



Public Call for Proposals for Fostering Social Cohesion in Multi-Ethnic Municipalities

1. Background

The European Union Support to Municipal Development – EU PRO Programme¹ will contribute to a more balanced socio-economic development of Serbia, by enhancing competitiveness and social cohesion of 99 municipalities, in two regions of Serbia: Šumadija and Western Serbia and South and Eastern Serbia.² The European Union (EU) has allocated 25 million Euros for the Programme that will be implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) during 36 months.

There are three results that the Programme will achieve:

- Result 1: Improved technological structure Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and their ability to export
- Result 2: Improved conditions for business operations through more efficient administrative service provision, better land management and specific infrastructure investments
- Result 3: Better social cohesion and attractive living environment through improvement of small scale public infrastructure and social relations.

The direct beneficiaries of the EU PRO are local administration structures, local SMEs, civil society organisations (CSOs) and business support organisations (BSOs). The final beneficiaries are the inhabitants of 99 municipalities.

The EU PRO Programme is based on the National Priorities for International Assistance in the Republic of Serbia 2014-2017, with projections until 2020 (NAD)³, significant for Serbia's EU accession process and socio-economic development. Its activities will be undertaken in partnership with the Government

¹The Programme is based on Serbia Local Development Action Document within the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) 2016 <http://europa.rs/eu-assistance-to-serbia/ipa/ipa-2016/?lang=en>

²Forty-five municipalities are from the third and the fourth category of development, 44 are from the first and the second. The two regions, Šumadija and Western Serbia and South and Eastern Serbia, are less developed comparing to Belgrade and Vojvodina.

³ Available at: [http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/74/NAD%202014%20with%20projections%20until%202020%20\(english\).pdf](http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/74/NAD%202014%20with%20projections%20until%202020%20(english).pdf)

of Serbia, while respecting the national strategies, laws and relevant development documents, in order to ensure national ownership and help develop national capacities.

2. Justification of the Call

The position of national minorities represents an important area in the Republic of Serbia's pre-accession negotiation with the European Union. By adopting the Action Plan for the Negotiation Chapter 23, Serbia has set strategic direction for improving institutional and legislative framework in the area of basic human and minority rights and freedoms and bring it in line with European standards. This commitment is reflected in adoption and implementation of the Action Plan for Exercise of the Rights of National Minorities⁴, the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma⁵ and in other measures taken for the improvement of the position of the minorities.

The European Commission's latest enlargement report⁶ has acknowledged Serbia's progress in this area, underlining that "the legal framework for respect of and protection of minorities and cultural rights is in place and generally upheld", while "interethnic relations continue to be good and stable". However, the document highlights need for overcoming persisting regional differences, where "implementation of policies and legislation needs to be improved to address existing discrepancies" having in mind the fact that some regions inhabited predominantly by national minorities remain among the most underdeveloped, including those covered by the EU PRO Programme. For example, in South East Serbia 71% residents of Bosilegrad and 53% of Dimitrovgrad are Bulgarian, 89% of Preševo and 55% of Bujanovac are populated by Albanians⁷, in South West Serbia 90% of Tutin, and 74% Sjenica inhabitants are Bosniaks⁸ whereby these municipalities are categorised among the least developed in Serbia, belonging to the fourth category⁹.

Furthermore, there is a need for aligning of local policies with the national regulatory framework and addressing inconsistency in implementation of the existing policies. The Councils for Inter-Ethnic Relations play very important role in this process, but recent assessment¹⁰ conducted by the Protector of the Citizens showed that insufficient number of the councils is in fact functional, while significant number of the LSGs did not establish local councils where such requirement is stipulated by the law. Additionally, Roma minority still experiences multiple discrimination and remain on the margins of the society. It is essential for the improvement of their position to foster implementation of the National Strategy at a local level.

⁴ <http://www.srbija.gov.rs/vesti/vest.php?id=259965>

⁵ <http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sh/press/vesti/vlada-usvojila-strategiju-za-socijalno-ukljucivanje-roma-i-romkinja-u-republici-srbiji>

⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20180417-serbia-report.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.kt.gov.rs/en/news/news-archive/press-release-estimated-population-in-the-municipalities-of-presevo-bujanovac-and-medvedja/>

⁸ <http://popis2011.stat.rs/>

⁹ <http://privreda.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Uredba-O-Utvrdjivanju-Jedinstvene-Liste-Razvijenosti-Regiona-I-JLS-Za-2014..pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebni-izvestaji/5371-p-s-b-n-izv-sh-s-v-i-z-dun-ci-n-ln-dn-s>

Considering national priorities and local needs, the Programme will support initiatives to establish sustainable cohesive and inclusive mechanisms for ensuring more equal access to education, employment, social protection and other fundamental rights for the citizens living in the multi-ethnic municipalities, especially for the most marginalised and vulnerable groups, including asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants currently residing in Serbia.¹¹ It will also encourage models that are underpinning cooperation between communities of different ethnic and cultural background, striving to foster social cohesion in local communities and contribute to their socio-economic development.

