**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Engagement and Monitoring of Assistants to Teachers of Serbian as Non-Mother Tongue in Selected Elementary Schools in Bujanovac and Preševo**

1. **Background**

The European Union Support to Municipal Development – EU PRO Programme[[1]](#footnote-1) 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]](#footnote-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]](#footnote-3), significant for Serbia’s EU accession process and socio-economic development. Its activities will be undertaken in partnership with the Government of Serbia, while respecting the national strategies, laws and relevant development documents, in order to ensure national ownership and help develop national capacities.

1. **Justification of the Intervention**

A language fulfils important function in a society and it is a significant factor that influence social cohesion of states and nations, especially in the societies where a language of common communication has to bridge multilingualism. Bearing this in mind, the issue of knowledge of Serbian is relevant for all national minorities living in the Republic of Serbia, particularly for those who are composing ethnically homogeneous environments.

In past decade, different sources (institutions, domestic and international organisations, representatives of the local communities, etc.) raised concerns about inadequate knowledge of Serbian language among members of the Albanian national minority living in Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveđa, especially among children and youth, which affects negatively their later opportunities for education, employment and overall social integration.

In 2014, the Coordination Body for Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa (CB), with the support from the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the United Kingdom Embassy, has produced the “Study on the Possibilities for Improvement of Teaching/Learning of Serbian as Non-Mother Tongue in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa”[[4]](#footnote-4) to get clear picture on this problem and to identify possible solutions for this burning issue. The Study confirmed a presence of the problem, establishing that only 5% of Albanian schoolchildren from 16 elementary schools surveyed in the three municipalities poses functional ability to communicate in Serbian. The pupils, in most cases, do not have a functional knowledge of Serbian to the extent that they cannot communicate in that language, either in writing or orally, nor are they able to understand someone talking to them.

The comprehensive research showed that the lack of qualified staff is one of the key causes, meaning that most teachers are not qualified or trained to teach Serbian as a non-mother tongue. One of the key recommendations for overcoming this situation foresees engagement of the teaching assistants, primarily those whose mother tongue is Serbian and who are qualified to provide such assistance, in order to enhance competences of the teachers, alongside with organisation of the seminars for the teachers on the methodology of teaching Serbian as a non-mother tongue.

EU PRO’s intervention is designed to address recommendations of the Study pertaining to enhancement of the competences of the teachers of the Serbian as non-mother tongue through engagement of the assistants. This intervention will lean on the previous actions and results achieved concerning this matter and it should ensure continuity of the process. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) and the CB, with the support of international partners, above all, the Delegation of the European Union through the preceding programme European PROGRES, enabled for six teaching assistants to be engaged in four primary schools[[5]](#footnote-5) in Preševo and Bujanovac during two consecutive school years (from 2015 until 2017), while in the second semester of 2017/2018 school year, four teaching assistants were engaged with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. These projects provided direct support to over 1,000 Albanian school children and the testing conducted in the course of the projects, showed significant improvement of their functional knowledge of Serbian language.

Additionally, this interventions will also contribute to the wider governmental efforts aiming to improve a position of national minorities within the framework of the Chapter 23 of Serbia’s EU accession process. Opening of this Chapter and adoption of accompanying plans for achieving rights of national minorities define education as important field for realisation of these rights and identify enhancement of teachers’ competences as part of the process.

1. **Objectives of the Intervention**

Overall objective is to contribute to better social integration of Albanian national minority, in a manner that they become fully involved in social, political and economic life in the Republic of Serbia, resulting in enhanced social cohesion in Bujanovac and Preševo.

Specific objectives include improving of teaching skills and learning methods of teachers of Serbian as non-mother tongue in four elementary schools and improvement of functional knowledge of Serbian language among Albanian children attending these schools.

