



Competition for the Best Media Reports on European Integration in the South East and South West Serbia

1. Background

European PROGRES is a multi-donor Programme, financed by the European Union (EU), the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Serbia, designed to support sustainable development in the South East and South West Serbia. The Programme has been conceptualised jointly with the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (SEIO), whose responsibility is to monitor implementation and provide assistance and facilitation. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has been granted with an initial budget of 17.46 million Euros and has the overall responsibility for the Programme implementation.

Through a multi-sector approach this Programme will contribute to sustainable development of underdeveloped areas and creation of more favourable environment for infrastructure and business growth by strengthening local governance, improving vertical coordination, planning and management capacities, improving business environment and development, as well as enhancing implementation of social inclusion and employment policies.

The Programme works towards achieving four main results, while good governance principles are interwoven as a cross-cutting aspect of the entire intervention:

1. Strengthened local governance, planning and management capacities through introduction of new, or improvement/elimination of existing procedures and processes in line with the principles of good governance
2. Increased competitiveness of local economy through improved business environment and management/organisational capacities of small and medium enterprises/agricultural cooperatives
3. Improved access to employment, offering equal opportunities to both men and women, and social inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups through development and implementation of local policies resulting in reduced migration from South East and South West Serbia
4. Effects of Serbia's European accession communicated to general public.

The final beneficiaries, but also the key stakeholders and financial contributors of this Programme are 34 local governments (LSGs) from the third and the fourth group of development level, which have the responsibility of taking ownership of activities implemented in their territory:

- Novi Pazar, Raška and Tutin in the Raška District
- Nova Varoš, Priboj, Prijepolje, Sjenica in the Zlatibor District
- Ivanjica in the Moravica District
- Prokuplje, Blace, Žitораđa, Kuršumlija in the Toplica District
- Leskovac, Bojnik, Vlasotince, Lebane, Medveđa and Crna Trava in the Jablanica District

- Vranje, Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vladičin Han, Preševo, Surdulica and Trgovište in the Pčinja District
- Brus in the Rasina District
- Aleksinac, Gadžin Han, Doljevac, Merošina and Svrljig in the Nišava District
- Babušnica, Bela Palanka in the Pirot District
- Knjaževac in the Zaječar District.

Other beneficiaries include institutions founded by LSGs and public utility companies, civil society organisations (CSO) and media in the participating LSGs. It is the inhabitants of the South East and South West Serbia who will feel the biggest benefits of the Programme.

Communications activities are an essential element of the overall efforts to achieve European PROGRES main objective to contribute to sustainable development of underdeveloped areas and creation of more favourable environment for infrastructure and business growth. The European PROGRES Communications Strategy identifies the media as the key multipliers of information, and hence instrumental for development message to be accurately distributed to target audiences.

2. Introduction

As the main source of information, media remains crucial in the process of the European integration and its benefits for the citizens of Serbia. This is especially true for the local media, which are able to provide targeted, accurate and timely information on locally relevant aspects of integration, subsequently contesting common myths and prejudices about the process. However, ordinary citizens have limited or no access to clear information to determine how the EU accession will impact their everyday lives. Furthermore, their perceptions are strongly influenced by political issues and hence it is important to de-link as much as possible, developmental aspects of accession and membership, from politics.

Nevertheless, the public opinion survey from October 2015 showed that over 45 percent of citizens felt they were not well informed about the EU. In-depth analysis of the survey results show limited understanding of the key aspects of the European integrations process – a third of population fears that joining the EU would increase poverty and unemployment rate, contribute to the loss of national identity and sovereignty (18%) and result in exploitation of natural resources (16%) while 15 percent resent the EU due to pressures and conditionality to recognise Kosovo* as an independent state.¹

According to the surveys almost a third of the citizens (29%) think that it is the media's responsibility to provide information about impact of Serbia's accession to the EU. The citizens would like to be informed about - youth policy, social policy, the EU economy in general, education policy, consumer protection, funds for financial support to the EU candidate countries and environment and agriculture.² Format showing experiences of ordinary people in the accession process and short news forms on relevant topics were deemed

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

¹ DEU [Attitudes of Serbian citizens towards EU integration \(pdf\)](#)

² DEU [Attitudes of Serbian citizens towards EU integration \(pdf\)](#)

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most popular, followed by expert opinion, specialised info-educational TV programmes and reports on daily political developments.³

In order to promote professional and high quality media reporting on the above mentioned issues and to increase general public awareness of the EU integration and positive changes it can make in the everyday life of the population in 34 Programme local self-governments, European PROGRES in partnership with the Delegation of the EU to Serbia (DEU) and the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (SEIO) is launching this Media Competition.

