned primary belts of development along parts of Corridor X, namely the Nišava belt, along the branch of Corridor X, on the direction from Niš to Pirot, Dimitrovgrad and Bulgaria (Sofia). Primary development belts are provided through areas with the highest concentration of population and economic activities, as well as along international and national infrastructure corridors. The network of these belts represents an important factor in the territorial cohesion of Serbia.

Network of settlements

The network of settlements and their structure on the territory of the Urban Area differs significantly between the City of Pirot and the municipalities of Babušnica, Dimitrovgrad and Bela Palanka.

By nature, Pirot is a polyfunctional centre, i.e. production, industrial, administrative, governing, cultural, educational and health centre. Rural settlements are mostly monofunctional. As for the network of settlements, Pirot is a regional and city centre, while suburban settlements

are settlements that are morphologically and functionally directly connected to Pirot itself, namely: Berilovac, Gnjilan, Gradašnica, Izvor, Novi Zavoј and Poljska Ržana. Secondary centres are community centres of settlements - Krupac, Staničenje, Temska, Sukovo and Visočka Ržana; and primary rural settlements, which are the remaining villages of the City of Pirot.

From the point of view of functional categorisation, the network of settlements of Babušnica implies three levels of centres: the primary centre - the centre of the municipality of Babušnica; community centres of Ljuberađa and Zvonce. Emphasized specialisation has Zvonce, oriented towards tourism development, and Ljuberađa, oriented towards water management. There are also settlements with limited centrality functions on the third level: Veliko Bonjince, Donji Striževac, Stol and Strelac; and primary rural settlements, which are all other settlements on the territory of the municipality.

The networks of Dimitrovgrad settlements consist of: I centre of the local self-government unit - Dimitrovgrad, II Centres of the settlement community: Smilovci and Željuša; III Centres with limited centrality: Izatovci, Donja Nevlja, Poganovo, Trnski Odorovci; and IV 36 primary settlements.

The network of settlements in the municipality of Bela Palanka consists of: Municipal centre - Bela Palanka; settlement community centre - Crvena Reka; settlements with limited centrality functions - Čiflik and Dolac - village; and primary rural settlements, which are all other settlements on the territory of the municipality.

The high centrality of local urban settlements compared to others (functions, planning/urbanism), as well as weak connections with the rural hinterland and insufficient vertical coordination (national-local) is noticeable. According to the Draft Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035, urban systems in urban areas in Serbia must be transformed from a hierarchical model of urban centres to a model of urban areas with a "general urban context", according to which urban areas and the centres that build them are qualitatively equal in providing the conditions necessary for quality life of the population, and they are complementary in terms of job offers and services, both for the residential population and for daily and other migrants. In this way, the elements of the quality of urban life, such as the basic set of services and quality infrastructure, as well as security, are felt in almost every settlement of the urban system, regardless of its distance from the centre and demographic size.

Main characteristics of urban entities

The main characteristics and existing uses of land in the central area of Pirot are housing, service activities, administrative and business activities. The middle zone is dominated by housing. The dominant existing land uses in the peripheral zone are work zones and housing. As a result of the development of the function of the work centre in Pirot, the functions of the housing centres are also developing. There is an increase in the number of inhabitants, intensive housing construction and territorial expansion of the city, but also the stimulation of the development of other functions of the city, especially city services and strengthening of the tertiary-quaternary sector. In the central part of the city there is a large concentration of multi-storey buildings, with a high density of buildings on relatively small areas. Therefore, the centre of the city has the highest concentration of functional units intended for housing,

which coincides with the borders of the administrative-business zone, so the lower floors are used for business-administrative activities, and the higher ones for housing. The existing trends of urban development are increased residential construction and expansion of the urban area.

The construction area of Babušnica includes areas for public and other purposes. Areas for other purposes include areas for housing, central functions, areas for business and work zones and a religious building. Housing occupies the largest part of the built-up territory and developed linearly, along the main traffic routes. It is represented as pure family housing, family housing with activities, as multi-family housing, as well as housing within central function zones. Family housing is organised mainly through free-standing buildings. Multi-family housing is represented in the central part of Babušnica, in Ul. Saša Ivković and Street 7. juli. Industrial complexes were built in several locations. Trade and craft shops are concentrated in the central part of the settlement.

The construction area of Bela Palanka consists of six spatial units. Units "A" (166.24 ha), "B" (179.00 ha) and "C" (218.60 ha) include within the construction area areas of public use and areas of other purposes, unit "D" (27.40 ha) includes a farm as a working production zone, unit "E" (129.30 ha) work production zone and unit "F" (48.50 ha) includes water land outside the construction area. Areas of public use include: public services; communal activities; green areas; sports and recreation; traffic; regulated and arranged watercourses. Areas for other purposes include: housing; tourist catering facilities; central functions; work - production zones; religious objects.

5.3.3 Natural environment

Natural entities and protected assets

On the territory of the Urban area, there are protected natural assets - Nature Park "Stara Planina" with the I, II and III degree protection regime and the Special Nature Reserve "Jerma" with the I, II and III degree regime. In particular, on the territory of Pirot there are also the Nature Monument "Valley of the Bigar Stream" with the I and II degree protection regime; Natural monument of botanical character "Oak Tree of Lužnjak"; The natural monument "Five trees of oak (*Quercus pubescens*)" on Golaš hill near the village of Osmakovo; and the Special Nature Reserve "Krupačko blato", a wetland area significant for its wealth of specific and strictly protected plant and animal species, and the area itself is designated for protection as a Special Nature Reserve. On the territory of Babušnica there are also the following natural assets: the Special Nature Reserve "Venerina Padina" in Zvonačka Banja, the only habitat of the strictly protected species *Adiantum capillus-veneris* (Venus hair fern) in Serbia and the Special Nature Reserve "Suva Planina", a smaller part of which is located on the territory of the administrative area of the municipality of Babušnica. On the territory of Dimitrovgrad there is also the Nature Monument "Petrliška Pećina". On the territory of Bela Palanka, there are also the following natural assets, on which protection regimes of I, II and III degree are established as ecologically significant areas, i.e. part of the ecological network of Serbia, which includes: Sićevo Gorge Nature Park; area in the process protection Special Nature Reserve Suva Planina; The EMERALD area is significant from the point of view of the application of the Berne Convention in Serbia; internationally important plant area (IPA); international and national important bird area (IBA); and a selected diurnal butterfly area (PBA).

In the city parts of the Urban Area, in the city of Pirot itself, the main characteristics of natural entities are the River Nišava, which flows through the centre of the City and divides it into two parts (Tijabara and Pazar), Promenade Quay along the river Nišava, Sarlah, Dag Banjica (thermal spring). The basic characteristics of these natural units are insufficient maintenance and landscaping (except for the Quay promenade), and if their maintenance were to increase, the level of quality and level of use would also increase.

Part of the whole “C” park with accompanying content in the part of the sports and recreation centre “Vrelo” with the dominant purpose of greenery and recreation represents the most important part of the natural entity of Bela Palanka. The underutilised potential of that entity, and a possible additional purpose would be trade, catering. The Banjica spring as a thermal mineral spring represents an untapped potential for spa tourism with all accompanying infrastructure facilities and content.

Green infrastructure

According to the wealth of forests and forest land in the Urban Area, Pirot leads with 43,372 ha, which is 35.2% of the total administrative area of the municipality, Bela Palanka with 25,512 ha, which is 49.3%, then Babušnica with 20,490 ha, which is 38.7%, and Dimitrovgrad with 16,170 ha and 33.5% of the total administrative area of the territory.

In the city of Pirot, there is a total of 59.17 ha of public green areas (excluding green areas within public roads and communal areas and within suburban settlements). The following categories of urban greenery are represented in the area of the town of Pirot: Quay on Nišava, parks, parks for specific purposes (Sarlah), block greenery, greenery of sports and recreational areas, greenery of roads, greenery of cemeteries and nurseries, and protective greenery. Given that there are 59.17 ha of public green areas per 46,883 inhabitants, the standard of public green areas in relation to the number of inhabitants is about 12.6 m² per inhabitant. Large parks (park-forests) and plantations of tall trees are missing. From the total number of public green areas, PE Komunalac, i.e. Working Unit “Zelenilo” maintains only 11.8 ha of public areas. There is a satisfactory amount of green areas in relation to the needs of the population. Every year, work is done on increasing and arranging the green areas in the city. In the area of Babušnica, greenery is planned as park greenery and protective greenery. The arrangement of greenery as a park is planned in the central area of the settlement, along the Lužnica river and south of the elementary school. Protective greenery is planned along the traffic corridors, to separate the purpose of housing and business and work zones, and on the perimeter of the Babušnica GRP area. In Bela Palanka, there are public green areas in the form of parks, squares, green areas for special purposes - sports and recreation centre Banjica and forests. Park greenery covers a total area of 2.09 ha, which represents 0.28% of the area and is represented in the urban units A, B, and C. Protective greenery covers a total area of 95.93 ha, which represents 12.61% of the area and is represented in spatial units A, B and C. It occurs around the perimeter of industrial complexes as a buffer zone and as a linear corridor along watercourses and infrastructure systems. Bela Palanka lacks park greenery the most, and it is necessary to ensure the connection of green areas in the construction area with green areas outside the construction area. The total green areas are sufficient to meet the general needs of the municipality of Bela Palanka.

Brownfield sites

On the territory of the Urban Area, there are a number of brownfield sites - former military or industrial areas - that represent the potential for urban regeneration. In Pirot there is a former industrial zone and former social enterprises, with often unresolved property-legal issues (e.g. the former social enterprise “Piroteks” with an attractive location of 2 ha at the mouth of the Bistrica river in Nišava). There are no military facilities in the area of the Bela Palanka settlement, but there are abandoned industrial areas. One is the plant hall of the factory “Vesna” in Crvena Reka, which is privately owned. It is located 20 m from the international road Niš-Sofia and 6 km from the interchange towards Bulgaria (near Bela Palanka), at a distance of 60 km from the border with Bulgaria. There are two rivers (Nišava and Crvena Reka) in the immediate vicinity of the building. There is a distribution electric and city water network, as well as a fiber optic cable in the immediate vicinity. The office building has an area of about 2,200 m², made of solid material, with a renewed steel roof structure. The building has one larger hall and several smaller ones. The facility also has an independent supply of high-quality technical water from its own well. The main and largest hall has an area of about 400 m² and a height of 4-5 m, with a duct system for forced ventilation. Possible purposes are business, production space, storage space for vehicles and parking, shopping centre, etc. There is also a plant of the Ukras wood furniture factory at the entrance to Bela Palanka. It consists of several buildings with a total area of 9,086 m². The building has all the necessary industrial connections and is well preserved in terms of construction. The El Femid factory is located at the entrance to Bela Palanka from the direction of Niš, 300 m from the main road Niš-Sofia and railway corridor 10. The factory has several buildings with a total area of about 2,500 m² and its own transformer station with an approved power of 473 kV low voltage and all infrastructure connections and its own sewage treatment plant. Next to that building is the “Banjica” water source, so all the mentioned buildings are very favorable for a water bottling factory or turning it into a spa resort. In the first and the second position there is a total of 4,640 m² area of buildings, i.e. usable area and about 7,330 m² land remains for the construction of other facilities as needed by the investor.

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

Quality and levels of air, water and soil pollution and noise level

Air

Air monitoring data show that the air quality in the city of Pirot does not exceed the prescribed values, except in the winter months, when the soot values show an excess in a few days, which is associated with individual fireplaces. Degradation of air quality in Bela Palanka is happening as a result of road and rail traffic. The dominant pollutants are those originating from traffic, namely: carbon monoxide, nitrogen monoxide, hydrocarbons, lead, sulfur dioxide and solid particles of PM10 and PM2.5 µm size. In general, at the level of the urban area, the state of air quality is satisfactory, except periodically in urban centres.

Water

Monitoring of the quality of drinking water from the public waterworks of rural settlements of Pirot and local water facilities, as well as the quality of surface water in the territory of the city of Pirot, show correct values, with occasional exceedances, although there is no WWTP and the discharge of waste water is directly into the recipient. The water quality of the river Nišava is measured at the measuring point “Pirot” and the water belongs to the II category of water, which in its natural state can be used for swimming, recreation of citizens, for water sports and for breeding various types of fish. Water quality in the Dimitrovgrad municipality, including the Nišava River, is significantly better compared to the results shown, considering that Dimitrovgrad is significantly distant, and upstream from the measuring site, and there are no significant sources of pollution in this part.

Land

Soil testing was not done on the territory of the City of Pirot.

Noise

Monitoring of noise in the territory of the city of Pirot is carried out every year. The noise level on average does not exceed the prescribed legal values for each zone. The most endangered noise zone is zone C - City Centre, and the reason is the high frequency of traffic. Occasional exceeding of the permitted noise level in Bela Palanka occurs as a result of road and rail traffic. The obtained authoritative levels show that in the planning period, the noise levels at a reference distance of 25 m from the edge of the E-80 highway road during the day will be around 72b(A) and 67db(A) during the night. At the level of the residential building, at a distance of 30-40 m from the edge of the roadway of the E-80 highway, the standard noise level during the planning period, during the day, will be around 65 db(A) at night, and up to 70 db(A) during the day.

Heat islands

None of the LSGs within the Urban Area have microclimate data and no measurements were made to document locations with increased temperatures, so the existence of heat islands cannot be established. The assumption is that the most threatened locations are the narrower city centres in the Urban area, due to excessive construction with a small percentage of open and green areas, a large amount of built-up and occupied land with solid and non-porous materials, such as concrete and asphalt, as well as increased motor traffic.

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

On the territory of the Urban area, the areas with the concentration of population, economic and non-economic activities, construction fund, etc. are potentially the most threatened areas from the aspect of country defense and protection from natural disasters.

When implementing flood protection, priority should be given to larger river courses (Nišava), and settlements partially or completely threatened by high waters will be protected by the construction of peripheral embankments that would defend one or a group of settlements or their parts, by building a common protective embankment. Basic flood protection measures are implemented by regulating watercourses, as well as protecting watercourses and canals that pass through the settlement from improper use. An important condition for realising the overall

positive effects of the system for flood protection and regulating water courses is protection against erosion and torrential flows. Landslide protection measures are primarily spatial planning measures that include avoiding planning any construction on unstable terrain and endangered areas, planning infrastructure corridors that bypass endangered areas and planned greening and afforestation of potential landslides.

Uncontrolled anthropogenic activity in the forest often leads to fires (the most endangered part is in G. J. "Suva planina I - Trem" in beech stands in the dedicated unit "66", on extremely steep terrains), which in itself imposes the need for better forest protection. Fires are a frequent phenomenon, and as the global temperature of the planet is increasing year by year, the danger of fire is becoming more and more certain. The danger of forest stands from fire can be classified into six categories: I degree - stands and cultures of pine and larch; II degree - stands and cultures of spruce, fir and other conifers; Level III - stands and cultures of coniferous and deciduous trees, Level IV - stands of oak and hornbeam; V degree - the composition of beech and other deciduous trees; and VI degree - thickets, thickets and clearings. Based on the degree of danger, it can be said that the danger of conifer forests from fire is the highest. The urban area belongs to the VIII intensity group according to the MCS (Merkali-Cancani-Sielzberg) scale, and earthquake protection measures represent the correct choice of location for the construction of buildings, the method of construction, the number of floors of buildings, etc., as well as the strict observance and application of valid legal regulations and regulations for the construction of buildings in seismic areas. In recent decades, no more intense seismic ground movements have been registered in these areas.

Waste management and illegal landfills

On the territory of the Urban Area, the PCU "Regional Landfill Pirot" is in operation, which serves four municipalities in the region, namely Pirot, Bela Palanka, Babušnica and Dimitrovgrad for about 100,000 inhabitants. It is located about 4.5 km north of the centre of Pirot, 0.5 km from the road Niš - Dimitrovgrad and about 400 m from the river Nišava. The location is very suitable from a morphological point of view with gentle slopes of the terrain, which potentially enables an increase in capacity. The landfill was built according to the highest standards in waste management and meets most requirements in terms of environmental protection.