The strategic documents also recognise need for inclusion of all stakeholders in the process of better integration of national minorities, and civil society organisations play important role considering that they are manifesting interest and needs of citizens. Therefore, they are irreplaceable partners in catalysing social change through identification of specific needs of local communities and creation of appropriate platforms for their addressing. Keeping this in mind, the Programme will promote initiatives brought by the civic sector, but which will also ensure participation of all relevant local actors.

3. Objectives of the Call

Overall objective of the Call is contribution to enhancement of social cohesion and inclusion in multi-ethnic municipalities in the regions of Šumadija, Western Serbia and South and Eastern Serbia.

Specific objectives are contribution to implementation of the rights of national minorities, improvement of inter-ethnic understanding and relations, better integration of national minorities and addressing of specific needs of marginalised and vulnerable¹² groups in multi-ethnic communities.

4. Scope

The Call for Proposals (the CfP) includes two LOTs:

- **LOT1** is focused on support of the projects that are implemented in **minimum two multi-ethnic municipalities**, as a results of **inter-municipal cooperation**. These projects will require mandatory partnership established between two civil society organisations that are coming

¹¹ Since 2015, the Republic of Serbia has faced an unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants, most from them fleeing from Syria and other war-torn countries. After the closure of the Western Balkans migration route, the number of migrants and refugees staying in the country went down to around 3,300 in July 2018 with around 90% accommodated in government centres, with the possibility to apply for asylum (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/europe-and-central-asia/serbia_en)

¹² Including asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants currently residing in Serbia

from both targeted municipalities. If the applicant is LSG entity, then it must establish formal partnership with the other LSG and two local CSOs seated in targeted municipalities.

- **LOT2** is directed toward the projects that are implemented in **one multi-ethnic municipality** and doesn't foresee mandatory partnership, when the applicant is CSO. If a LSG is an applicant, then its project must be result of a partnership with a local CSO.

The eligible activities under this Call encompass:

- 1. Enhancing social inclusion and cohesion in multi-ethnic municipalities by addressing specific needs of excluded groups and improving their socio-economic position, while upholding the principle of multi-ethnicity in identification of the beneficiaries:**
 - i. Economic empowerment of the marginalised and vulnerable populations through business start-ups, rural development, education and other interventions that create jobs and income generating opportunities
 - ii. Improving access to social protection, health, education and/or other fundamental rights for the members of excluded groups¹³
- 2. Advancement of inter-ethnic relations and community-based dialogue contributing to overall community¹⁴ cohesion, particularly among the youth population:**
 - i. Enhance cooperation and building trust between communities of different ethnic background through educational, economic, cultural, sports and other interventions
 - ii. Establish new and/or strengthen existing mechanisms for prevention and protection against discrimination, particularly against national minorities
- 3. Aligning of local policies for improvement of the position of national minorities with the national regulatory framework and addressing inconsistency in their implementation:**
 - i. Development of local policies for exercising rights of national minorities and making them effective in local communities through implementation of appropriate measures
 - ii. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of public institutions in addressing minority rights issues
- 4. Fostering inter-municipal cooperation between multi-ethnic communities, especially between regions that are populated by different ethnic minority groups:**

¹³ Including asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants currently residing in Serbia

¹⁴ Including communities affected by the migrant and refugee crisis

- i. Networking and realisation of joint activities between local organisations/institutions that are working on enhancing of inter-ethnic collaboration and/or dealing with minorities issues
- ii. Share of experience, promotion and implementation of examples of good practices in relation to the improvement of inter-ethnic cooperation and/or exercise of rights of national minorities

5. Location

The project must refer exclusively to one or more of 32 municipalities/cities within the Programme's AoR, which have multi-ethnic composition according to the Law on Local Self-Government¹⁵ and relevant census data. Following municipalities/cities meet this criteria: **Babušnica, Bela Palanka, Bojnik, Boljevac, Bor, Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vladičin Han, Vranje, Golubac, Dimitrovgrad, Doljevac, Žagubica, Žitorađa, Koceljeva, Kučevo, Lajkovac, Lebane, Leskovac, Majdanpek, Medveđa, Merošina, Negotin, Novi Pazar, Petrovac na Mlavi, Požarevac, Preševo, Priboj, Prijepolje, Sjenica, Surdulica and Tutin.**

If required, certain activities (for example, study tours, etc.) can be organised outside of the targeted territory, but members of the target group from the targeted municipalities must primary benefit of organising such activities.