3. Competition Themes

European PROGRES, the EU Delegation and the European Integration Office invite all eligible media outlets and journalists working for them⁴ to submit entries for the best print, broadcast (TV & Radio) and online, web-based media coverage of the EU integration process and its impact on the everyday life of the local population, as well as on the EU support to development of Programme municipalities.

The eligible media reports should focus on relevant topics of public interest linked to the European Integration and general European support provided locally to improve socio-economic status of the community - support to: economic growth, good governance, improved quality of life in the spheres of education, health, culture, youth, environment protection, inclusion of the vulnerable and fostering gender equality.

Only the reports in print, broadcast (TV & Radio), and online coverage that have been produced and published/broadcast for the first time by the media outlet applying for the Competition in the period 15 December 2016 – 1 March 2017 may be submitted.

The print, broadcast (TV & Radio) and online, web-based media reports will be awarded in eight categories:

1. Best TV broadcast (TV stations, news agencies)
2. Best radio broadcast (Radio stations)
3. Best printed report (dailies, periodicals)
4. Best report by independent online media editions (editor-formatted websites or web portals)
5. Best series of media reports (including all types of media outlets – TV, Radio, print media, online media editions)
6. Best report on the entrepreneurship – Youth, Women, Small and Medium Enterprises, Agricultural Groups and Partnerships between Municipalities and Civil Society Organisations
7. Best report on the EU and the Swiss Government jointly funded project implemented in European PROGRES Area of Responsibility (AoR), namely 34 Programme municipalities
8. Best report on potential projects within European PROGRES AoR that would contribute to better quality of life for the local community.

³ Ibid [Attitudes of Serbian citizens towards EU integration \(pdf\)](#)

⁴ Defined in the section **Competition Eligibility**

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4. Competition Awards

Both media outlets and individual journalists working for these outlets who are authors of the best reports on the European integration in the South East and South West of Serbia are eligible for awards.

The European Union and the Swiss Government through European PROGRES will present an award to the best media report from each of the eight categories. The winning media outlets will be awarded with the new audio visual and audio equipment, and computer equipment with or without accompanying software, in the amount of up to 5,000 Euros.⁵

As a part of this proposal, the applying media outlets should submit the documentation listed in the Annex 1 in order to determine the equipment and its specifications and thus ensure the winners receive the prize that will contribute to the improvement of their technical capacities.

The awards for individual journalists will be provided by the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia including a two-day working visit to Belgrade based relevant national state institutions involved in the EU integration process, while the Delegation of the European Union will organise for the awarded journalists a study visit to Brussels, where they will meet European officials, tour the European institutions and cultural sites in Brussels, as well as meet their colleagues reporting from Brussels.

5. Competition Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply for the competition the media outlets need to fulfil the following criteria:

- Be local or regional dailies or periodicals, news agency services, radio programme, television programme, independent online media editions (editor-formatted websites or web portals) based in one of the European PROGRES Programme municipalities
- Be regional media outlets that are based outside the European PROGRES AoR but covering and reporting on the developments in at least five Programme LSGs in the previous two years (proven by at least five media-press reports)
- Be registered within the Media Register, Serbian Business Registers Agency⁶ as an integrated, centralised, electronic database on media
- Electronic media should have licence for the provision of audio and audio-visual media services issued by the Regulatory Body for the Electronic Media⁷
- Only the work in print, broadcast (TV & Radio), and online coverage that has been produced and published/broadcast by the media outlet applying for the Competition in the period 15 December 2016 – 1 March 2017 may be submitted
- One applicant can be awarded for one media report.

⁵ The equipment that will be donated will be procured by UNOPS/European PROGRES in accordance with organisational regulations

⁶ Pursuant to the [Law on Public Information and Media \(pdf\)](#), ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No 83/2014)

⁷ Pursuant to the [Law on Electronic Media \(pdf\)](#), ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No 83/2014 an 6/2016)

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6. Selection Criteria

The European PROGRES selection committee will be composed of the representatives of the Delegation of the European Union to Serbia, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the European Integration Office of the Government of Serbia (SEIO) and European PROGRES.

The Prize winners will be chosen on the basis of the relevance to the Competition themes and requirements:

- The media reports should address and contribute to raising awareness of the topics related to the EU integration process and the EU support to development 34 European PROGRES municipalities, implemented through the Programme.
- The media reports should go beyond mere reporting on events, be in the form of investigative reportage, and clearly underline and explain the benefits brought to the local population in the spheres of education, health, culture, youth, environment protection, inclusion of the vulnerable, gender equality, etc. as well as overall economic and social development that contributes to improved quality of life.
- The language used should not be burdened with administrative and bureaucratic phrases and clichés, but comprehensible thus helping the ordinary citizens understand the process and the opportunities it provides.
- The media reports should meet the journalistic criteria including research, writing skills, incisive impact, public benefit, ethics, originality, innovation and creative flair, but also if the material is regarded as the initiator of a positive change.
- Regarding electronic media:
 - i. Audio and Video Entries are to be original work by eligible media outlet and its journalist
 - ii. Where required and applicable, entries must be accompanied with evidence of copyright permission for such things as network news footage, licensed or unlicensed music, etc. - items submitted without this will not be judged.
 - iii. Productions must contain primarily originally produced material (as opposed to stock footage or segments produced by anyone other than the eligible entrant(s), etc.).