In the territory of the City of Pirot, the primary separation of waste through the so-called dry bin was introduced. In this type of primary separation system, all (or several) recyclables are placed together in a single bin/container and usually include a mixed stream of "dry recyclables" such as paper and cardboard, glass bottles, cans, plastics, metal, etc. This one the system is completed with an efficient plant for secondary waste separation (separation line), in order to further separate the collected fractions from the mixed recyclable stream. This approach is mainly aimed at dry recyclable materials (paper, plastic, metals and to a lesser extent glass) which are more easily separated in a central sorting facility. PE Komunalac is obliged to empty bins/containers and bring this type of waste to the separation line located within the Regional Landfill Pirot. For primary selection, 10,715 blue bins of 240 liters, 96 containers of 1 m³, 136 yellow containers for glass packaging with a capacity of 1 m³, and 3 special vehicles for collecting and transporting primarily separated waste were provided. For "wet waste", there is another transport line where the collected waste is deposited at the body of the regional landfill as part

of PCU “Regional landfill Pirot”. Municipal waste is collected from containers with a volume of 1.1 m³ (this includes blue containers for paper, plastic and metal, and yellow containers for glass) and blue bins of 240 liters for paper, plastic and metal. In addition to municipal waste, non-hazardous industrial waste is collected from Tigar Tires. The collection is carried out by special vehicles and transported to the Pirot Regional Landfill. The waste of primary separation is separated, and the remaining municipal waste is deposited in the body of the landfill. Relevant data on the examination of the morphological composition of waste show that about 45% of the total amount of municipal waste is biodegradable waste. As the best method of utilizing the organic fraction (biodegradable waste) of municipal and industrial waste, composting represents a significant step in reducing the volume of waste that is disposed of in landfills. The plan is to build a composting plant above the hall for secondary waste separation, in a separate part of which the pre-treatment of green, biodegradable organic waste (from the “wet” bin) and sludge from the future municipal wastewater treatment plant will take place, with all the accompanying surfaces and contents necessary for the functioning of the system.

The municipality of Bela Palanka collects and transports waste to the Regional Sanitary Landfill in Pirot. The implementation of the Project for the introduction of separate collection of recyclable waste, which is implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection in cooperation with the EISP2 programme supported by the Swedish Government, is underway. The proposed model of primary waste separation refers to the joint collection of recyclable fractions separately from the rest of the municipal waste stream. In the first so-called “dry” bin, waste will be collected, which includes different types of materials suitable for recycling, such as plastic, paper, cardboard, metal, rubber, etc. and in the second “wet” bin, all the remaining municipal waste will be collected, which mostly consists of biodegradable categories of waste (food scraps and kitchen waste), as well as other fractions such as textiles, leather, soil, etc.

On the basis of the Programme for the Cleanup of Illegal Landfills in the area of the city of Pirot, the measures determined by the programme for the rehabilitation of 19 landfills were recorded. The Suva Planina Special Nature Reserve and the “Sićevo Gorge” Nature Park are threatened by industrial facilities located on the edges of protected areas.

5.3.5 Primary utility infrastructure

Plumbing and sewerage

Water supply in the territory of the Urban area is mostly from the source. The town of Pirot is supplied with water from the springs Kavak and Krupac. The water from the Kavak spring is only chlorinated, while the water from the Krupac spring is processed into the Water treatment plant (WTP) Berilovac. WTP Berilovac was reconstructed in 2018 with a capacity of 270 l/s, while a maximum of 90 l/s is used from the Kavak source, which is enough for the city’s water supply. Bela Palanka is supplied with water from the spring Vrelo, and the main method of production is through wells. The system is old and needs reconstruction, and the project for the reconstruction of the water supply network has been approved for funding by the World Bank and is awaiting implementation. The quality of the water source is satisfactory and there are no pollutants, with the fact that the water sources in Pirot have defined protection zones and are not endangered, while the water source in Bela Palanka does not have a protection zone.

Water consumption in Pirot in 2021 was 3,670,876 m³, of which 2,551,028 m³ population and 1,119,848 m³ the economy. The average consumption per inhabitant for the year 2021 was 185 l/person/day for the city and villages in total. Water consumption in Bela Palanka amounts to 342.922 m³ per year for the population, and 26,210 m³ goes to the economy. The urban areas of Pirot and Bela Palanka are fully covered by the water supply network and 100% of the inhabitants are connected to the water supply network and there are no water restrictions during the summer months. The problem of water supply is for settlements above 700 m high due to poor availability and economic profitability.

The atmospheric and sanitary fecal waste water removal system on the territory of the Urban Area is such that the city of Pirot is almost completely covered by the sewerage network and 99% of the population is connected to the sewerage network. In addition to the city, the sewage network was also built in the villages of Krupac, Poljska Ržana, Izvor, Gnjilan, Barje Čiflik, Berilovac and Gradašnica. On the territory of the city, the degree of connection is ensured for 90.5% of the population. The sewer network on the territory of the city is of a general type, i.e. faecal is also used as rainwater. In Bela Palanka, the inner city core is almost completely covered by the sewage network, 99%, and for the remaining 1%, no request for connection has been submitted, while there is no sewage network in the villages. Storm sewers exist, but are rarely used for both purposes.

There is still no Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in the Urban area, but project documentation is being prepared in Pirot and it is expected that the WWTP will be built by 2025, and the construction of a WWTP is also planned in Bela Palanka.

Energy

In the territory of the Urban Area, in Pirot and Bela Palanka, individual fireplaces are the dominant heating method, where firewood is mostly used as an energy source and pellets are significantly less. The public utility company "Gradska toplana" Pirot supplies heat energy to the residential and business premises of the town of Pirot. Since 2020, "Gradska Toplana" Pirot has been using compressed natural gas as the main energy source for the production of thermal energy and further distribution of thermal energy to customers. There is no remote heating system in Bela Palanka. For both cities on the territory of the Urban Area, electricity is used mostly in the pre-season and for additional heating in the heating season. There are sufficient capacities for the distribution of electricity, and a negligible part of consumers is not connected to the public power grid, with the fact that the ratio of electricity consumption at the city level between housing and economy is not known.

There is no natural gas distribution system on the territory of the Urban Area, but there is great potential for the use of alternative energy sources. It is the largest in the use of biomass, as well as solar energy and hydropower, and there are already hydropower plants on Nišava. Considering that firewood also belongs to RES, more than half of the households in Pirot use biomass as RES. The use of solar energy is in its early phase, but the rapid growth of its share in the overall structure of energy sources is noticeable. In Bela Palanka, three plants in the industrial zone use heat pumps for heating, namely exchangers, water-water system. On the territory of the city of Pirot, 57 energy passports have been issued so far, and on the territory of the municipality of Bela Palanka, 8 public buildings have an energy passport of category C.

5.3.6 Primary transport infrastructure and traffic

Traffic network

The traffic network in the Urban area is well developed. The basis of the traffic network of Pirot consists of state roads of the first order (IA and IB), namely I A4: Niš - Pirot - Dimitrovgrad - state border with Bulgaria (border crossing Gradina); I B39: Pirot - Babušnica - Vlasotince - Leskovac - Lebane - Medveđa - Priština - Peć - state border with Montenegro (border crossing Čakor); II class state roads (IIA and IIB), namely: II A221 Knjaževac - Kalna - Temska - Pirot - Visočica Ržana - Mojinci - Dimitrovgrad; II A223: Periš - Bela Palanka - Babušnica - Zvonce - Trnski Odorovci - Sukovo - connection with state road 43; II A259: Niš (Malča loop) - Bela Palanka - Pirot - Dimitrovgrad - state border with Bulgaria (gradina border crossing); II B428: Bela Palanka - Ponor - connection with state road 39; then municipal roads of the first order; municipal roads of the II order; and, municipal uncategorised roads. In the city of Pirot, it is necessary to carry out work on the completion of the construction of the traffic ring - Ring 2, i.e. to reconstruct the intersection of the streets Kozaračka - Hajduk Veljka and to finish the construction of the road on the part from Cara Dušana Street to the Little Bridge.

In the area of Babušnica, the main roads are state roads of the first order IB-39, IIA-223; IIA-224: Niška Banja - Gadžin Han - Bonjince. A significant part of the road network on the territory of the municipality is the system of municipal roads, which connect all settlements with each other and with the municipal centre. The network of local roads is extensive, but of insufficient quality.

The traffic network in Bela Palanka is relatively well developed, with state roads of the first and second order, and municipal roads, but there is poor road infrastructure on rural and local roads.

A significant part of the road network of Dimitrovgrad consists of state roads of the IIA order - II A221, II A223 and II A259, as well as the state road of the IIB order no. 429 Dimitrovgrad - Donja Nevlja - Vrapča - Petačinci - Trnski Odorovci. On the sections of these roads that pass through larger populated areas, in order to increase the safety of pedestrians, the construction of sidewalks is required, as well as the construction and adequate arrangement of stops for public transportation lines.

Traffic coordination exists between local bodies for the coordination of traffic safety affairs, as well as between LSGs and the Road Traffic Safety Agency of the RS. There is an intermodal hub within the Pirot Free Zone.

Traffic safety

In the Urban area, there are no locations where the safe flow of traffic is particularly threatened, that is, there are no "black spots" on the local traffic network. A greater number of traffic accidents in Pirot occur on the section that is also the most heavily trafficked, namely the Industrial Zone - Nikola Pašić - Knjaz Miloš - Srpski vladara, i.e. at the intersections with Trg Republike and Save Kovačevića streets. Crossings of the railway line with the local road network are particularly at risk. The condition of the infrastructure, both road and railway, at the crossings is in most cases poor. Also, breakdowns and malfunctions of bumpers/semi-bumpers at railroad crossings often occur.

Public city and suburban transport

Public city transport (PCT) in Pirot is arranged with 6 lines of city traffic and lines of suburban traffic. Suburban lines cover a large number of villages, except for a few that are infrastructurally inaccessible. The problem of transportation is primarily the territorial fragmentation and the great distance of the village of Pirota, and the relatively small number of passengers, especially to mountain villages, which makes certain lines economically unjustified. In Bela Palanka, the PCT is partially developed, there are a couple of suburban lines, but the situation is similar to that in Pirot. PCT services in both cities are provided by the private sector. Public transport vehicles and bus stops are not fully adapted to people with disabilities, especially people in wheelchairs. Suburban and intercity transportation of passengers on the territory of Dimitrovgrad is mostly done by road and partially by rail. Safety at railroad crossings is not at a satisfactory level.

Pedestrian zones

The settlement of Pirot has an organised pedestrian zone in the central part consisting of: Pirot Warriors Square, Pirot Liberators Square and Dobrica Milutinović Square, while the quay of the river Nišava is organised as a pedestrian zone. There is no shortage of pedestrian zones in Bela Palanka.

Bicycle traffic

In Pirot, there are no constructed bicycle paths physically separated from motorised traffic. In the previous period, bicycle lanes were marked on the most frequent bicycle corridors, which have not been renewed in the meantime, so the traffic situation has faded and in most places has been completely erased due to exploitation. Sports centre Pirot has done the traffic project Improvement of bicycle traffic in Pirot, an attempt was made to find funds within the call of the Interreg IPA Programme for the project “Mobility for clean air”, which includes the marking of bicycle paths and a system of public transport by bicycles. There are no bicycle paths in Bela Palanka, they need to be built.

Parking

There is a lack of off-street parking on the periphery of the central city zone of Pirot, in order to reduce motor traffic in the narrowest city core to the minimum possible, while parking spaces are missing in the narrower city core of Bela Palanka.

Railway

On the territory of the City of Pirot there is a main single-track non-electrified railway line Niš - Dimitrovgrad - state border - Dragoman, on which public passenger and freight traffic is organised. There is no rail passenger traffic in Bela Palanka, only goods are transported. Also, some railway intersections - the crossing of the railway line and local roads - are not well marked. The international main railway of normal gauge E-70 Niš - Pirot - the border of R. Bulgaria, passes through the area of Dimitrovgrad municipality.

Water traffic

There is no river traffic on the territory of the Urban Area.

Internet and digitalisation

Since 2008, the SMS Parking electronic parking payment system has been introduced in Pirot, and the development of the Elaborate for the introduction of a system for recording free parking spaces in the zoned area of the city is underway. In a small area in the centre of Bela Palanka, there is coverage of the city with public free internet, and this was realised as a WiFi tree, which is the result of a project in cooperation with the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government.

Air traffic

Within the Urban Area, there is no infrastructure for air traffic, and the nearest airport Konstantin Veliki is located in Niš, about 50 km from Bela Palanka, 75 km from Pirot and Babušnica and 100 km from Dimitrovgrad, there is also an airport in Sofia in the Republic of Bulgaria.

5.4 URBAN AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

5.4.1 Access to governance

Integrated and sustainable urban development implies a specific way of managing the process that tends to harmonise the various relevant actors in planning, funding and managing the development and implementation of the strategy. The key aspects of urban development management are: 1) a multi-level governance approach (in this area it exists), which refers to the coordination and harmonisation of activities between different levels of governance; 2) multi-stakeholder approach, which refers to the inclusion of all relevant actors during the public policy development cycle; and 3) the principle of “bottom-up” and citizen participation, which refers to initiatives led by the local community and encouraging the involvement of local actors.

Multi-level governance and partnerships

On the territory of the Urban Area, multi-level governance in terms of coordination and harmonisation of actions between different levels of administration from international, through national to local level in the matter of inter-municipal cooperation is carried out through several programs and projects. International, national and local actors, as well as the regional agency RDA South, collaborate on these programs and projects as partners.

On the international level, support for quality management is realised through several projects of the European Union (EU in the City of Pirot):

- CARDS Programme (projects: Establishment of the Office for Local Economic Development and Successful Model of Economic Cross-Border Cooperation of construction with the municipality of Montana from Bulgaria);
- IPA CBC Programme (projects: Development of small sports infrastructure in the Montana-Pirot cross-border region; The future is in our hands; Promotion of cross-border cooperation through the development of sports infrastructure; Improvement of the waste management system in the Montana-Pirot cross-border region; Modernisation of cultural centres in the Čupren-Pirot cross-border region; Modernisation and improvement of the existing sports of infrastructure in the Montana-Pirot cross-border region; Establishment of a centre for education and support for pregnant women; Modernisation and renewal

of educational institutions in the Montana-Pirot cross-border region Montana-Pirot; Conservation, revitalisation and exhibition of the early Christian basilica and the medieval fortress in the cross-border region; Joint cross-border initiatives for the creation of an ecologically healthy region; and Sports activities for young people, the future for everyone in the cross-border region). In addition to the City of Pirot, the partners in the programs are the municipalities of Montana, Pernik (Free Zone Pernik), Pravets, Vršec and Čupren, and in several projects also civil sector associations, such as the Association Vizija Pirot, the Zvono Association and the Novitas Association.

- IPA Transnational Programme (project: ADB Multi Modal Platform) and RSEDP2 Programme (projects: South Cheese Cluster and Centre for Youth, Employment and Entrepreneurship) with the Municipality of Montana from Bulgaria; and
- EUPRO (project: Business infrastructure-part of the logistics centre Pirot), EUPRO PLUS (Adaptation of a building owned by the City of Pirot into a multifunctional facility for cultural, social and business events) and UNOPS programmes (project: EU SAI Social Housing and Inclusion).

The ministries of the Republic of Serbia are the main national partners in programs and projects.