1. **Activities**

Scope of intervention will include, but it is not necessarily limited to the following activities:

Inception period:

* Ensure understanding of the EU PRO Programme’s Description of Action and the context of the intervention, particularly, become familiar with the previously implemented actions which included engagement of the assistants to the teachers of the Serbian as non-mother tongue
* Based on below defined criteria identify and engage six qualified assistants to provide support to the teachers of Serbian as non-mother tongue (SNMT) in four schools in Bujanovac and Preševo. Assistants’ selection and appointment will be approved by the Selection Committee composed of the delegated representatives of the MoESTD, the CB, the EU PRO, experts for teaching of Serbian as non-mother tongue from the Faculty of Philology and contracted implementer
* In accordance with the Labour Law, prepare and issue contracts to six selected teaching assistants (TAs), making sure that their role and responsibilities in the project are clearly defined and explained

Implementation:

* In coordination with the MoESTD, the CB and EU PRO, liaise with four schools covered by the intervention and ensure that that the teaching assistants’ commence of engagement runs smoothly and in accordance with the plan, meaning that they are assigned to the appropriate teachers of Serbian as non-mother tongue and will have full class load (18 school classes per week). This will include organisation of at least one joint meeting between TAs, teachers and directors before start of assistants’ engagement.
* Supervise and manage the TAs for the whole period of their assignment and provide them support when required. This includes being in charge for managing and paying the TAs’ remuneration.
* Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of TAs’ work and submit to the EU PRO relevant documents to support these activities
* Maintain regular communication with the schools (directors and teachers of SNMT) in the course of the project, ensuring that its implementation goes in accordance with the work plan
* Conduct monthly field visits to the assistants and per requirement and organise meetings with the TAs and school representatives in order to monitor and evaluate progress of the project
* Take participation in the Working Group for monitoring of the measures for improving teaching and learning Serbian as non-mother tongue that will be established by the MoESTD before start of the project and present progress of the project at the regular meetings of the Group. The meetings will be held at least four time in the course of the project.
* Enable participation of the TAs in at least one of the trainings for the teachers of Serbian as non-mother tongue that will be realised by the MoESTD during project implementation, if the MoESTD organises the trainings
* Engage two experts for teaching of Serbian as non-mother tongue from the Faculty of Philology who will be in charge for preparation and realisation of baseline testing of pupils’ knowledge at the beginning of the project, as per coordination with the MoESTD, the CB and the EU PRO
* Prepare milestone reports on project progress, which will also include inception and final reports, and submit them to the EU PRO
* Any aberration from the work plan must be raised as an issue and mitigation measures must be proposed and executed
* Ensure compliance with the visibility requirements of the Programme, and especially its donor, the European Union, throughout implementation of the project, whereby the guidelines will be provided by the EU PRO

1. **Outputs**

Following outputs must be delivered during the project implementation and elaborated within the proposed plan for realisation of this intervention:

* A detailed action plan for the project implementation is produced and delivered, covering all envisaged activities, their products and outlining their dynamic
* Produced and executed detailed plan for monitoring and evaluation of the project implementation, which will include dynamic of the field visits and of the meetings with the TAs and school representatives, etc.
* Produced and executed TAs’ selection process plan and accompanying material (TA’s terms of reference , criteria for selection of the TAs, CVs of the candidates, documents confirming their qualifications, etc.) submitted to the EU PRO to support the process
* The Selection Committee composed of the delegated representatives of the MoESTD, the CB, the EU PRO, experts for teaching of Serbian as non-mother tongue from the Faculty of Philology and contracted implementer established and they selected six teaching assistants in accordance with the qualifications requirements
* Prepared and signed contracts with six qualified TAs in accordance with the Labour Law, who will be responsible for assisting to the teachers in the delivery of the classes of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in four selected schools throughout the whole 2018/2019 school year
* At least one joint meeting with the schools’ directors, teachers and TAs organised before assistants’ start of the engagement in the schools, that will result in preparation and delivery of the plan for assigning assistants’ to appropriate teachers and fulfilment of full class load
* Executed supervision, management and monitoring of the TAs work and relevant material to corroborate these activities is produced and submitted to EU PRO regularly, including meeting minutes, field visits reports, the TAs’ monthly reports, their payslips, etc.
* Signed contracts with two experts for teaching of Serbian as non-mother tongue engaged at the beginning of the project and they delivered baseline testing of pupils’ knowledge of Serbian language and submitted report with the analysis of the results of the testing
* All activities are delivered through consultation and cooperation with the delegated representatives of the MoESTD, the CB and the EU PRO
* Attended regular meetings of the Working Group and presented progress of the project to its members
* Prepared outline of possible project’s risks and proposed mitigation measures. The risk management plan executed and updated during implementation, if necessary.
* EU PRO’s visibility requirements fully met in line with its guidelines
* Milestone reports on project progress prepared, including inception report at the beginning of the project and final report no later than 30 days after the end of the project, and submitted to EU PRO , in line with the contract prescription