The applications will be disqualified if they were not submitted according to the requirements and criteria of this competition, or are incomplete, or are submitted after the deadline. This decision will be final.

European PROGRES/UNOPS⁸ reserves the right to utilise all materials submitted for presentation and media use and to reproduce it for the purposes of further promoting the Award, as well as UNOPS and the Programme itself.

⁸ The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has the overall responsibility for the Programme implementation Programme is financed by the European Union, the Governments of Switzerland and Serbia and is implemented by UNOPS in cooperation with 34 local self-governments in the South East and South West Serbia

7. Application Procedure

- I. The media material with clearly identified author/journalist should be sent in accordance with the following procedures:

- **For Print Media Reports:**

Print media outlets must supply original sheet of the work in three copies (where possible). Where a sheet of the original work is not available, a high quality copy will be accepted.

- **For Radio Broadcast:**

Radio stations must supply report in three copies on a CD in mp3 format. The entry should be on a clearly marked CD, bearing the name, address and telephone number of the entrant.

- **For Television Broadcast:**

TV stations must supply report in three copies on a DVD or send the material online. The entry should be on a clearly marked DVD, bearing the name, address and telephone number of the entrant.

- **For On-line Media Reports:**

Online media outlets must send CD with an article/report in HTML format or an Internet address where the material (unaltered) intended for the competition can be viewed.

The applicants must complete the application form with their rights and obligations in the Competition, available at: <http://www.europeanprogres.org/pozivi/sr/>

- II. As per the Awards envisaged by this Competition, the applying media outlets should submit the documentation listed in the [Annex 1](#) in a separate envelope.

Where and How to Send the Application

The applicant must submit the application form with the media material submitted for the Competition and all required supporting documents in one original and one copy.

The applicant must fill the requested form in English language appropriately. Insufficient information or failure to provide inputs for requested questions in the forms will render the application ineligible for further processing and the application will be dismissed.

Entries may be sent by post or handed over personally in European PROGRES' office:

UNOPS/European PROGRES

Naznaka „Prijava za najbolji medijski prilog” Skerlićeva 4, 11000 Beograd

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Deadline for Submission of the Application

The deadline for submission of applications is 1 March 2017.

European PROGRES will organise info sessions about the call, while the precise place, date and time will be announced on the Programme website.

Questions related to the competition themes, requirements, and application procedures may be sent by e-mail not later than 20 February 2017 to and rspc.ep.comms@unops.org, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals. The contracting authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date.

Replies will be given not later than seven days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on European PROGRES webpage: <http://www.europeanprogres.org/pozivi/sr/>. It is therefore highly recommended to regularly consult the above mentioned website in order to be informed of the questions and provided answers.

8. Supporting Documents

The list of the supporting documents that should be provided in Serbian:

- Photocopy of the registration documents with the Agency for Business Registration (APR) owner
- Photocopy of the registration documents with the Media Register the Agency for Business Registration (APR)
- Photocopy of the licence for the provision of audio and audio-visual media services issued by the Regulatory Body for the Electronic Media
- Free form statement about company/media publisher liquidity, i.e. the company bank accounts have not been in the blockade in last three years)
- The certificates of the tax administration and local government that the applicant has paid all tax obligations until the date of publication of the call (the certificates should not be older than six months from the date of proposal) - original or certified copy of the certificate. As the alternative to these two certificates, the media publishers can submit proof that they are registered in the Registry of Suppliers within APR.
- Regional media outlets that are based outside the European PROGRES AoR but covering and reporting on the developments in at least five Programme LSGs in the previous two years should provide evidence of at least five media/press reports on the CD (for TV stations , radio stations and print media) or web links for the independent online media editions

9. Annex 1

The applying media outlets will have to provide the precise information on the equipment requested as the awards that will contribute to the improvement of their technical capacities in the value of up to 5,000 Euros.

Therefore, the entrants are asked to provide:

- At least one pro-forma invoice for provision of requested equipment
- Detailed technical specification of requested equipment⁹

⁹ While striving to meet the requested requirements, European PROGRES and UNOPS reserve the right to modify specifications in order to ensure the efficient procurement processes and economy of scale

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