Several regional initiatives, projects and partnerships were also achieved in the form of inter-municipal cooperation with several LSGs:

- Between Pirot, Babušnica, Bela Palanka and Dimitrovgrad through the Inter-Municipal Agreement on Regional Cooperation in the Management of Solid Municipal Waste and the Agreement on the Establishment of the Public Utility Company "Regional Landfill Pirot" which manages the landfill. It was built with joint funds from EU funds (3,800,000 euros), the Eco Fund (1,000,000 euros) and the City of Pirot (500,000 euros), as a regional project for 4 municipalities of the Pirot district. The regional landfill started operating in January 2013 with the cooperation of all participants;
- The expansion of the Pirot "Free Zone", which was confirmed by the Government Decision on the expansion to the municipalities of Dimitrovgrad and Babušnica (Official Gazette 51/2019). The Free Zone is hereby established as a Regional Free Zone in the City of Pirot and the municipalities of Babušnica and Bela Palanka;
- Act on the establishment of the Local Action Group Catena Mundi with the founders of the municipality of Bela Palanka and the municipality of Babušnica (among others);
- The city of Pirot and the municipalities of Bela Palanka, Babušnica and Dimitrovgrad are the founders of the Regional Development Agency South and signatories to the act establishing the Regional Development Agency South. Since 2009 (Babušnica since 2022 year) actively participate in the management of RDA through the Assembly of RDA;
- Several regional initiatives and projects, implemented by RDA South, which include the participation of ITI municipalities: Via Militaris (IPA CBC BG-SR), LANDS (Erasmus +), Link Up Serbia II (ADA), Inno-LAB, C2CE-, C2CE-From crisis to circularity (EUPRO+);
- RELOF 2 (2019) - the partnership of the City of Pirot with the municipalities of Dimitrovgrad and Babušnica - where the partners received mentoring support for the introduction or improvement of financial management and control (FMC) as well as the improvement of the supervision of public companies;

- RELOF 2 (2020) - the partnership of the City of Pirot with the municipalities of Dimitrovgrad, Babušnica and Bela Palanka - where the partners received mentoring support for the introduction or improvement of internal audit as well as the improvement of the supervision of public companies;
- “Establishment and further development of social protection services in the municipalities of Dimitrovgrad, Bela Palanka, Babušnica and Vlasotince for children with disabilities”. The general goal of the project is to support the development of community services for children with developmental disabilities in the municipalities of Dimitrovgrad, Bela Palanka, Babušnica and Vlasotince - SOCIAL INCLUSION - IPA 2008 - Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, 2011-2013;
- Exchange 4 - “Clean environment for a better life” project, a partnership between the municipality of Babušnica and the municipality of Dimitrovgrad with the aim of improving the regional waste management system for the Pirot region through the establishment of primary waste separation in the municipalities and through support for the closure and rehabilitation of unsanitary municipal landfills and landfills.

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 support for the implementation of programs for SMEs of the Fund for development.

Participatory approach

The application of citizen participation and the initiative of the local population was realised during the development of urban and spatial plans through public consultations and public inspection, which are required by law on the territory of the Urban Area, and the best examples are the Spatial Plan of the City of Pirot, the Spatial Plan of the Municipality of Bela Palanka 2009 - 2024, a series of general regulation plans and detailed regulation plans, and one of the most important is the DRP “Regional sanitary landfill for the municipalities of Pirot, Dimitrovgrad, Bela Palanka and Babušnica”.

Citizen participation is implemented in Pirot through working groups, plan presentations and public hearing for the Local Rural Development Strategies LAG Katena Mundi, 2020 - 2023, Development Plan of the City of Pirot 2021-2028, Medium-term Development Plan of the City of Pirot 2022-2024. Also, for a series of local action plans, such as the one for employment for 2021-2023, for the children of Pirot 2019-2024, waste management of the City of Pirot 2021-2031, for the social inclusion of Roma men and women 2019-2021. Then also within programs and plans, such as the one on environmental protection 2019-2023, the development of tourism in the city of Pirot 2018-2022, the Capital Investment Plan 2021-2024, the Traffic Safety Strategy for the period 2018 to 2023, the Public Health Plan of the City of Pirot 2019-2021, and in development of the Integrated Territorial Investment Strategy for the BG-SR cross-border cooperation region. In Bela Palanka, participation was carried out for the Bela Palanka Municipality Development Plan 2021-2028, in the preparation of which representatives of businessmen, farmers and other experts participated, in addition to representatives of the public sector.

For the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality of the Municipality of Bela Palanka 2021-2023, working groups, a presentation of the plan and a public discussion were formed. For the Local Action Plan for the Social Inclusion of Roma and Roma Women in the Bela Palanka Municipality for the period 2021-2023 representatives of Roma associations, health mediators, pedagogical assistants, etc. also participated. For the Programme for Improving the Position of Persons with Disabilities in the Bela Palanka Municipality from 2021 to 2023, consultations were held with interested parties and target groups and a public debate was held during the drafting process. For the Strategy for the improvement of preschool education and education of the municipality of Bela Palanka in 2021 In 2024, a public hearing was organised with all interested parties, such as representatives of Roma associations, health mediators and representatives of the Health Centre, as well as representatives of the Parents' Council.

Additionally, the City of Pirot is implementing the Participatory Budgeting Project for the third year in a row, in cooperation with the organisations BIRN Serbia and NALED, and further this project is being implemented independently with some technical support from BIRN. Participatory budgeting is a process that involves citizens and other interested parties in determining priorities and adopting spending plans within the local self-government budget. In this way, part of the budget is earmarked for projects of interest to the local community.

5.4.2 Sources of funding

There are different types of urban development funding on the territory of the Urban Area, from national and international funds, LSG budgets, public-private partnerships, and private funds in the form of loans from investment and commercial banks in the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

The main domestic sources of funding urban development are the own funds/budget of LSG units, programmes of various ministries of the Republic of Serbia. In Pirot, the Ministry of Tourism financed the "Strengthening of the Serbian medieval fortress of Kale - Phase II and the Ponišavlje Museum", then the Ministry of Culture "Development of design and technical documentation for the Army House", the Ministry of State Administration "Establishment of a single administrative place", and the Ministry of Construction for "Development of planning documents - Spatial plan of the City of Pirot". In Bela Palanka, the Ministry of Environmental Protection financed through the IPA 2017 fund and EISP 2 (Environmental Infrastructure Support Programme) Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA 2) - European Commission, Operational agreement on programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of action programs, then the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - Directorate for Agrarian Payments, Programme for the preparation of local rural development strategies in 2019 - LEADER approach.

There is also bilateral and multilateral cooperation and donor programs, such as the Social Protection Reform in the Republic of Serbia - Support for the Development of the Local Community, which was implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy through the IPA 2008 Fund for Social Inclusion - IPA 2008.

EU funds were used from foreign sources of funding for urban development, namely for the Primary Separation of Waste in four regions through the IPA 2017 fund, then the Construction

of the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Pirot through the fund of the German Development Bank KfW. There is also bilateral and multilateral cooperation and donor programs in which all projects include cross-border cooperation (one is INTERREG IPA Cross Border Cooperation).

5.4.3 Transparency and information

According to the local self-government transparency index for the year 2022, the City of Pirot is in a high 14th place with an index of 65, which is an increase of as much as 58.5% (98th place and index 41 in 2021); Dimitrovgrad is also in a good 25th place with an index of 57, which is an increase of 32.6% (88th place and an index of 43 in 2021); Babušnica is in 50th place with an index of 51, which is an increase of 4.1% (58th place and index of 49 in 2021); and Bela Palanka in 127th place with an index of 37, which is a small drop of 2.6% (113th place and an index of 38 in 2021).

In Bela Palanka, there is a developed system of electronic communication between the administration and citizens, and there are also seven services in the municipality that are registered on the E-government portal.

There is a city GIS in Pirot and Bela Palanka, but it is not used to an adequate extent in the urban development governance. It does not contain most of the data for this purpose and has never been updated since it was introduced. The lack of trained and qualified staff to perform this type of work is evident.

6 SWOT ANALYSIS AND NEEDS

6.1 IDENTITY OF THE URBAN AREA

advantages/strengths

- Favorable location and traffic connections at the interstate level > the tri-border of Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia > the shortest road connection in Europe to the Black Sea Basin
- Several brownfield sites equipped with infrastructure > potential for urban regeneration (urban settlements Pirot, Bela Palanka)
- Untouched nature, ecological preservation and natural resources (Stara Planina, valley Jerma River, Zavoj Lake, Sićevo Gorge, Venerina dolina, Lužnica valley, Jama Bezdanka, Zvonce Spa, Belopalanačka cave Jovina, Petrlaška cave, waters, forests), Ecological network Natura 2000
- Cultural material and intangible heritage recognizable in autochthonous and partially visible Ottoman architecture (the village of Presek, Ostatovica) and vernacular architecture, and embodied in traditional products, already widely recognizable (Pirot cheese, rug, Pirot pressed sausage, rusk, vurma, Vrtka paprika, etc.), habits, customs, speech, cuisine, traditional crafts, etc.
- Transformation and adaptation of the city settlement of Pirot to the modern needs of the development of new technologies and industries (business complex, Pirot Free Zone, catering, etc.)

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Eccentric location in Serbia and distance from larger urban centres
- High centrality of local urban settlements in relation to others (functions, planning/urbanism), weak connections with the rural hinterland and insufficient vertical coordination (national-local)
- The expansion of the urban area and increased residential construction (urban settlement of Pirot), as well as a large number of illegally built buildings without legal status and solutions
- The Suva Planina Special Nature Reserve and the “Sićevo Gorge” Nature Park are threatened by industrial facilities, while there is a frequent occurrence of excessive forest cutting, aggressive expansion of quarries and endangerment of natural values by human activities.
- Underutilisation and slow transformation of former industrial and military brownfields
- Insufficient utilisation and uneven development of tourist potentials

potentials/possibilities

- Possibilities of urban regeneration of urban structures and public spaces > artisan quarter in Tijabara, revival of the town of Kale and the medieval fortress of Momčilov grad
- Possibilities of urban renewal of rural buildings of local communities, as well as conversion of abandoned schools, centres of culture, rural buildings, etc.

- Regeneration of brownfields > former industrial and military complexes equipped with infrastructure and excellent traffic connections
- Ecological preservation and natural resources for the development of sustainable tourism
- Development of cultural tourism and tourist destinations with cultural and natural heritage
- A well-preserved environment as the basis of eco and rural tourism (Zvonce Spa, Ljuberađa (Babušnica), Temska, Gostuša, Senokos, Gornja Kamenica, etc.) and organic food production
- Branding of tourist and agricultural products and definition of profiled tourist itineraries and their connection in order to improve the entire tourism industry
- Strengthening urban-rural ties through intensification of real cooperation, decentralisation of functions, joint projects, etc.

threats/risks

- Abandoned industrial complexes > without new purposes and unresolved property-legal situation
- Continuation of illegal construction and failure to solve the problems of these buildings and territories
- Further endangerment of natural and cultural assets by illegal and excessive construction (e.g. the rubber industry complex in Dimitrovgrad)
- Uncontrolled expansion of settlements and usurpation of agricultural and forest land
- Insufficient connection with the tourist offer of surrounding destinations

needs

- Strengthening the existing/creating a new identity of public urban spaces
- Adequate transformation and reactivation of a brownfield site
- Urban regeneration of the city structure, arrangement and preservation of public spaces and renovation and conversion of rural buildings (abandoned schools, centres of culture, etc.)
- Rehabilitation of illegal construction
- Preservation and better management of natural landscapes
- Strengthening urban-rural ties through the development of social and technical infrastructure in rural areas, monitoring programs for ecosystem services that rural areas provide to urban settlements and a better offer of jobs and services
- Diversification of the tourist offer through the development of eco-tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism, etc. and better connectivity with the tourist offer of the surrounding destinations

6.2 GREEN AND ENERGY TRANSITION AND MOBILITY

advantages/strengths

- Wealth of forests and forest land in the Urban area
- Zavoj Lake > water and energy resource for the production of clean energy
- Pirot Regional Landfill for the entire territory of the Urban Area > about 100,000 inhabitants and primary waste selection and recycling
- District heating system in the urban settlement of Pirot
- Developed traffic network of local roads
- Proximity and good connection to the airports in Niš and Sofia

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Insufficient green areas and polluted air in the centres of the Urban Area > traffic and heating during the winter, excessive construction, illegal landfills, etc.
- The absence of a system for the treatment of waste water and the discharge of unprocessed waste water from economic entities into recipients and the lack of separation sewerage
- Weak application of green-blue infrastructure, as well as the destruction of traffic roads (e.g. road 121) by breaking through Atar roads
- The problem of water supply, especially in settlements at altitudes above 700 meters, which remain without water
- Contamination of soil and surface and underground watercourses with wastewater from septic tanks > lack of sewerage in most rural settlements
- Illegal and unsanitary landfills
- The threat of the special nature reserve Suva Planina and the Nature Park "Sićevo Gorge" (Bela Palanka) to industrial facilities
- Unregulated river courses > unsatisfactory degree of flood protection
- Weak safety of railroad crossings in settlements
- Insufficiently developed cycling infrastructure and lack of marked cycling paths
- Insufficient space for street and organised parking
- Suburban transport > territorial dispersal and great distance from villages
- Lack of free Internet coverage

potentials/possibilities

- Use of alternative energy sources > biomass, solar energy (solar energy plants and panels on flat roofs), wind and water
- Potential expansion and capacity increase of the Pirot regional landfill
- Rehabilitation of unsanitary landfills
- Primary selection of waste and recycling
- Improvement of bicycle traffic > Interreg IPA Programme "Mobility for clean air" system of public transport by bicycle
- Freeing central urban areas from motor traffic, expanding public pedestrian areas, developing public transport and using alternative vehicles
- Increase in areas under forests

- Construction of gas pipelines for municipalities where this system is missing
- Possibilities after the opening of Chapter 27 in the negotiations for EU integration, which will improve the legislative framework and open up the possibility of increased investment in environmental protection, as well as the use of the funds of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans
- Using Nature Based Solutions for landscaping and flood protection in Nišava
- Construction of the new border crossing Gradina 2

threats/risks

- Underutilisation of the potential of natural resources and renewable energy sources
- Insufficient use of alternative (ecologically clean) modes of transportation on the territory of the Urban Area and improvement of railway infrastructure
- Continuation of industrial and economic pollution of the environment
- Expansion of settlements along roads
- The usurpation of agricultural and forest land, as well as the degradation of pastures due to the spread of invasive species
- Further environmental threats and environmental problems from illegal landfills
- The concept of development of urban contents that favors the greater use of passenger cars
- Unupdated cadastre and low level of enforcement of regulations

needs

- Revitalisation and rehabilitation of the traffic network and improvement of urban mobility
- Construction of sidewalks in populated areas and arrangement of stops of public city transport lines
- Construction of bicycle infrastructure and marked bicycle paths
- Reconstruction of the water supply network and construction of watertight septic tanks in most rural settlements
- More efficient purification and separation of waste water

6.3 INNOVATIVE AND SMART ECONOMY

advantages/strengths

- Branded products Pirot cheese, carpet, Pirot pressed sausage
- Industrial zones and Free zone Pirot and subzones in Dimitrovgrad, Babušnica and Bela Palanka
- Relatively developed use of the IT sector in the economy
- Connection of the SME sector with large systems (e.g. TIGAR), as well as certain local subsidies for start-up loans and support for investors
- Gastronomic fairs and other forms of promoting the Urban area
- A large amount of biomass and the production of wood chips

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Lack of labor force and unfavorable qualification structure of workers in the Urban area
- High average unemployment
- Lack of formal institutions to support production and entrepreneurship
- Insufficient available “greenfield” locations for investment (small areas, inadequate infrastructure, etc.)
- Reservedness public sector to encourage the circular economy

potentials/possibilities

- Regional and cross-border cooperation - inter-municipal and regional connection and cooperation in the field of economy and culture
- Availability and use of national and foreign funds for business development
- Development of organic food production
- Institutional support for the development of the Urban Area - e.g. Pirot Development Institute (for the entire urban area)
- Applying for EU funds to encourage the development of the circular economy
- Construction and biodegradable waste as a resource for recycling and composting
- Creative industry/old crafts - for branding and product placement
- Improvement of energy and transport infrastructure and adaptation to environmentally acceptable standards (railway electrification, biomass heating plant, gas pipeline, etc.)

threats/risks

- High average unemployment and continued outflow of quality labor from the Urban area
- Reliance of economic development on industries that are significant polluters of the environment
- Non-use of financial instruments at the state level (fees) for waste and wastewater
- Poor accessibility to the urban area and a small number of alternative modes of transportation

needs

- Qualified and trained workforce
- Institutional and non-institutional support for start-up companies and development of the rural economy
- Improvement of road and utility infrastructure in order to attract new investments
- Improvement of public intercity transport that would connect settlements in the Urban area
- Motivating and articulating the needs for the revitalisation of cooperation and association of businessmen and producers

6.4 SOCIAL WELLBEING

advantages/strengths

- Significant public allocations for social services
- Great experience and expertise of employees in the field of social protection
- Knowledge of the needs of persons from socially disadvantaged categories
- Good cooperation with the non-governmental sector, which is capable of providing social protection services
- Developed sports infrastructure with modern equipment
- Quality cultural institutions of local and regional importance with existing infrastructure and facilities
- Lifelong learning and reduction of the number of illiterate and uneducated people and the first accredited programme of dual studies in Serbia prepared in cooperation and according to the needs of business entities in the Urban Area
- A large number of artists, especially visual artists