6. Financial Allocation and Cost Share Contribution

The indicative overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is **400,000 Euros**. The EU PRO Programme reserves the right not to award all available funds.

6.1. Minimum and Maximum Grant Award

	Minimum	Maximum
LOT1	15,000 Euros	30,000 Euros
LOT2	10,000 Euros	15,000 Euros

¹⁵The municipalities where one national minority accounts for more than 5% of the total population or all national minorities collectively account for more than 10% of the municipality's population according to the last census are considered to be nationally mixed

6.2. Co-funding

The financial contribution of at least 15% of total project eligible costs is required to be secured when the lead applicant is LSG entity. Only actual funds transferred to a separate account, once the contract is being signed and immediately before EU PRO transfers its funds to the same account, are considered as “financial contribution”.

7. Terms and Conditions for the Applicants

7.1. Eligible applicants

Eligible to apply are:

7.1.1 Civil society organisations

An applicant (lead, as well as co-applicant with leading CSO or LSG) must be an **organisation which is established, registered and operates in accordance with the Law on Associations** (hereinafter referred to as civil society organisation) and **complies with all of the following criteria** in order to be eligible:

- **Registered and seated in one of 32 municipalities/cities** within the Programme’s AoR that are considered to be nationally mixed in line with the Law on Local Self-Government as stipulated under Section 5 of the CfP
- **Registered at least one year** before submission of the project proposal
- **Registered to perform activities** for which the objectives of the proposed project will be realised and organisation’s mission is in line with the objectives of the Call
- Proven track record of **successful realisation of at least two projects** that are dealing with the issues that are subject of the CfP and of proposed action
- It is **not in the process of** enforced collection of claim, bankruptcy, closure or liquidation; has clean record in fulfilment of contractual obligations undertaken on the basis of previous grant agreements and no cases of funds misusing, illegal activities or criminal charges/convictions
- It **has expertise, organisational and financial capacities** to successfully carry on implementation of proposed action
- The organisation is **not using funds on the same grounds** from other institutions or donors during the period of implementation of activities

- There are **no convictions nor criminal proceedings** against the person(s) authorised to represent the organisation¹⁶

7.1.2 Local self-governments

The 32 LSGs and their institutions within the Programme's AoR, which have multi-ethnic composition according to the Law on Local Self-Government and relevant census data as stipulated under Section 5 of this Call, are eligible to apply. The LSGs must meet following criteria, as well:

- Must apply **in partnership with the CSO** which complies with the eligibility criteria defined under 7.1.1 Section
- Must secure **financial contribution** as stipulated under 6.2. Section

These requirements applies to LOT1 and LOT2.

7.2. Partnership requirements for LOT1

- If a civil society organisation (CSO) is applying for an inter-municipal project (LOT1), it is mandatory to establish formal partnership with at least one other CSO, where both CSOs must comply with the requirements outlined under 7.1.1. Section, and they must be seated in both targeted municipalities
- If a LSG entity is a lead applicant for LOT1, it must establish formal partnership with the other targeted LSG and at least two CSOs, where both CSOs must comply with the requirements outlined under 7.1.1. Section, and they must be seated in both targeted municipalities
- Partnership must be formalised through a legally binding agreement (signed and stamped by authorised persons from all sides), clearly indicating roles and responsibilities of all parties in the implementation process. The partnership agreement **MUST** be submitted with the application.
- The lead partner is submitting the application and enters into contractual arrangements with EU PRO

7.3. Other important requirements and considerations

- One applicant can submit more than one project proposal as a lead organisation, but only one application can be approved for funding
- The applicant can be a partner in another project proposal and it can simultaneously receive grant as a lead applicant and be co-applicant in another granted project

¹⁶The applicant is submitting signed statement form (Annex F) to confirm compliance with the criteria, but if the project proposal is approved for funding, EU PRO will request submission of appropriate certificate issued by the competent authority before contract signing

- If the lead applicant is CSO, partnership with the LSG institution(s) is strongly encouraged, but it is not mandatory and additional points will be provided for established partnership, both for LOT1 and LOT2
- The organisations that are proposing provision of social protection services must possess and submit appropriate licence in line with the law requirements
- The applicants that are proposing construction works must possess and submit relevant technical documentation and permits that will prove feasibility of the action within duration of the project