1. **Important Considerations**

* Six teaching assistants will be engaged for ten months in the course of 2018/2019 school year (from September 2018 until end of June 2019). The TAs will support teachers of Serbian as non-mother tongue in preparation and realisation of up to 18 school classes per week. They will plan lessons and teaching materials jointly with the teachers and support them in introducing and applying of new teaching methodologies, as well as support pupils in enhancing their knowledge of Serbian language, etc. The TAs’ monthly remuneration should be calculated taking into account following elements: gross of average monthly salary of the elementary school teachers in the first quarter of 2018 year, plus the allowance for living expenses outside the place of residence (35% of the gross of the monthly salary, including taxes as required by the Labour Law). The costs of their engagement must be outlined separately from other costs of the project.

Qualifications of the Assistants:

* University degree in Serbian language and literature is a requirement
* Experience in teaching Serbian as non-mother tongue is an advantage
* Experience in teaching Serbian as a foreign language would be an asset
* Good communication and presentation skills
* Ability to live and work in multicultural environment
* Demonstrate respect for cultural diversity
* Completed training related to teaching Serbian as Non-Mother tongue and/or as foreign language would be considered as an asset
* Completed training related to inter-cultural cooperation would be considered as an asset
* Basic understanding of Albanian language would be an asset
* Engagement of two experts for teaching Serbian as non-mother tongue from the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade is planned for the beginning of the project. It will be short-term and limited to delivery of following tasks:
* Participation in selection process of TAs as the members of the Selection Committee
* Preparation and execution of baseline testing (preparation and development of tests, testing conducting, analysis of the results, preparation of the report on the results, the accommodation and stay of experts in the field, etc.)

Experts’ fee should be calculated taking into account the scope of their work and taxes per requirement of the Labour Law. The costs of their engagement must be outlined separately.

Baseline testing will be first out of three testing planned during the project implementation, where the costs of the remaining two examinations will be covered by the Coordination Body.

* The contracting implementer must list members of their project team and elaborate their roles and responsibilities , as well as scope of engagement
* The contracting implementer must outline its overheads separately and in detail

1. **Timeframe**

The contract with the selected implementer will last from August 2018 until end of June 2019. Engagement of the TAs will start in September 2018 and last until end of June 2019. The selection process for TAs should be delivered before start of the school year. Final report will be submitted not later than 30 days after the end of the project.

1. **Monitoring and Reporting**

The contracted implementer will remain in close contact with appropriate EU PRO personnel and will discuss and agree upon all relevant matters during the implementation of the activities.

The electronic copies of all reports or any other materials pertained to the project will be made available to EU PRO/UNOPS in English. In particular, but not limited to:

* The detailed work plan, including monitoring and evaluation plan and risk management plan
* The TAs’ selection process plan and final list of selected candidate, with accompanying materials and documents
* Copies of the signed contracts with the TAs and experts
* Milestone reports on project progress , TAs’ reports and any other reports produced within the project

Methodology, data collected, analyses, reports and other products of the project, will remain the intellectual property of UNOPS.

1. **Other Considerations**

Working language when contacting EU PRO is both English and Serbian. However, all official correspondence should be in English only. Working language of the contracted implementer with the beneficiaries will be Serbian.

1. The Programmes 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> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Forty-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. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Available at: <http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/74/NAD%202014-2017%20with%20projections%20until%202020%20(english).pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.kt.gov.rs/images/Studija%20o%20mogucnostima%20unapredenja%20nastave_engleska_elektron.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The schools “Muharem Kadriu” in Veliki Trnovac, “Naim Frasheri” in Bujanovac, “Ibrahim Keljmendi” in Preševo and “Seljami Halaci” in Oraovica, Preševo [↑](#footnote-ref-5)