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Insufficient spatial capacities in facilities for health care
- A small number of children aged 0–3 years who are in the preschool education system (24.3%)
- Social protection services are not sufficiently available in rural areas
- Weak user information about the possibility of exercising rights
- Absence of shelters for adults and the elderly, children and victims of violence
- Lack of human resources and availability of primary health care (doctors, emergency services, etc.)
- Insufficient cooperation between the economy and secondary schools for the needs of professional personnel education
- Lack of higher education institutions
- Lack of sports hall in schools and protective workshops in companies for children with special needs
- Insufficient coverage of cultural contents in some parts of the Urban area

potentials/possibilities

- Cross-border cooperation with cities from Bulgaria in the fields of culture, sports, education, etc.
- Inclusion of the private sector as a provider of services in the field of social protection
- Establishing better cooperation between institutions and institutions between local self-governments in order to exchange experiences and knowledge

threats/risks

- Continuation of population decline, migration of young and skilled workforce and population aging
- A large number of one-member/two-member elderly households in the countryside and an increase in the number of elderly people with needs
- Poor economic position of educational, social and health workers and lack of workers in education, social protection, culture, etc.

needs

- Establishment of new social protection services:
 - social-educational and counseling-therapeutic services,
 - services to help the elderly,
 - shelter for socially vulnerable categories of the population (victims of violence, homeless, old and infirm, residents in a state of immediate social need, etc.)
- Establishing a system of emergency medical assistance to the sick throughout the territory of the Urban area and reconstruction and adaptation of clinics in the rural area
- Establishment of appropriate educational courses in secondary schools in accordance with the needs of the Urban Area
- Improving the condition and building the necessary sports facilities for basic sports and recreational facilities
- Construction of new memorial complexes, museums and other cultural facilities and mapping of the Urban area for potential new cultural contents and their connection

6.5 URBAN AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE***advantages/strengths***

- Management at multiple levels - international, national and regional actors through various programs and projects
- Participatory approach in the development of development strategies and plans and the inclusion of interested parties and stakeholders, national minorities, socially vulnerable categories of residents, health mediators, teaching assistants, etc.
- Participatory budgeting and the involvement of citizens and other interested parties in the determination of priority projects for implementation of interest to the local community
- Civic initiatives for the topics of sustainable development and environmental protection
- 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 (Pirot in 14th place, Dimitrovgrad in 25th place, Babušnica in 50th place and Bela Palanka in 127th place)

weaknesses/deficiencies

- Weak inter-municipal cooperation
- Lack of qualified personnel and overloading of existing ones in local self-government units for managing urban development

- Little and insufficient use of Geographical Information Systems in the management of urban development and insufficient training in the use of modern IT systems
- Communication with citizens regarding the adoption of development plans is not sufficiently adapted and understandable, which results in insufficient interest and lack of information.

potentials/possibilities

- International and national programs and projects for building and increasing management capacity
- Networking, cooperation and partnership with public and private sector actors on international projects
- Public-private partnerships in many areas - infrastructure; place branding; sustainable mobility; development of sustainable and cultural tourism, etc.
- Strengthening the cooperation of LSGs within the Urban area for content complementarity > model of urban areas with a "general urban context" > quality life of the population and tourists;
- Strengthening the cooperation of LSGs for the governance of the development of the Urban Area and joint care for the state of the environment, the implementation of regional landfills and other projects.
- Better cooperation with the civil and private sector and strengthening of transparency in decision-making in the management of urban development
- Significantly better use of GIS and entry of existing spatial data into the system
- Formation of the Council of Users of Protected Natural Assets

threats/risks

- Slow reform of administration for multi-stakeholder management processes
- Low level of citizen participation in the process of planning and realisation of urban development
- Migration of young, highly educated people to bigger cities and abroad
- Slowing down of European integration and the EU accession process and the economic crisis caused by the war in Ukraine - reduced number of EU projects and additional sources of funding

needs

- Building and increasing capacity in integrated urban management
- Better management within the Urban Area, especially the environment and reduction of anthropogenic impacts in urban settlements
- Complementary and joint application at the Urban area level for international projects
- Essential participation of citizens and interested parties in the planning process beyond formal forms for quality urban management
- Introduction of modern technologies and GIS tools in territory management at the Urban area level

7 VISION, OBJECTIVES, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

7.1 VISION

PIROT IS AN URBAN AREA OF FREE, HARD-WORKING PEOPLE AND UNFETTERED NATURE.

An area of preserved, clean environment and circular economy, which provides healthy food for future generations. A multicultural environment, with a pronounced and recognizable identity, in which what is useful is not wasted and what is valuable is defended. The territory of Pirot is a combination of ancient and modern, young and old, permeated by the free flow of goods and people. People come to Pirot from all over the world, it has rivers full of water, pastures full of sheep and villages full of children.

PIROT URBAN AREA - FREE ZONE, FREE CITIZENS, FREE FLOW OF GOODS AND PEOPLE

WE ALSO SAVE FOR OLD AGE: THE AVERAGE AGE OF THE POPULATION IS REDUCED FROM 48 TO 28 YEARS OLD

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 Fund⁶ (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, 2023⁷; Sludge management programme in Serbia from 2023 to 2032⁸ (Government of RS, 2023); Low-carbon development strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2023 to 2030 with projections until 2050⁹; Strategy for young people in the Republic

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

7 <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/>

8 <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>

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

of Serbia for the period from 2022 to 2030¹⁰ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 9/2023); Strategy of deinstitutionalisation and development of social protection services in the community for the period 2022-2026 year¹¹ ("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 plan¹² ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 140/2022); Circular economy development programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2024 year¹³ ("Official Gazette of RS", no. 137/2022); Waste management programme in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2031 year¹⁴ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 12/2022); Programme of adaptation to changed climatic conditions with Action Plan, Draft¹⁵; Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2035, Draft¹⁶; Strategic priorities for the development of the culture of the Republic of Serbia from 2021-2025 year¹⁷ (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 2050¹⁸; Strategy for the development of information society and information security in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026¹⁹ ("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"²⁰ ("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 2025²¹ ("Official Gazette of RS", number 125/2021); Industrial policy strategy of the Republic of Serbia from 2021 to 2030²² ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 35/2020); Employment strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026²³ ("Official Gazette of RS", no. 18/2021, 36/2021); Strategy for the development of education and upbringing in Serbia until 2030²⁴ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 107/2021); Strategy of smart specialisation in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2027. year²⁵ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 21/2020); Strategy of sustainable urban development of the Republic of Serbia until 2030²⁶ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 47/2019); Artificial intelligence development strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2025. year²⁷ ("Official. Gazette of the RS", no. 96/2019); Public health strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2026 year²⁸ ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 61/2018); Tourism development strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2025²⁹ ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 98/2016); Strategy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

of agriculture and rural development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2024 year³⁰ ("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 2020³¹ ("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, and
- 5) Improvement of urban development governance.

The "localisation" 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 1: *Thematic objectives, specific objectives and goals*

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 1 Development, renovation and regeneration of underutilised buildings, zones and units, including the revitalisation of brownfield sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dimirovgrad (GID Gumarska industrija i Svoboda) • Bela Palanka (Ukas, Vesna) • Pyrote (Pirutex, blow-graphics) • Babušnica
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.)
M 1.1.3 Arrangement, preservation and connection of public spaces (areas and buildings) in accordance with the concept of accessibility and improvement of the culture of housing
M 1.1.4 Establishment of measures to improve the management, maintenance and promotion of housing culture in residential communities (multi-apartment buildings) at the level of LSGs

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

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

M 1.1.5 Improving safety in urban areas (relocating the railway line outside the settlement, ...).
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 buildings and areas of architectural and urban heritage that are not protected cultural assets (traditional types, vernacular architecture, industrial buildings, architecture and urban planning before and after World War II, etc.)
M 1.2.3 Preservation of cultural diversity, preservation of the cultural and natural landscape
SO 1.3 Encouraging the development of sustainable tourism and a unified tourist offer
M 1.3.1 Valorisation and planned diversification of tourist offer and capacities based on the identity of the urban area with 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 Branding and promotion of places and tourist products and cultural heritage
M 1.3.3 Promotion of food, old crafts, customs and folklore (intangible cultural heritage - ICN)
M 1.3.4 Connecting and promoting cultural points in the urban area, unified offer and creation of common thematic routes (thematic itineraries and combination of content)
M 1.3.5 Improvement of tourist infrastructure
SO 1.4 Encouraging an integrated and sustainable approach in remediation of illegal construction and its prevention
M 1.4.1 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 1.4.2 Removal of illegal buildings in zones under protection regimes (sanitary protection of sources of drinking water, floodplains, wetlands, protected cultural and natural assets,...) and improvement of the work of the inspection service
SO 1.5 Strengthening and improving the management of urban-rural connections
M 1.5.1 Development of public services, traffic and technical infrastructure, suburban public transport (bus and railway) and communal activities in rural areas
M 1.5.2 Identification projects and monitoring programs of ecosystem services that rural areas provide to urban settlements and voluntary association of rural producers
M 1.5.3 Creation of conditions for supplying rural areas with basic foodstuffs, etc.
M 1.5.4 Restoration of underutilised buildings (in different forms of ownership) in rural areas and their conversion

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 renewable energy sources (electrical and thermal)

M 2.2.2 Application of examples of good practice for energy supply, which would result in the shutdown of individual boiler houses
SO 2.3 Development of smart energy systems, networks and storage
M 2.3.1 Introducing a smart grid, advanced systems for energy storage and distribution, energy efficiency monitoring, development of smart cities, energy-efficient lighting, sustainable biomass production, etc.
M 2.3.2 Development of the producer-consumer concept (solar panels)
M 2.3.3 Connection to the gas network of all potential users
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 Establishing new or improved risk monitoring, preparedness, warning and response systems for natural disasters and natural hazards
M 2.4.2 Improvement of protection measures against natural disasters related to climate change (except floods and forest fires)
M 2.4.3 More effective protection against flooding by external waters (rivers and lakes)
M 2.4.4 Newly built or strengthened and improved protection against landslides and landslides
M 2.4.5 Built or improved green infrastructure to adapt to climate change
M 2.4.6 Measures (technical systems) of forest fire protection
M 2.4.7 Creation of a risk assessment, protection and rescue plan, as well as a plan for disaster risk reduction in emergency situations
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 operation, recultivation and monitoring of waste landfills
M 2.6.2 Encouraging and introducing waste separation
M 2.6.3 Introduction of adequate management of household hazardous waste
M 2.6.4 Introduction of adequate construction waste management
M 2.6.5 Development and implementation of measures for the use of energy and materials from waste
SO 2.7. Strengthening the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, and reducing all forms of pollution
M 2.7.1 Systemic protection of green infrastructure (plants) and blue infrastructure (water)
M 2.7.2 Identification of areas within the framework of preparation for NATURA 2000 networks covered by protection and restoration measures
M 2.7.3 Reclaimed land for green areas, housing support, economic or other purposes

M 2.7.4 Improvement and expansion of the areas covered by the installation of the air quality monitoring system
M 2.7.5 Clearly defining the areas covered by the protection against major chemical accidents and limiting the consequences of those accidents on human health and the environment through the control of the Seveso plant/complex
M 2.7.6 Prohibition construction of small hydro power plants (the city of Pirot has already protected its watercourses)
M 2.7.7 Sanitation landslides and water protection (soil drainage - method, management)
SO 2.8 Encouraging sustainable multimodal urban mobility
M 2.8.1 Introduction of new or renewal and modernisation of rail system lines
M 2.8.2 Introduction of environmentally friendly vehicles for collective public transport
M 2.8.3 Displacement of rail traffic from populated areas
M 2.8.4 Provision of infrastructure intended for bicycle traffic
M 2.8.5 Introduction of infrastructure for alternative fuels
M 2.8.6 Establishment of a new or modernised digitalised system of urban transport
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 ITIs with the development of a 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 Corridor H 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
M 3.1.1 Supporting companies and creating jobs, strengthening innovation capacities and applying advanced technologies in micro, small, medium and large companies
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
SO 3.2 Using the benefits of digitisation for citizens, businesses, research institutions and public administration bodies

M 3.2.1 Continuous improvement of digital knowledge and skills of citizens, raising the capacity of employees in the public and private sector to use new technologies and improvement of digital infrastructure in educational institutions
M 3.2.2 Digitisation of services and business in the public and private sector
M 3.2.3 Continuous 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
SO 3.4. Development of competences for smart specialisation 4S, industrial transition and entrepreneurship, within the quadruple spiral of innovation (economy, 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 encouragement of investments in circular economy solutions as growth generators (new waste recycling capacity, investments in facilities for separate waste collection, waste processed for reuse)
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
SO 3.8 Connecting economy and education
M 3.8.1 Connecting educational institutions with the economic sector
M 3.8.2 Definition of programs and motivational measures that would be sufficiently stimulating to retain existing and future staff in the Urban Area (subsidies for solving housing issues, continuous training, good conditions for children's upbringing and their education, scholarships, etc.)

O 4. Improvement of social welfare

SO 4.1 Improving the effectiveness and 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 modernisation 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 Improved access and expansion of the network of social services and social innovations in the community
M 4.2.2 Development of new or modernisation of existing facilities for temporary reception and intervention care (homeless, begging children, victims of violence, migrants, etc.)

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 Increasing the volume, quality and variety of housing solutions for housing support users through the construction and other ways of acquiring new housing units in public ownership intended for lease, as well as through the development of alternative housing solutions
M 4.3.2 Establishment of the “Supported Housing” service at the Urban Area level
M 4.3.3 Support for the employment of sensitive categories through various programs of training, education, protective workshops
SO 4.4 Improving equal access to inclusive and quality education services
M 4.4.1 Development of new or modernisation of existing child care services for preschool, primary and secondary education, training and lifelong education (continuing education)
M 4.4.2 Development of higher education institutions
SO 4.5 Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering health system resilience
M 4.5.1 Development of new or modernisation of existing health and social care services
SO 4.6 Encouraging social inclusion and social innovation
M 4.6.1 Improved access and expansion of the network of social services and social innovations in the community
SO 4.7 Ensuring equal access to cultural services, programs and facilities
M 4.7.1 Establishment of continuous cooperation of cultural institutions and exchange of cultural content in the urban area
SO 4.8 Ensuring equal access to sports and recreation services, contents and facilities
M 4.8.1 Improving the quality of life through playing sports as an element of essential importance for the development of personality and a healthy lifestyle
M 4.8.2 Construction of sports fields in urban and rural settlements
SO 4.9 Creating a stimulating environment for youth initiatives and activities
M 4.9.1 Designing and organising the offer of programs and content for the quality use of young people’s free time
M 4.9.2 Development of the “Youth Club” model
M 4.9.3 Encouraging young people to volunteer in various fields

O 5. Improving the management of urban/territorial development

SO 5.1 Encouraging development management at multiple levels - local, national, international, EU, etc.

M 5.1.1 Strengthening public dialogue, more effective implementation of networks, partnerships, programs and projects of urban development management at multiple levels in order to improve the quality of work and introduce innovations

M 5.1.2 Capacity building for development management

M 5.1.3 Increasing the visibility of the importance of “Management at the Urban Area Level”

SO 5.2 Encouraging a multi-stakeholder approach - economy, science and education, 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 ³² and standards of open administration
SO 5.4 Encouraging mixing (<i>blending</i>) 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 (<i>ITI</i>), sustainable urban development (<i>SUD</i>), community led local development by LSGs (<i>CLLD</i>)
M 5.4.3 Institutionalisation - complementary and joint application at the level of the urban area
M 5.4.4 Application of integrated cross-border management
SO 5.5 Strengthening the transparency of decision-making at the level of the urban area
M 5.5.1 Development of regional information systems (GIS) for the needs of territory development management (monitoring and evaluation of urban area strategy implementation)
M 5.5.2 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.) and their regular updating

³² Official Gazette of the RS - International Agreements, No. 8/2018-1

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 areas³³. 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.³⁴. 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.

³³ 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.

³⁴ 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.

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 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.