8. Terms and Conditions for Project Proposal and Budget Preparing

8.1. Project proposal guidelines

The nominated projects must:

- Address one or more issues defined under the scope of the Call and produce specific outcomes distinctively contributing to the objectives of the Call
- Address local/regional socio-economic development priorities, as stipulated in relevant local/regional strategies and plans, contributing to their implementation
- Propose sustainable actions, meaning that the project will ensure benefits on a long-term basis for the beneficiaries
- Demonstrated ability to include men and women equally in project planning, as appropriate to the scope of the Call and to the project
- Demonstrate ability to underpin Good Governance principles¹⁷ in the programming of the activities, as appropriate to the content of the project proposal
- Demonstrate awareness of possible risks in project delivery, as well as strategies to mitigate them

8.2. Duration of the project

The **maximum** duration of the project is **twelve (12) months**, while **minimum** duration is **eight (8) months** from the signing of the Grant Agreement.

8.3. Ineligible activities and costs

- In general, activities that are not contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Call
- On-going activities funded from the other sources

¹⁷ Transparency, accountability, rule of law, participation, efficiency and effectiveness and equity and non-discrimination

- Activities that would be more appropriately funded from other sources
- Interventions concerning solely or mainly training and/or research activities
- Interventions concerning only development of strategies and/or plans
- Intervention that relate solely or mainly to capital investments, such as renovation/construction of facilities
- Extensive procurement of the equipment; procurement of the equipment that is not grounded in the objectives of the Call and without specific outcome
- Extensive costs for promotional activities
- Human resources costs for the project team cannot exceed 30% of the total project costs
- Auditing costs
- Unforeseen expenses

8.4. Other important considerations

- All expenses (except costs of fuel, land-line/mobile telephone, electricity and public heating – if applicable) planned to be funded from EUPRO's contribution presented in the budget must NOT include VAT
- All planned project costs must be presented in dinars
- In-kind contribution cannot be displayed in the project budget
- Any major inconsistency in the application (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the application form, etc.) may lead to the rejection of the application

9. Visibility

The Applicants must take all necessary steps to promote the European Union (EU) financial contribution to the Action. These activities include but are not limited to clear visual identification of the action at site, partaking in various media activities and events including activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the overall EU support to Serbia. These include but are not limited to on-camera and other media interviews, participation in high level events and relevant on-line and in person surveys on Programme related topics. In these applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing¹⁸.

10. Instructions for the Applications Submission

The Application is consisted of:

¹⁸ See the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/17974>

- **Six Application Documents** that are **fully filled in** (list provided under Section 13. *Annexes - Documents to be completed*) and submitted in editable format (i.e. excel, word) and in PDF (signed, stamped and scanned)
- **Supporting documentation** (registration documents, bills, etc.) as listed in the Annex G *List of mandatory supporting documentation*
- **Partnership Agreement** between applicant and co-applicant(s) for LOT 1, for LOT 2 when the applicant is a LSG entity, and, **if applicable**, for lead CSO and partner LSG institution. *Note: Partnership Agreement is not provided as template and it needs to be created by the partners*

NOTE: ALL supporting documents must be submitted together with the Application Documents.

The Application must be submitted in the following manner:

- Applications must be submitted **exclusively to the e-mail** rsoc.applications@unops.org
- Applications must have **reference number of the Call** (CFP 09-2018)
- Exclusively via e-mail in PDF format** (signed, stamped and scanned) **and in original editable format** (i.e. Excel, Word). Signed, stamped and scanned versions must contain exactly the same application documents as the electronic versions in original editable format. In case of discrepancies, signed, stamped and scanned version will prevail.
- The applicant must submit application forms **in English language**
- The total **e-mail size of the application should not exceed 17 MB**, as that is the maximum allowed e-mail message size by the UNOPS server. **If the application is larger than 17 MB, documents should be sent in series of e-mails**, with each e-mail not exceeding 17 MB size thresholds. Each part of the application should be numbered in the e-mail subject field
- Applications must be submitted to the e-mail address below: rsoc.applications@unops.org. Automatic notification of the delivery would follow upon successful submission of email application. One notification is sent to each sender (for the first sent e-mail).
- The deadline for the submission of applications is **05 December 2018**. Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected
- Applications must be received **before midnight-local time** on the closing date of the Call for Proposal. Applicants are kindly advised to submit the application timely, as late deliveries due to slow internet connection or other network/hardware/software related problems may lead to disqualification of the application. Only bids received by UNOPS mail server before the deadline would be accepted.