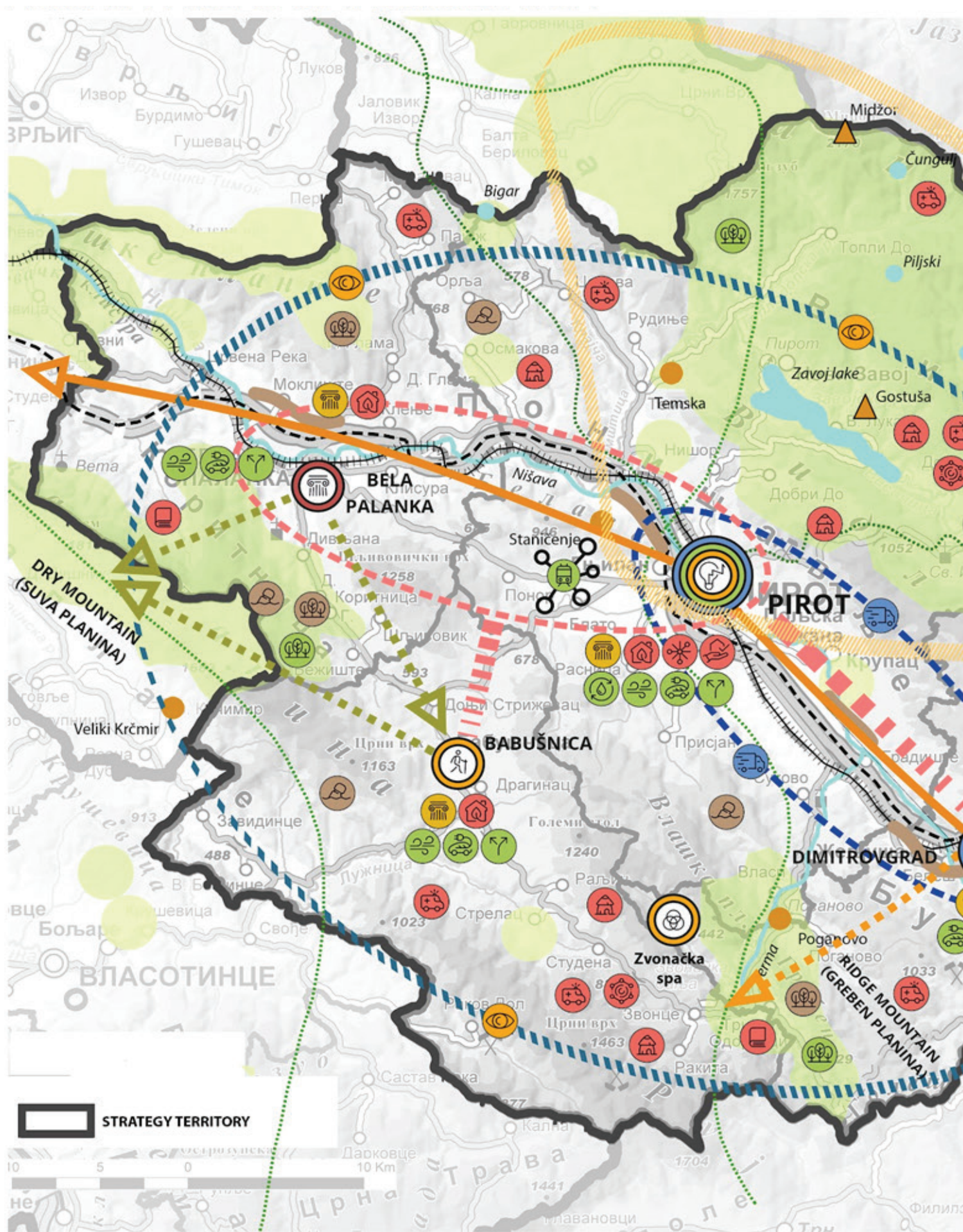
These dimensions find their way to effective expression through a strategic approach, which serves as an operational framework for better utilising the potential of urban areas by adopting a “challenge-oriented” mindset. This approach includes the formulation of transformative processes within public 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





DEVELOPMENT GENERATORS

PIROT - development centre of low-carbon and circular economy; smart specialization centre: food for the future, gastronomy, packaging, creative industry; centre of sustainable tourism of the Old Mountain (Stara Planina); centre of social services and culture

DIMITROVGRAD - smart specialization center: food for the future, cross-border cooperation, culture of remembrance and old crafts

BELA PALANKA - centre of social services and cultural tourism (Remeziana)

BABUŠNICA - centre of sustainable and sports tourism

ZVONAČKA SPA - health rehabilitation centre

PRIORITY AREAS

Smart specialization zone - logistics centre Piro - Dimitrovgrad

Thematic route: Via militaris / revitalization and protection of Roman heritage: Remeziana (Bela Palanka), TURRES (Piro) and connection with Niš and Sofia

Zone of unique tourist offer: "branding of local products: 'Buy ours'; cultural and religious tourism and vernacular architecture; sports and recreational tourism and accommodation facilities

Zone of sustainable tourist offer: Old Mountain connection with Knjaževac

Zone of sustainable tourist offer: Dry Mountain (Suva Planina) - Bela Palanka - Babušnica - connection with Gadžin Han and Niška Spa

Zone of sustainable tourist offer: Old Mountain - Ridge Mountain (Geben planina)

Social services integration zone: Piro - Bela Palanka

PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT ZONES

green infrastructure: zones and individual locations

blue infrastructure

regulation of the Nišava river

areas threatened by deforestation

areas threatened by illegal dumping (rural areas)

DEVELOPMENT ROUTES AND HUB

state road of the IA order

main / regional railway

E4 and E7 pedestrian corridors

EURO VELO 13 EURO VELO 13 cycling route



Multimodal node:
highway - railway -
logistics centre

DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

Landmarks and National Cultural Heritage of great / extraordinary importance

"Four Museums" network: reconstruction of White Cat house & Piro carpet-making museum, military museum trench - Babušnica, Dimitrovgrad museum, B. Palanka museum

Integration of rail and road traffic and bicycle paths

"Four Forests" network: afforestation and greening of the urban area and integrated management and fire protection

Relocation of railway from urban centres and land rehabilitation for brownfield sites development

Establishing an integrated regional wastewater system

Infrastructure for electric vehicles in public urban and intercity transport

Gasification (Piro, Bela Palanka, Dimitrovgrad)

Ethno museums / creative centres for the preservation and affirmation of old crafts in the villages of the urban area

Network of complementary multi-functional centres in rural areas

Health for all - mobile health care system, mobile pharmacy / emergency medical assistance / help at home

Integrated service system for the elderly

Network of schools for children to stay in nature (Reconstruction of schools on Old Mountain / recreational teaching

Regional centres for children with autism

Supported housing for health and education workers

8.3 LIST OF STRATEGIC PROJECTS

8.3.1 Identity of the urban area

1. "Mountain basket" (basket with food products of the urban area)
2. Promotion and affirmation of "Via Militaris"
3. Revitalization of Zvonačka Banja
4. Affirmation (branding) of natural and ethnic heritage (vernacular architecture)
5. "Four Museums" network (renewal and affirmation)

8.3.2 Green and energy transition and urban mobility

1. Gasification (Pirót, Bela Palanka, Dimitrovgrad)
2. Relocation of railways from urban centers, land restoration of brownfield sites
3. Integration of different types of road traffic and introduction of a single transport ticket
4. Establishment of an integrated regional wastewater system
5. Construction of a compost plant with accompanying contents at the location of the regional centre for non-hazardous waste management in Pirót
6. Establishment of the Regional Development Center for the low-carbon and circular economy
7. Afforestation and greening of the urban area and integral management and fire protection - "Four Forests"

8.3.3 Innovative and smart economy

1. Establishment of the e-platform "Buy ours" - regional promotion of local producers
2. Establishment of the Creative Center for the preservation and affirmation of old crafts
3. Networking and matching educational profiles with the labor market

8.3.4 Social wellbeing

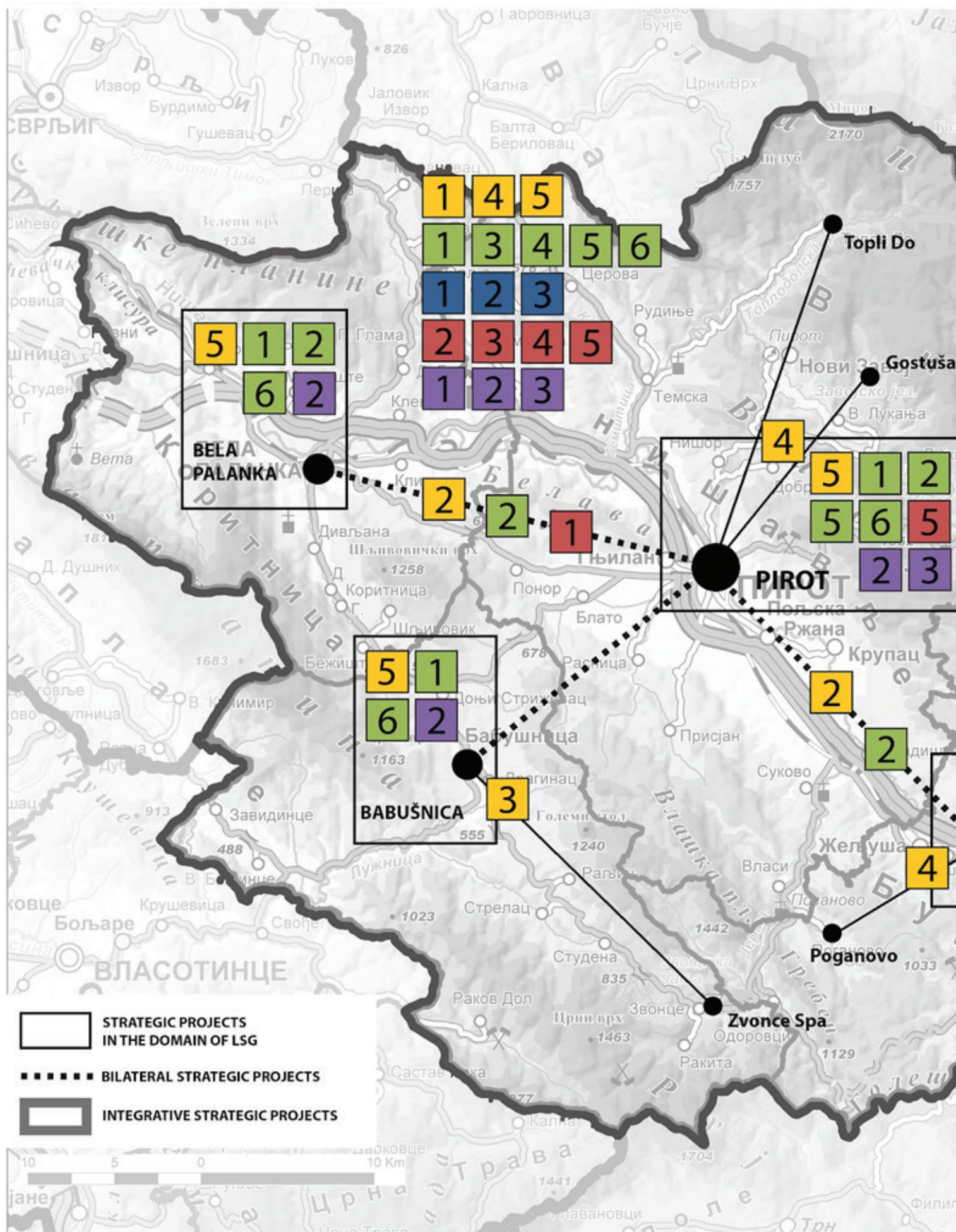
1. Establishment of an emergency medical service in the entire urban area
2. Establishment of a network of complementary multifunctional centres in rural areas
3. Establishment of a mobile healthcare system - "Health for all"
4. Establishing an integrated system of services for the elderly
5. Formation of a regional centre for people with autism
6. Improving the educational ecosystem in the urban area
7. Preparation of a pre-investment feasibility study for the establishment of a higher education institution in Pirót

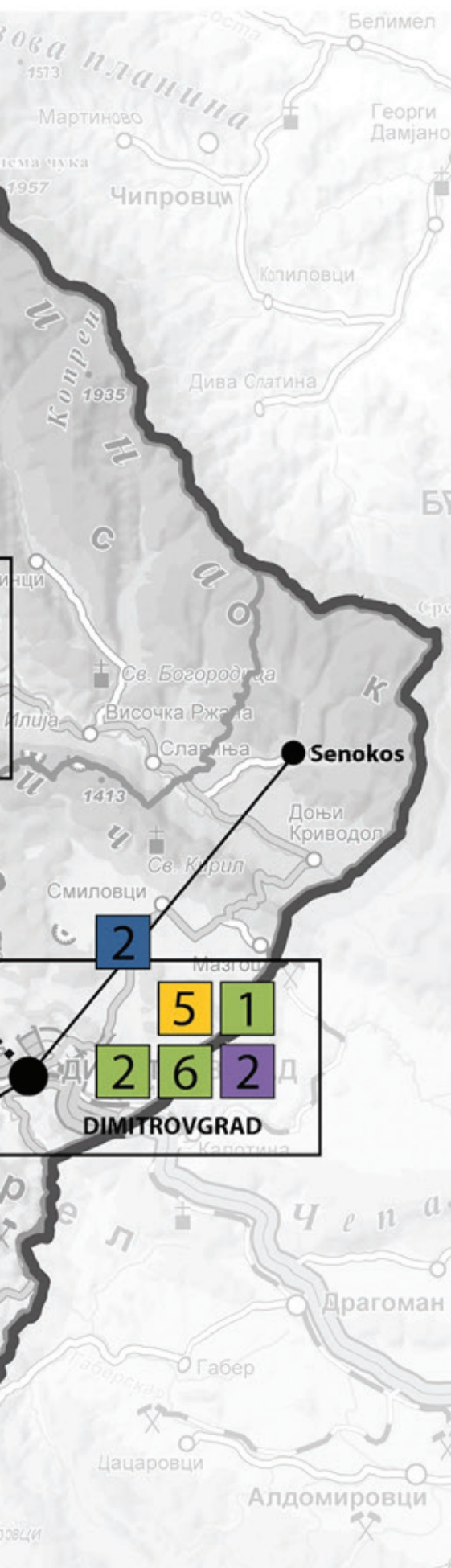
8.3.5 Urban and territorial development governance

1. Improving the capacity for managing integrated territorial investments, including the establishing of a project coordination unit
2. Development of practical tools for management, monitoring, evaluation and strategy implementation
3. Establishment of the Laboratory for Territorial Development (regional council)

8.4 STRATEGIC PROJECTS - GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

TERRITORIAL STRATEGY OF PIROT AND BABUŠNICA, DIMITROVGRAD AND BELA PALANKA URBAN AREA





URBAN AREA IDENTITY

- 1 "Mountain basket" (basket with food products of the urban area)
- 2 Promotion and affirmation of "Via Militaris"
- 3 Revitalization of Zvonačka Banja
- 4 Affirmation (branding) of natural and ethnic heritage (vernacular architecture)
- 5 "Four Museums" network (renewal and affirmation)

GREEN AND ENERGY TRANSITION AND URBAN MOBILITY

- 1 Gasification (Piro, Bela Palanka, Dimitrovgrad)
- 2 Relocation of railways from urban centers, land restoration of brownfield sites
- 3 Integration of different types of road traffic and introduction of a single transport ticket
- 4 Establishment of an integrated regional wastewater system
- 5 Establishment of the Regional Development Center for the low-carbon and circular economy
- 6 Afforestation and greening of the urban area and integral management and fire protection - "Four Forests"

INNOVATIVE AND SMART ECONOMY

- 1 Establishment of the e-platform "Buy ours" - regional promotion of local producers
- 2 Establishment of the Creative Center for the preservation and affirmation of old crafts
- 3 Networking and matching educational profiles with the labor market

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

- 1 Establishment of an emergency medical service in the entire urban area
- 2 Establishment of a network of complementary multifunctional centres in rural areas
- 3 Establishment of a mobile healthcare system - "Health for all"
- 4 Establishment an integrated system of services for the elderly
- 5 Establishment of a Regional center for people with autism

URBAN/TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

- 1 Improving the capacity for managing integrated territorial investments, including the establishing of a project coordination unit
- 2 Development of practical tools for management, monitoring, evaluation and strategy implementation
- 3 Establishment of the Laboratory for Territorial Development (regional council)

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 Finance³⁵; Ministry of Economy³⁶; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management³⁷; Ministry of Environmental Protection³⁸; Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure³⁹; Ministry of Mining and Energy⁴⁰; Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade⁴¹; Ministry of Justice⁴²; Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government⁴³; Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue⁴⁴; Ministry for European Integration⁴⁵; Ministry of Education⁴⁶; Ministry of Health⁴⁷; Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs⁴⁸; Ministry of Family Care and Demography⁴⁹; Ministry of Sports⁵⁰; Ministry of Culture⁵¹; Ministry of Rural Care⁵²; Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation⁵³; Ministry of Tourism and Youth⁵⁴; Ministry of Information and Telecommunications⁵⁵; Ministry of Public Investments⁵⁶; The cabinet of the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

44 <https://www.minljmpdd.gov.rs/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

minister without portfolio in charge of improving the development of underdeveloped municipalities⁵⁷; 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 diaspora⁵⁸; Cabinet of the minister without portfolio in charge of balanced regional development⁵⁹), 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 Serbia⁶⁰; Port Management Agency⁶¹) and funds (Development Fund of the Republic of Serbia⁶²; Fund for innovation activity⁶³; Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia⁶⁴);

- The local budget, as well as loans from commercial banks (Erste Banka A.D.⁶⁵; UniCredit Banka⁶⁶; Banca Intesa⁶⁷; NLB Komercijalna banka⁶⁸; Banka Poštanska štedionica⁶⁹; ProCredit banka⁷⁰) 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 assistance⁷¹ (2021-2027; 2014-2020; 2007-2013), Programmes of European territorial cooperation in the Republic of Serbia 2021-2027⁷², Investment framework for the Western Balkans⁷³ (Western Balkans Investment Framework - WBIF), IPARD III⁷⁴, a multi-user IPA⁷⁵;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

73 <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/>

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

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

- EU programmes⁷⁶ (Digital Europe⁷⁷, 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 funds⁷⁸ (New Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, MADAD, EU Solidarity Fund, Regional Housing Programme) and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans⁷⁹;
- International financial instruments - banks⁸⁰ (Council of Europe Development Bank - CEB, European Investment Bank - EIB, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - EBRD, World Bank - WB⁸¹, German Development Bank - KfW);
- Bilateral and multilateral cooperation, donor programmes (United Nations Team in Serbia⁸², German Agency for Technical Cooperation - GIZ⁸³, French Development Agency⁸⁴, 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.

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

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

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

79 <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/>

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

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

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

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

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

Table 2: 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 3: *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 program 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
Areas 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;
- **reliable** - for those who are not experts, unambiguous and easy to interpret;
- **easy** - monitoring is possible with low costs and acceptable administrative burden; and
- **indestructible** – 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 4: 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	m ²	
	- Reclaimed land used for green areas, social (affordable) housing, economic or other purposes	m ²	
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/m ²	SOURRS
SO 1.5 Strengthening and improving the management of urban-rural connections	- 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 CO ₂	
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/m ²	RCO 26 PPIKUAP 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/m ²	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/m ²	
	- Area of restored land for which support was received	ha/m ²	
	- Area covered by air pollution monitoring systems	ha/m ²	
	- 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 benefits of digitisation 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Estimated greenhouse gas emissions	Reduction of t CO ₂	RCR 29 RCR 105 RCO 59 SNURRS SIPRS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Estimated greenhouse gas emissions by boilers and heating systems converted from solid fossil fuels to gas	Reduction of t CO ₂	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Infrastructure for alternative fuels (filling/refueling points)	Number of points	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Afforestation	ha/m ²	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Area of new or modernised facilities for employment services	m ²	RCO 61 RCR 65 SZRS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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 SIZRS
SO 4.6 Ensuring equal access to cultural services, programs 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 management 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 (<i>blending</i>) 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 management	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	SRSEERS
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 Pirot and the municipalities of Bela Palanka, Babušnica and Dimitrovgrad (LGS) 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 Pirot 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.⁸⁵

After closing the project, the City of Pirot 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 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

⁸⁵ 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.

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.

12 SOURCES

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13 ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 - DECISIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORIAL STRATEGY



СКУПШТИНА ГРАДА ПИРОТА

На основу 10. и 38. став 3. Закона о плаћском систему ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 30/2018), члана 13. став 1, члана 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 25. став 1. тачка 4. Статута Града Пирота ("Службени лист Града Ниша", број 20/2019), Правилника о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката ("Службени гласник РС", број 51/2019) и Меморандума о разумевању, закљученог између града Пирота и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге (П/031-71/22 од 20.05.2022. године) којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка,

Скупштина Града Пирота на седници одржаној 30.06.2022. године, донosi

ОДЛУКУ

О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА ПИРОТА И ОПШТИНА БАБУШНИЦА, ДИМИТРОВГРАД И БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА

Члан 1.

Град Пирот приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка.

Члан 2.

Циљ израде Стратегије је допринос одрживом развоју територије заснованом на подстицању: иновативне, паметне, нискоугљеничне и циркуларне економије; прелаза на чисту и пратећу 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 кохезије у домену запошљавања, образовања, социјалне 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 грађитељског наслеђа, природне баштине, одрживог туризма и јачању урбаног подручја.

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 Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка, 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 процес израде Стратегије промовисаће се интегрални и партиципативни приступ планирању развоја, међусекторска сарадња и размена информација, укључивање и



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координација јавног, приватног, цивилног сектора и научно-истраживачког сектора у процесу одлучивања, и партнерство међу институцијама.

Члан 5.

У циљу израде Стратегије образоваће се Савет за развој урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка (у даљем тексту: Савет) и Радна група 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 Пирота, председници општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка, које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представник Регионалне развојне агенције „Југ“, док су заменици чланова Савета заменик Градоначелника града Пирота, 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, предложеном од стране Радне групе, даје мишљење на предложени нацрт Стратегије, прибавља мишљења релевантних институција и учествује коначном нацрту 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 града Пирота.

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.



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За реализацију ове Одлуке задужена је Капеларија за локални економски развој града Пирота и организационе јединице општинских управа Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка, надлежне за послове урбанизма.

Члан 12.

О овој одлуци информисаће се јавност у складу са одредбама Закона о планском систему, Закона о локалној самоуправи и Правилника о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката, објавом на службеним страницама јединица локалне самоуправе.

Члан 13.

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

Г бр.06/48-6/22

30.06.2022. год.

П и р о т



ПРЕДСЕДНИЦА
СКУПШТИНЕ ГРАДА
Миленка Димитријевић

Миленка Димитријевић

У складу са чланом 12. Закона о планском систему ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 30/2018), чланом 13. став 6. и чланом 21. Закона о локалној самоуправи ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 129/2007, 83/2014 – др. закон, 101/2016 – др. закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021 – др. закон), чланом 20. Закона о територијалној организацији Републике Србије ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018 и 9/2020 - др. закон), чланом 33. и 39. Закона о регионалном развоју ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 51/2009, 30/2010 и 85/2015 – др. закон), Правилником о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 51/2019), Стратегијом одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 47/2019), чланом 40. став 1. тачка 6) Статута општине Димитровград („Сл. лист општине Димитровград“, бр. 6/2019) и Меморандумом о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, града Пирота и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, дана 20.05.2022. године, којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград, Скупштина општине Димитровград, на седници од 29.06.2022. године, донела је

ОДЛУКУ
О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА
ПИРОТА И ОПШТИНА БАБУШНИЦА, БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА И ДИМИТРОВГРАД

Члан 1.

Општина Димитровград приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград.

Члан 2.

Под Стратегијом развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград (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 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.

¹ члан 29. Уредбе (ЕУ) 2021/1060 Европског парламента и већа од 24.јуна 2021. о утврђивању заједничких одредаба о Европском фонду за регионални развој, Европском социјалном фонду плус, Кохезионом фонду, Фонду за праведну транзицију и Европском фонду за поморство, рибарство и аквакултуру те финансијских правила за њих и за Фонд за азил, миграције и интеграцију, Фонд за унутрашњу безбедност и инструмент за финансијску подршку на подручју управљања границама и визне политике.

Полазну основу за формулисање Стратегије представљају дефинисани правци развоја Републике Србије и Европске уније и територије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград 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 Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград (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, предложено 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 градоначелник Пирота и председници општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представници Регионалне развојне агенције Југ, док су заменици чланова Савета, заменици градоначелника односно председника општина.

Радом 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.

Члан 9.

Регионална развојна агенција Југ пружа стручну и техничку подршку и административно-техничку помоћ Радној групи током израде Стратегије, кроз обезбеђење простора за рад у сарадњи са градском управом, и административно-техничку помоћ током израде Стратегије, прикупљање и достављање свих званичних релевантних података и др.

Члан 10.

Током израде Стратегије биће организовани тематски округли столови, радионице, форуми за стручне и јавне расправе, на којима ће се усаглашавати предложена решења. У њихов рад могу бити укључени и сви остали заинтересовани учесници, како би се обезбедила партиципација и транспарентност процеса одлучивања и правовремено обавештавање јавности.

Члан 11.

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

Члан 12.

Реализација ове Одлуке обезбеђује се кроз програм ЕУ ПРО Плус. За реализацију ове Одлуке задужене су организационе јединице градских управа и општина надлежне за послове урбанизма.

Члан 13.

О овој Одлуци информисаће се јавност у складу са одредбама Закона о планском систему, Закона о локалној самоуправи и Правилника о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката, објавом на службеним страницама јединица локалне самоуправе.

Члан 14.

Сви појмови у овој Одлуци употребљени у граматичком мушком роду подразумевају мушки и женски природни род.

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у "Службеном листу Општине Димитровград"

ОБРАЗЛОЖЕЊЕ

У оквиру Јавног позива за подношење предлога пројекта за израду територијалних стратегија, број позива: CFP EUPROPLUS 01-2021, који је расписала Канцеларија Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге у оквиру програма ЕУ Про Плус 13.10.2021. године, Граду Пироту (као носиоцу пројекта) и партнерским општинама (Бабушница, Бела Паланска и Димитровград) одобрена је техничка подршка Граду Пироту за израду Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланска и Димитровград.

У складу са потписаним Меморандумом о разумевању и сарадњи између UNOPS-а и Града Пирота о пружању техничке подршке кроз израду Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланска и Димитровград, Општина Димитровград у сарадњи са ЕУ ПРО Плус Програмом иницира израду, као и коначно усвајање Стратегије, подржи процес израде Стратегије у свим његовим фазама и формира интердисциплинарану радну групу за израду Стратегије. У сарадњи са партнерским локалним самоуправама Општина Димитровград се обавезује да успостави управљачки механизам за територију обухваћену Стратегијом и да ради на успостављању укупног институционалног оквира за подршку имплементације Стратегије. Техничка подршка УНОПС-а се састоји од пружања подршке раду интердисциплинарне радне групе кроз фасилитацију и организацију догађаја, обука, радионица за израду Стратегије, затим пружању техничке подршке у припреми нацрта Стратегије, као и пратећих материјала и подршка у припреми коначне верзије

документа и пружању техничке подршке за успостављање управљачког механизма за територију обухваћену Стратегијом, као и пружање подршке имплементацији Стратегије.

Стратегија доприноси 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. Стратегијом се тежи да се постигне територијална кохезија кроз уравнотежен економски регионални развој и унапређење људског капитала.

За реализацију Стратегије нису потребна додатна финансијска средства из буџета Општине Димитровград.

Број: 06-106/2022-17/18-21

У Димитровграду, 29.06.2022. године.

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ ДИМИТРОВГРАД



ПРЕДСЕДНИК

Зоран Ђуров

У складу са чланом 12. Закона о планском систему („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 30/2018), чланом 13, став 6, чланом 21. Закона о локалној самоуправи („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 129/2007, 83/2014 - др.закон, 101/2016 - др.закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021-др.закон), чланом 20. Закона о територијалној организацији Републике Србије („Службени гласник РС”, бр.129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018 и 9/2020 - др. закон), чланом 33. и 39. Закона о регионалном развоју („Службени гласник РС”, бр.51/2009, 30/2010 и 85/2015 - др.закон), Правилником о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 51/2019), Стратегијом одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године („Службени гласник РС”, бр.47/2019), чланом 40. Статута општине Бела Паланка („Службени лист Града Ниша”, бр.14/2019) и Меморандумом о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, града Пирота, и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, дана 20.05.2022.године, којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бела Паланка, Бабушница и Димитровград,

Скупштина Општине Бела Паланка на седници од 29-06 2022. године, доноси

ОДЛУКУ О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА ПИРОТА И ОПШТИНА БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА, БАБУШНИЦА И ДИМИТРОВГРАД

Члан 1.

Општина Бела Паланка приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бела Паланка, Бабушница и Димитровград.

Члан 2.

Под Стратегијом развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бела Паланка, Бабушница и Димитровград (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 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.

¹ Члан 29. Уредбе (ЕУ) 2021/1060 Европског парламента и већа од 24.јуна 2021. о утврђивању заједничких одредаба о Европском фонду за регионални развој, Европском социјалном фонду плус, Кохезионом фонду, Фонду за праведну транзицију и Европском фонду за покретност, рибарство и аквакултуру те финансијских правила за њих и за Фонд за вешт, иновације и интеграцију, Фонд за унутрашњу безбедност и инструмент за финансијску подршку на подручју управљања границама и ванит политике.

У складу са чланом 12. Закона о планском систему („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 30/2018), чланом 13, став 6, чланом 21. Закона о локалној самоуправи („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 129/2007, 83/2014 - др.закон, 101/2016 - др.закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021-др.закон), чланом 20. Закона о територијалној организацији Републике Србије („Службени гласник РС”, бр.129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018 и 9/2020 - др. закон), чланом 33. и 39. Закона о регионалном развоју („Службени гласник РС”, бр.51/2009, 30/2010 и 85/2015 - др.закон), Правилником о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 51/2019), Стратегијом одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године („Службени гласник РС”, бр.47/2019), чланом 40. Статута општине Бела Паланка („Службени лист Града Ниша”, бр.14/2019) и Меморандумом о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, града Пирота, и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, дана 20.05.2022.године, којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бела Паланка, Бабушница и Димитровград,

Скупштина Општине Бела Паланка на седници од 29-06 2022. године, доноси

ОДЛУКУ О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА ПИРОТА И ОПШТИНА БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА, БАБУШНИЦА И ДИМИТРОВГРАД

Члан 1.

Општина Бела Паланка приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бела Паланка, Бабушница и Димитровград.

Члан 2.

Под Стратегијом развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бела Паланка, Бабушница и Димитровград (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 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.

¹ Члан 29. Уредбе (ЕУ) 2021/1060 Европског парламента и већа од 24.јуна 2021. о утврђивању заједничких одредаба о Европском фонду за регионални развој, Европском социјалном фонду плус, Кохезионом фонду, Фонду за праведну транзицију и Европском фонду за покретност, рибарство и аквакултуру те финансијских правила за њих и за Фонд за вешт, иновације и интеграцију, Фонд за унутрашњу безбедност и инструмент за финансијску подршку на подручју управљања границама и зовне политике.

Члан 10.

Током израде Стратегије биће организовани тематски округли столови, радионице, форуми за стручне и јавне расправе, на којима ће се усаглашавати предложена решења. У њихов рад могу бити укључени и сви остали заинтересовани учесници, како би се обезбедила партиципација и транспарентност процеса одлучивања и правовремено обавештавање јавности.

Члан 11.

Рок за израду Стратегије је 12 (дванест) месеци од дана ступања на снагу ове Одлуке.

Члан 12.

Реализација ове Одлуке обезбеђује се кроз програм ЕУ ПРО Плус. За реализацију ове Одлуке задужене су организационе јединице градских управа и општина надлежне за послове урбанизма.

Члан 13.

О овој Одлуци информисаће се јавност у складу са одредбама Закона о планском систему, Закона о локалној самоуправи и Правилника о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката, објавом на службеним страницама јединица локалне самоуправе.

Члан 14.

Сви појмови у овој Одлуци употребљени у граматичком мушком роду подразумевају мушки и женски природни род.