- Requests for clarification should be submitted to the e-mail address below: rsoc.cfp.clarifications@unops.org by 23 November 2018 the latest
- Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post or by hand delivery) or delivered to other e-mails different from the stated in CfP will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.
- UNOPS reserves the right to request the original versions of submitted documents from applicants where/when original documentation is required by the Evaluation Team.

11. Evaluation and Contract Awarding Procedure

The quality of the applications¹⁹, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants, will be assessed by the Evaluation Commission by using the evaluation criteria as presented in the Evaluation Grid table below. Evaluation of applications may include on-site visits to the premises of applicant, meetings with responsible persons and key operational and business personnel and visits to any part of the premises/sites for the purposes related to the application. The Evaluation Commission is submitting the evaluation results to the Programme’s Steering Committee, which provides final approval of the results.

Evaluation Grid

Scoring: The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Section	Maximum Score
1. Operational capacity	10
1.1 Does the applicant have sufficient experience in project management and operational capacity (including staff, equipment, previously implemented donor funded projects, and ability to deliver the action)?	5

¹⁹The applications that didn't pass administrative check and are not in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Call will not be considered for the evaluation

1.2 Does the applicant have sufficient technical expertise (relevant education and experience of the project team with the issues to be addressed; number of previously implemented similar projects)?	5
2. Relevance	25
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and one or more of the priorities of the call for proposals?	5
2.2. Does the proposal contribute to implementation of local and/or national policies ? What is the level of contribution to implementation of these policies?	5
2.3 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target municipality and/or region? Is the proposal complementary with governmental and other relevant initiatives and avoid duplication?	5
2.4 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (target groups and final beneficiaries ²⁰)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5 x 2
3. Methodology	20
3.1 Is the action plan clear, appropriate and feasible? Is the timeline realistic? Have risks been identified and assessed, and mitigation measures planned? Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system?	5 x 2
3.2 Does the proposal identifies appropriate objectively verifiable indicators for the expected results of the action? Does the proposal includes strong rationale and evidence, especially regarding expected outcomes and impact?	5
3.3 Does the proposal demonstrate ability to address good governance and gender equality aspects of the action?	5
4. Outcomes and Impact	20
4.1 Does the proposed action produce specific outcomes distinctively contributing to the objectives of the Call?	5
4.2 Is the action likely to generate tangible and positive benefits for its target groups ? Will it produce immediate benefits for them?	5

²⁰"Target groups" are the groups/entities who will be directly positively affected by the project at the project purpose level, and "final beneficiaries" are those who will benefit from the project in the long term at the level of the society or sector at large

4.3 Is the proposal likely to create long term and broader benefits for its target groups and final beneficiaries?	5
4.4 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5. Sustainability	10
5.1 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - Institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local “ownership” of the results of the action?</i>) - At policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action – e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc.</i>)? 	5 x 2
6. Budget and cost-effectiveness	10
6.1 is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
6.2 Is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the action?	5
7. Partnership	5
7.1 Does the proposal foresee substantial and formalised partnership with relevant local institution/organisation? Does the partnership clearly define roles and responsibilities of all parties and are they appropriate for the proposed action?	5
Maximum total score	100

Only the applications that have been given a total score of a minimum 65 points will be considered for the award.

Following the decision to award a grant, the candidate will be offered a contract. By signing the Grant Agreement (Annex H), the applicants agree to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract, including applying of the Procurement Manual when the grantee is a CSO and which will be provided by the Programme to the awarded applicants. The Programme would predominantly use grant methodology for implementation of the approved projects.

12. Indicative Timetable

Stages	Date and time period
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Publishing of the Call for Proposals	22 October 2018
Informative sessions about the Call	30 October - 08 November 2018
Deadline for Submission of Applications	05 December 2018
Administrative check of Applications	December 2018
Evaluation of the Project Proposals	January – February 2019
Approval of the evaluation results by the Programme Steering Committee	March – April 2019
Notification on the Evaluation Results	April 2019
Signing of Agreement	May 2019

13. Annexes

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- Annex A: Grant Application Form (Word format)
- Annex B: Project Budget, including sources of funding and narrative budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical Framework (Excel format)
- Annex D: CSO's Factsheet (Word format)
- Annex E: Application Checklist (Word format)
- Annex F: Statement of the Applicant on the truthfulness of the data and fulfilment of the requirements of the Call (Word format)

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

- Annex G: The list of mandatory support documentations for submission
- Annex H: UNOPS Grant Support Agreement Template (not to be filled)