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

Број: 011-47/2022-1

Датум: 28.06.2022. године

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА

ПРЕДСЕДНИК
АЛЕКСАНДАР ПЕЈЧИЋ



СТРАНА - БРОЈ БАБУШНИЦА 10.06.2022. ГОДИНЕ

У складу са чланом 12. Закона о планском систему ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 30/2018), чланом 13. став 6, и чланом 21. 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), чланом 20. Закона о територијалној организацији Републике Србије ("Сл.гласник РС", бр.129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018 и 9/2020 - др. закон), чланом 33. и 39. Закона о регионалном развоју ("Сл.гласник РС", бр.51/2009, 30/2010 и 85/2015 - др.закон), Правилником о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката ("Службени гласник РС", број 51/2019), Стратегијом одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године ("Службени гласник Републике Србије", број 47/2019), чланом 40. став 1. тачка 4 Статута општине Бабушница („Скупштински преглед општине Бабушница“, број 4/2019 и 7/2019-исправка) и Меморандумом о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, града Пирота, и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, број 031-71/22 дана 20.05.2022. године, којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград, Скупштина Општине Бабушница на седници одржаној 10.06.2022. године донела је:

ОДЛУКУ

О ПРИСТУПАЊУ ИЗРАДИ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА ПИРОТА И ОПШТИНА БАБУШНИЦА, БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА И ДИМИТРОВГРАД

Члан 1.

Општина Бабушница приступа изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград.

Члан 2.

Под Стратегијом развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград (у даљем тексту: Стратегија), у смислу ово 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, социјалне 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 грађевинског 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.

СТРАНА - БРОЈ БАБУШНИЦА, 10.06.2022. ГОДИНЕ

Члан 4.

Полазну основу за формулисање Стратегије представљају дефинисани правци развоја Републике Србије и Европске уније и територије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград 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 Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград (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, предложеној 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 градоначелник града Пирота и председници општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград које су у саставу урбаног подручја обухваћеног Стратегијом, као и представници Регионалне развојне агенције „Јут“, док су заменици чланова Савета заменик градоначелника односно заменици председника општина или друга лица по овлашћењу.

Радом 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 Пирота.

Члан 9.

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

СТРАНА - БРОЈ БАБУШНИЦА 10.06.2022. ГОДИНЕ

Члан 10.

Током израде Стратегије биће организовани тематски округли столови, радионице, форуми за стручне и јавне расправе, на којима ће се усатлањавати предложена решења. У њихов рад могу бити укључени и сви остали заинтересовани учесници, како би се обезбедила партиципација и транспарентност процеса одлучивања и правовремено обавештавање јавности.

Члан 11.

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

Члан 12.

Реализација ове Одлуке обезбеђује се кроз програм ЕУ ИРО Плус. За реализацију ове Одлуке задужене су организационе јединице градске управе и општинских управа надлежне за послове урбанизма.

Члан 13.

О овој Одлуци информисаће се јавност у складу са одредбама Закона о планском систему, Закона о локалној самоуправи и Правилника о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката, објавом на службеним страницама јединица локалне самоуправе.

Члан 14.

Сви појмови у овој Одлуци употребљени у граматичком мушком роду подразумевају мушки и женски природни род.

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у „Скупштинском гласнику Општине Бабушница“.



Број:350-38/2022-2
У Бабушници, 10.06.2022. године
СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНА БАБУШНИЦА

ПРЕДСЕДНИК,
Данибор Јоцић,с.р.

ANNEX 2 - LIST OF PROJECT IDEAS

O 1. IDENTITY OF THE URBAN AREA	
1.	Conversion of the Dairy School into a Food Academy
2.	Restoration of the worn-out fountain in the old city centre of Dimitrovgrad
3.	Restoration of the Native Museum in Bela Palanka
4.	Restoration and revitalisation of the Church of St. Archangel in the village of Boljev Dol (Dimitrograd)
5.	Revitalisation of Spatial Cultural Historical Entities (PKIC), Gostuša village
6.	Valorisation of archaeological sites on the territory of the urban area
7.	Creation of the tourist corridor Via militaris, connection and promotion of the most important tourist potentials
8.	Revitalisation and protection of Roman heritage on Via Militaris - Remiziana (Bela Palanka), Via Militaris road, remains of TURRES (Piro),
9.	Preservation of old crafts, especially blacksmithing
10.	Development and improvement of the Artisans' Alley Museum (Bela Palanka)
11.	Museum of carpet making in Piro
12.	Ethno Museum in the village of Poganvo in Dimitrovgrad
13.	Unification of the tourist offer (skiing, folklore, carpet making, vurd, sušenica, banica, lamb in Krupac, hiking, cycling, running, Serbian Colorado - Slavinsko grlo)
14.	Tourist signalisation projects
15.	Pearls of the district - joint offer (website creation, brochure, promo film)
16.	Visitor centre in Trnski Odorovci in SNR Jerma
17.	Creative centre of old crafts in the village of Senokos on Stara planina (Dimitrovgrad municipality)
18.	Reaffirmation of Zvonačka Banja
19.	Memorial complex "Pametik" in Dimitrovgrad
20.	Creation of the project of the culture of memory (Zlatan Dudov in Dimitrovgrad)
21.	Creation of a map of traditional food for the urban area
22.	Dispersive and decentralised holding of events
23.	Creating a calendar of events and brochures about them for the entire Urban area (cultural, gastronomic, ethnic...)
O 2. GREEN AND ENERGY TRANSITION AND MOBILITY	
24.	Public partnerships of PE, LSG, CSO in order to improve energy efficiency
25.	Development of plans and projects for the use of energy from green renewable sources
26.	Creation of the Regional Development Centre for the Low Carbon and Circular Economy Piro

27.	Forest restoration project
28.	Promotion of circular economy principles - public and private sector, creation of an alliance for circular economy
29.	Technical support of air and water quality monitoring and testing
30.	Smart solutions in settlements - smart bins and parking lots
31.	Measurement and control of air pollution
32.	Development of risk assessment projects with plans for protection and rescue measures in emergency situations at the LSG level
33.	Development of the watercourse regulation project
34.	Development of projects for the regulation of the Nišava River (in parts where regulation has not been carried out)
35.	Development of projects and plans for wastewater treatment
36.	Removal of illegal landfills
37.	Construction of recycling islands
38.	Development of urban mobility plans
39.	Project of stationary traffic (parking) around Pirot General Hospital
40.	Construction of pedestrian and bicycle paths in cities and between settlements where possible
41.	Introduction of electric vehicles in public city and intercity transport, subsidies
42.	Integration of rail, road traffic and bicycle paths, in order to achieve efficient transportation and mobility of citizens in the region
O 3. INNOVATIVE AND SMART ECONOMY	
43.	Regional innovation scheme for companies with the support of RDA South
44.	Regional development fund for rural development
45.	Support for young people in entrepreneurship
46.	Introduction of circular economy principles in SMEs, Binis Incubator - Centre for Circular Economy
47.	Subsidizing employment in SMEs
48.	Training of SMEs and support in the preparation of Horizon EIT manufacturing projects
49.	Training/education for the Union of Producers, product presentation, through the IT centre in the municipalities
50.	Creation of new programs for risk management in the economy
51.	Creating a regional brand product (cheese, sušenica, rug, pie, vurma)
52.	Creation of the "Buy Our" regional program
53.	Support for young people in employment
54.	Tasting centre for traditional products

55.	Fair through the promotion of products made exclusively from recycled materials
56.	Introduction of new educational profiles in line with the economy and continuous improvement of employees' competencies
O 4. SOCIAL WELLBEING	
57.	Institutional linking of educational institutions in the country, region and Europe
58.	Establishing a safe house for the entire urban area
59.	Construction of a home for the elderly
60.	Identification and assistance to elderly households in rural areas that are outside the social protection system
61.	Multifunctional centres in the urban area
62.	Improvement of the "Home Help" service, especially in rural areas
63.	Regional centre for children with autism and special needs
64.	Reconstruction/adaptation of school buildings on Stara planina, for the needs of recreational teaching
65.	Provision of emergency medical assistance in the entire Urban area
66.	Providing affordable housing for healthcare and education workers
67.	Subsidizing the opening of mobile pharmacies that would cover the needs of parts of the Urban area that do not have this type of service - Health for all
68.	Adaptation of accessibility especially to sports facilities
69.	Promotion of intangible cultural heritage
70.	Presentation of cultural places (Covenant cross, records)
71.	Connecting cultural points in the Urban area and creating common thematic routes (eg via militaris, religious architecture, religious tourism, etc.)
O 5. URBAN/TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE	
72.	Establishment of a single administrative office in all LSGs
73.	Establishment of "Regional laboratories", which meet on certain topics and are based on "regional knowledge" to solve development issues
74.	Campaign to raise citizens' awareness for greater involvement in the governance process
75.	Creation of application teams at the district level (project teams) that would monitor the application for the entire area of the district
76.	Capacity building for development management - public, civil, private sector, training and study tours
77.	Developing a strategy for smart specialisation of the territory
78.	Development of software with the presentation of all locations attractive for urban development
79.	Development of a platform for the presentation of current projects

80.	Development of a regional information system for monitoring and evaluating the ITI strategy at the level of the urban area
81.	Development of CLLD strategies and creation of implementation mechanisms
82.	Creation of an instrument to activate notable individuals and scientists

ANNEX 3 – PARTICIPANTS IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Participants in the Strategy development process

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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 SERBIA⁸⁶

1.1.1 MINISTRY OF FINANCE⁸⁷

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 ECONOMY⁸⁸

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;
- 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,

⁸⁶ <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/link/2497>

⁸⁷ <https://www.mfin.gov.rs/>

⁸⁸ <https://privreda.gov.rs/>

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 MANAGEMENT⁸⁹

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

⁸⁹ <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 PROTECTION⁹⁰

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

⁹⁰ <https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/>

- 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 INFRASTRUCTURE⁹¹

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.
- 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.

⁹¹ <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/projekti>

- 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 ENERGY⁹²

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

⁹² <https://www.mre.gov.rs/>

- 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 TRADE⁹³

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 JUSTICE⁹⁴

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-GOVERNMENT⁹⁵

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

⁹³ <https://must.gov.rs/>

⁹⁴ <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/>

⁹⁵ <https://mduls.gov.rs/category/projekti-i-programi/>

- 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 DIALOGUE⁹⁶

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.

⁹⁶ <https://www.minlmpdd.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 INTEGRATION⁹⁷⁹⁸

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 EDUCATION⁹⁹

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;
- 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;

⁹⁷ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/>

⁹⁸ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/pozivi/165/detaljnije/w/0/raspisan-prvi-poziv-za-projektne-ideje-iz-teritorijalne-strategije/>

⁹⁹ <https://prosveta.gov.rs/>

- 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 HEALTH¹⁰⁰

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.

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/>

- 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.

1.1.14 MINISTRY OF LABOR, EMPLOYMENT, VETERANS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS¹⁰¹

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.

¹⁰¹ <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr>

- 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 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 DEMOGRAPHY¹⁰²

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 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.

¹⁰² <https://minbpd.gov.rs/>

1.1.16 MINISTRY OF SPORTS¹⁰³

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 CULTURE¹⁰⁴

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.
- 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.

¹⁰³ <https://www.mos.gov.rs/>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.kultura.gov.rs/>

- 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 CARE¹⁰⁵

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 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 INNOVATION¹⁰⁶

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

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.mbs.gov.rs/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://nitra.gov.rs/>

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 YOUTH¹⁰⁷

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 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.

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.mto.gov.rs/>

- 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 TELECOMMUNICATIONS¹⁰⁸

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.
- 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 INVESTMENTS¹⁰⁹

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.

¹⁰⁸ <https://mit.gov.rs/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.obnova.gov.rs/>

- 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 MUNICIPALITIES¹¹⁰

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.

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 DIASPORA¹¹¹

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.

¹¹⁰ <https://rnro.gov.rs/javni-konkursi/>

¹¹¹ <https://www.mbpdijaspora.gov.rs/>

1.1.25 CABINET OF THE MINISTER WITHOUT A PORTFOLIO IN CHARGE OF EVEN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT¹¹²

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 ADMINISTRATION¹¹³

From the RS budget, the Customs Administration finances the project:

- Construction of the complex of the customs office at GP Gradina.

1.2.2 ADMINISTRATION FOR FREE ZONES¹¹⁴

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 DIRECTORATE¹¹⁵

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

¹¹² <https://rrrz.gov.rs/extfile/sr/472/%D0%88avni%20poziv.pdf>

¹¹³ <https://www.carina.rs/>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.usz.gov.rs/>

¹¹⁵ <https://rdvode.gov.rs/>

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, Pirot Leskovac, Paraćin, Knjaževac, Vrbas and Kikinda.

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 FORESTS¹¹⁶

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.

¹¹⁶ <https://upravazasume.gov.rs/>

1.2.5 ADMINISTRATION FOR AGRARIAN PAYMENTS¹¹⁷

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 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 ADMINISTRATION¹¹⁸

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.

¹¹⁷ <https://uap.gov.rs/>

¹¹⁸ <https://upz.minpolj.gov.rs/sadrzaj/>

1.2.7 NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION¹¹⁹

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 SERBIA¹²⁰

- 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.
- 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 AGENCY¹²¹

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 SERBIA¹²²

- 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.

¹¹⁹ <https://www.napa.gov.rs/>

¹²⁰ <https://ras.gov.rs/>

¹²¹ <https://www.aul.gov.rs/>

¹²² <https://fondzarazvoj.gov.rs/cir>

1.3.2 FUND FOR INNOVATION ACTIVITY¹²³

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 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

¹²³ <http://www.inovacionifond.rs/cir/>

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 SERBIA¹²⁴

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

¹²⁴ <https://fondzanauku.gov.rs/>

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 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)¹²⁵

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).

¹²⁵ <https://www.cpn.edu.rs/>

1.4 BANKS

1.4.1 Erste Bank A.D.¹²⁶

- 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 bank¹²⁷

- 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.
- 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 Intesa¹²⁸

- 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 banka¹²⁹

- 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 štedionica¹³⁰

- 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.

¹²⁶ [HTTPS://www.erstebank.rs/sr/Pravna-lica](https://www.erstebank.rs/sr/Pravna-lica)

¹²⁷ <https://www.unicreditbank.rs/rs/pi.html>

¹²⁸ <https://www.bancaintesa.rs/>

¹²⁹ <https://www.nlbkb.rs/>

¹³⁰ <https://www.posted.co.rs/>

- 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 bank¹³¹

- Credits for energy efficiency.
- Business loans for solar panels.
- Grants for new machines.

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

¹³¹ <https://www.procreditbank.rs/>

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 Delegation¹³².

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 programmes¹³³ 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

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

https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance/how-does-it-work_en

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

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).

2.1.1.4.1 ROMANIA - SERBIA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Support area¹³⁴

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.

¹³⁴ <https://www.romania-serbia.net/>

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 PROGRAMME*Support area¹³⁵

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.

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 area¹³⁶

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.

¹³⁵ <http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/>

¹³⁶ www.croatia-serbia.com

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.

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 area¹³⁷

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 area¹³⁸

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.

¹³⁷ <http://srb-bih.org/>

¹³⁸ www.cbcsrb-mne.org

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

2.1.1.4.6 SERBIA - NORTH MACEDONIA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Support area¹³⁹

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 PROGRAMME

Support area¹⁴⁰

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

¹³⁹ <https://eu.rs-mk.org/>

¹⁴⁰ www.adrioninterreg.eu

- 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.

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 area¹⁴¹

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

¹⁴¹ www.interreg-danube.eu

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.

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

URBACT¹⁴² 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

¹⁴² <https://urbact.eu/>

2.1.1.5 WESTERN BALKANS INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK (WBIF)

Investment framework for the Western Balkans¹⁴³ (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 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 III¹⁴⁴ 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 instrument¹⁴⁵ (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

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/ipard-iii/>

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/src/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ipa-instrument-za-pretpristupnu-pomoc/visekorisnicka-ipa/>

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.

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”¹⁴⁶ 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, and
- 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 Plus¹⁴⁷ 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.

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/projekti-ministarstva-za-evropske-integracije/razvoj-sistema-za-upravljanje-kohezijom-politikom-ipa-2015/>

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.euproplus.org.rs/onama/o-programu>

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.

2.1.2 PROGRAMMES OF THE UNION

Union programmes¹⁴⁸ 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)¹⁴⁹ 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 2027.¹⁵⁰ 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

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

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

150 <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/716373/potpisan-sporazum-o-ucescu-srbije-u-programu-digitalna-evropa.php>

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 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 policy¹⁵¹ (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 22¹⁵². 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 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

¹⁵¹ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/koheziona-politika/>

¹⁵² 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).

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 funds¹⁵³.

2.1.3.1 NEW COHESION POLICY 2021-2027 (ERDF, ESF, CF)

New cohesion policy of the EU¹⁵⁴ 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 invested in priority projects that the cities themselves define based on the local strategy of sustainable urban development.

Asset priorities

¹⁵³ 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.

¹⁵⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/2021-2027_en

- 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 Fund¹⁵⁵ (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

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ostali-fondovi/>

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 Fund¹⁵⁶ (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 2014.¹⁵⁷ 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 application¹⁵⁸.

2.1.3.4 REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME

Regional housing programme¹⁵⁹ 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

156 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ostali-fondovi/>

157 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).

158 http://www.obnova.gov.rs/uploads/useruploads/Documents/Solidarnost_na_delu_preview.pdf

159 <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/fondovi-evropske-unije/ostali-fondovi/>

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 solutions¹⁶⁰.

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 Agenda¹⁶¹, 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 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

¹⁶⁰ www.regionalhousingprogramme.com; www.kirs.gov.rs

¹⁶¹ <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/>

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 CEB¹⁶²

Council of Europe Development Bank¹⁶³ (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 Bank¹⁶⁴ (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 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

¹⁶² <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/fondovi/bilateralni-i-multilateralni-partneri/po-medjunarodnim-organizacijama/>

¹⁶³ www.coebank.org

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.eib.org/>

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 Development¹⁶⁵ (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.
- 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

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.ebrd.com/home>

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 projects¹⁶⁶ 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 Serbia¹⁶⁷

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 development¹⁶⁸. 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 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

¹⁶⁶ https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-summary?lang=en&countrycode_exact=YF

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/serbia/brief/green-livable-resilient-cities-in-serbia-programme>

¹⁶⁸ 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).

- 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 bank¹⁶⁹. 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 Challenges¹⁷⁰ (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.

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

¹⁶⁹ <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/kfw/>

¹⁷⁰ <https://rcf-wb6.org/sta-mi-radimo/?lang=me>

- 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 Serbia¹⁷¹ 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;
- 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

¹⁷¹ <https://serbia.un.org/sr/about/about-the-un>

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 Serbia¹⁷² 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 projects¹⁷³ from the following areas:

- sustainable improvement of the economy and employment;
- good governance;
- environment.

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

¹⁷² <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/giz/>

¹⁷³ 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)

French Development Agency¹⁷⁴ 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 holder¹⁷⁵ 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, 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

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

175 <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/projekti/razvoj-lokalne-infrastrukture-i-institucionalnog-jachanja-lokalnih-samouprava-republike>

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 RS¹⁷⁶ 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 Serbia¹⁷⁷ 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 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

¹⁷⁶ <https://www.jica.go.jp/balkan/english/office/index.html>

¹⁷⁷ <http://serbien.um.dk/en/danish-cooperation/danish-cooperation-with-serbia/>

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 organisations¹⁷⁸. 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 Serbia¹⁷⁹ 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 2021-2027¹⁸⁰. 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 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.

¹⁷⁸ <https://www.norway.no/en/serbia>

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.netherlandsworldwide.nl/countries/serbia>

¹⁸⁰ <http://www.swedenabroad.com/sr-Latn-RS/Embassies/Belgrad/>

- 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.¹⁸¹ 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 accession¹⁸². 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.
- 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.

¹⁸¹ <http://rs.chineseembassy.org/srp/>

¹⁸² <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/>

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 Albania¹⁸³. 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.¹⁸⁴ 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:

- 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 Serbia¹⁸⁵ implemented through small development projects,

183 <http://www.mfa.gr/serbia/sr/the-embassy/>

184 www.itecgoi.in

185 www.belgrad.msz.gov.pl

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.

Republic of Slovenia

Technical assistance activities¹⁸⁶ 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

¹⁸⁶ www.belgrade.embassy.si

governments of the two countries on technical and financial cooperation¹⁸⁷ 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 Agency¹⁸⁸ (GIZ). In the past period, German development aid funds in the 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

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.tika.gov.tr/en>

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.belgrad.diplo.de/> and www.nemackasaradnja.rs

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 administration¹⁸⁹ 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 economy¹⁹⁰ 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*).

Slovak Republic

Cooperation between the Slovak Republic and RS¹⁹¹ 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 Kingdom¹⁹², representatives

189 <https://www.usaid.gov/serbia/democracy-human-rights-and-governance>

190 <https://www.usaid.gov/serbia/economic-growth-and-trade>

191 <http://www.mzv.sk/belehrad>

192 <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-belgrade.sr>

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 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 Intercooperation¹⁹³ 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.¹⁹⁴ 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 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

193 <https://www.helvetas.org/en/eastern-europe/what-we-do/where-we-work/partner-countries/serbia>

194 <https://n1info.rs/biznis/istrazivanje-gradjani-nedovoljno-ukljuceni-u-odluke-o-trosenju-novca-na-lokalu/>

ANNEX 5 - DECISIONS ON ADOPTION OF THE TERRITORIAL STRATEGY



СКУПШТИНА ГРАДА ПИРОТА

Република Србија
Град Пирот
Скупштина Града
I бр.06/42-4/24
03.04.2024. год.
П и р о т

На основу члана 32. став 1. тачка 6., а у вези са чланом 66. Закона о локалној самоуправи („Сл. Гласник РС“, број 129/2007, 83/2014 – др. закон, 101/2016 – др. закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021 – др. закон) и члана 25. став 1. тачка 6. Статута Града Пирота („Службени лист града Ниша“, бр. 20/19), Стратегије одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030.године („Службени гласник Републике Србије“ бр.47/2019), Меморандума о разумевању између града Пирота и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге (број П 031-71/22 од 20.05.2022. године) Скупштина града Пирота, на седници одржаној дана 03.04.2024. године, донела је

ОДЛУКУ

о усвајању Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка за период 2023-2034.године

I

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка за период 2023-2034. године.

II

Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка и Извештај о спроведеној јавној расправи су саставни делови ове Одлуке.

III

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

ПРЕДСЕДНИЦА СКУПШТИНЕ
ГРАДА ПИРОТА

Драгана Тончић

На основу члана 32. став 1. тачка 6., а у вези са чланом 66. Закона о локалној самоуправи („Сл. Гласник РС“, број 129/2007, 83/2014 – др. закон, 101/2016 – др. закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021 – др. закон), члана 40. став 1. тачка 4. Статута општине Бабушница („Скупштински преглед општине Бабушница“, бр. 4/19, 7/19 и 5/23), Стратегије одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године („Службени гласник Републике Србије“ бр.47/2019) и Меморандума о разумевању између града Пирота и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге (број П 031-71/22 од 20.05.2022. године) Скупштина општине Бабушница, на седници одржаној 11.06.2024. године, донела је

ОДЛУКУ

о усвајању Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка за период 2023-2034.године

I

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка за период 2023-2034. године.

II

Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка је саставни део ове Одлуке.

III

Ова Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у „Скупштинском прегледу општине Бабушница“.



СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ БАБУШНИЦА

Број: 020-78/2024-2

У Бабушници, 11.06.2024. године

ПРЕДСЕДНИК СКУПШТИНЕ ОПШТИНЕ БАБУШНИЦЕ,

мр Милан Стаменковић



У складу са чланом 12. Закона о планском систему ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 30/2018), чланом 13. став 6. и чланом 21. Закона о локалној самоуправи ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 129/2007, 83/2014 – др. закон, 101/2016 – др. закон, 47/2018 и 111/2021 – др. закон), чланом 20. Закона о територијалној организацији Републике Србије ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018 и 9/2020 - др. закон), чланом 33. и 39. Закона о регионалном развоју ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 51/2009, 30/2010 и 85/2015 – др. закон), Правилником о смерницама добре праксе за остваривање учешћа јавности у припреми нацрта закона и других прописа и аката ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 51/2019), Стратегијом одрживог урбаног развоја Републике Србије до 2030. године ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 47/2019), чланом 40. став 1. тачка 6) Статута општине Димитровград („Сл. лист општине Димитровград“, бр. 6/2019) и Меморандумом о разумевању, закљученог између носиоца израде Стратегије, града Пирота и Канцеларије Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге, дана 20.05.2022. године, којим се дефинише техничка подршка Програма Европске уније за локални развој ЕУ ПРО Плус у изради и спровођењу Стратегије урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград, Скупштина општине Димитровград, на седници одржаној дана 21.06.2024. године, донела је:

О Д Л У К У **О УСВАЈАЊУ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ГРАДА ПИРОТА И** **ОПШТИНА БАБУШНИЦА, ДИМИТРОВГРАД И БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА**

Члан 1.

УСВАЈА СЕ Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка.

Члан 2.

Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка саставни је део ове Одлуке.

Члан 3.

Ову Одлуку и Стратегију развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка, објавити у "Службеном листу општине Димитровград".

Члан 4.

Одлука ступа на снагу осмог дана од дана објављивања у "Службеном листу општине Димитровград".

О б р а з л о ж е њ е

Правни основ за доношење Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка дефинисан је одредбама чланова 10. – 13. Закона о планском систему Републике Србије ("Сл. гласник РС", бр. 30/18) којима су одређени појам и врсте докумената јавних политика као и појам, врсте и садржина стратегије као планског документа.

Чланом 40. став 4. Статута општине Димитровград ("Службени лист општине Димитровград", бр. 6/19), предвиђена је надлежност Скупштине општине Димитровград да доноси план развоја Општине, планске документе јавних политика, средњорочне планове и друге планске документе, у складу са законом.

У оквиру Јавног позива за подношење предлога пројекта за израду територијалних стратегија, број позива: CFP EUPROPLUS 01-2021, који је расписала Канцеларија Уједињених нација за пројектне услуге у оквиру програма ЕУ Про Плус 13.10.2021. године, Граду Пироту (као носиоцу пројекта) и партнерским општинама (Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград) одобрена је техничка подршка Граду Пироту за израду Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград.

У складу са потписаним Меморандумом о разумевању и сарадњи између UNOPS-а и Града Пирота о пружању техничке подршке кроз израду Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Бела Паланка и Димитровград, Општина Димитровград у сарадњи са ЕУ ПРО Плус Програмом иницирала је израду, као и коначно усвајање Стратегије, подржала процес израде Стратегије у свим његовим фазама и формирала интердисциплинарану радну групу за израду Стратегије. У сарадњи са партнерским локалним самоуправама Општина Димитровград се обавезала да успостави управљачки механизам за територију обухваћену Стратегијом и да ради на успостављању укупног институционалног оквира за подршку имплементације Стратегије. Техничка подршка УНОПС-а се састојала од пружања подршке раду интердисциплинарне радне групе кроз фасилитацију и организацију догађаја, обука, радионица за израду Стратегије, затим пружању техничке подршке у припреми нацрта Стратегије, као и пратећих материјала и подршка у припреми коначне верзије документа и пружању техничке подршке за успостављање управљачког механизма за територију обухваћену Стратегијом, као и пружање подршке имплементацији Стратегије.

Дана 29.06.2022. године Скупштина општине Димитровград донела је Одлуку о приступању изради Стратегије развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка која је објављена у „Службеном листу општине Димитровград“, бр. 18/22.

Стратегија доприноси 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. Стратегијом се тежи да се постигне територијална кохезија кроз уравнотежен економски регионални развој и унапређење људског капитала.

За реализацију Стратегије нису потребна додатна финансијска средства из буџета Општине Димитровград.

На основу свега напред изнетог, Скупштина општине је донела Одлуку као у диспозитиву.

Број: 06-167/2024-17/6-5

У Димитровграду, 21.06.2024. године

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ ДИМИТРОВГРАД



ПРЕДСЕДНИК
Зоран Ђуров

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), Споразума о сарадњи током израде и спровођења стратегије развоја урбаног подручја Града Пирота и општина Димитровград, Бабушница и Бела Паланка број 401-120/2022-IV/04 од 19/09/2022.године, и члана 40 Статута општине Бела Паланка („Службени лист града Ниша“, број 14/19), Скупштина општине Бела Паланка на седници одржаној 26/06/2024. године доноси

ОДЛУКУ

О УСВАЈАЊУ СТРАТЕГИЈЕ РАЗВОЈА УРБАНОГ ПОДРУЧЈА ПИРОТА И ОПШТИНА БАБУШНИЦА, ДИМИТРОВГРАД И БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА ЗА ПЕРИОД 2024-2034.ГОДИНЕ

Члан 1.

Усваја се Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка за период 2024-2034 године.

Члан 2.

Стратегија развоја урбаног подручја града Пирота и општина Бабушница, Димитровград и Бела Паланка за период 2024-2034 године и Извештај о спроведеној јавној расправи сусаставни део ове Одлуке.

Члан 3.

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


Број: 011-40/2024-1

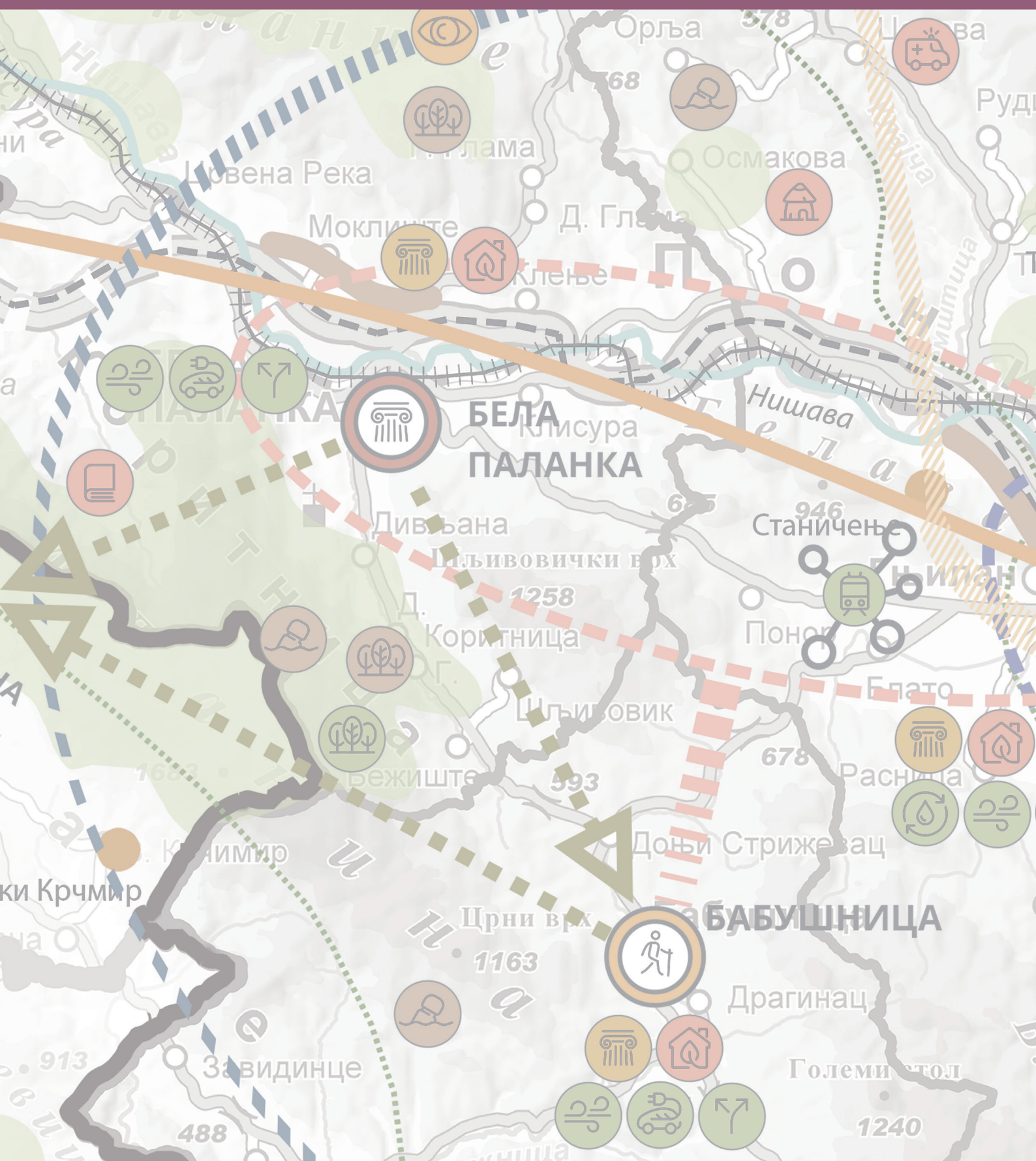
У Белој Паланци, дана 27.06 2024.године

СКУПШТИНА ОПШТИНЕ БЕЛА ПАЛАНКА

ПРЕДСЕДНИК

Александар Пејчић





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