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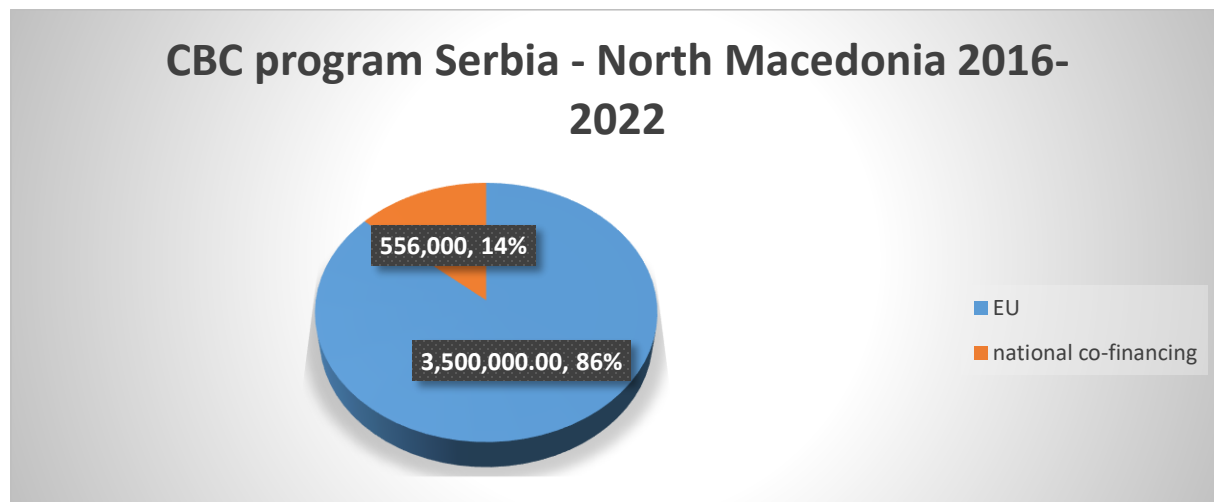
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Dear CBC Friends,

As we approach the end of the year the signs of the **festive season** pop up everywhere. We thought it was high time for all of us to join the mood and see what **new opportunities** are created for our **old friends** in the Programme area inhabited by 723,000 people in 30 municipalities [Programme area](#).

This is our **first newsletter** and we want to acknowledge your contribution and interest in the **CBC Serbia-North Macedonia (RS-MK)** [homepage](#) by **sharing all the good news** with you.

The event that marked 2022 was the **launch of the Second Call** for Proposals on March 10th. We hope there will be some more good news already in December, so- stay tuned [FB page](#)



We have also presented the **seven projects contracted from the 1st Call** [MEI Kick off You tube](#) with [project database](#) that contribute to strengthening of good neighbourly relations, to creation of partnerships and the development of a vibrant Programme area by connecting its people and resources in a sustainable way.

Fit For the Needs – Raise opportunities for underdeveloped areas

Fit for the Needs targeted several municipalities in order to establish a model of support to measures for improving the employability of the rural population. The analysis elaborated in Lebane, Vlasotince, Surdulica, Kumanovo and Staro Nagoricane showed that producers in this cross-border area are mainly engaged in fruit, vegetable and honey production and processing.

“Since as many as 52% of producers declared that they most needed support for the purchase of machinery, the focus of the incentive program must be on investments in production and processing capacities. In order for producers from these regions to be able to enter foreign markets, they need to harmonize their products with the regulations of the countries in which they want to do business, which is why it is important to help with certification and standardization of production. Finally, in order to make



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their products a recognizable brand, it is necessary to provide them with the support of experienced experts”- said the executive director of NALED, Violeta Jovanović.

More about Fit for needs [Fit for the needs](#)

The key recommendations are aimed at the development of these sectors including the traditional handicrafts through the work of experts, embedding these incentives in the municipal development plans and ensuring the continuous cooperation of the stakeholders in this area.

Less Garbage, Less Risk, More Health

The project aimed at increasing capacities for managing manmade risks and hazards related to solid waste disposal and protection of the environment. The very tangible **results** are that a number of illegal dumps sites were cleaned, two solid waste collection trucks purchased as well as ten bigger waste collection containers and over 1700 small garbage bins that were distributed to the households in the region.



The project was implemented by two partners: Municipality of Lipkovo, MK and PUC "Moravica" Preševo, RS, with total value of 253.762,08 EUR EUR (85% EU contribution).

The partners used this opportunity to establish preconditions for their further service provision to around 30,000 citizens in these two municipalities through elaboration of GIS Platform and Local Environmental Action Plans.



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“These municipalities are underdeveloped, and there is a lack of funds for almost every sector. Therefore, the EU support is highly important on resolving our problems, sometimes even the most basic ones,” says the project manager Aleksandar Gumberovski.

More about this project: [Less Garbage, Less Risk, More Health](#)

Connecting Pearls

The project mobilized cultural and natural resources for joint development of sustainable tourism products and destinations by upgrading the touristic offer of the natural “pearls” in the region- Vučjanka Canyon and Stanecki waterfalls at Kozya River. 9.5 km of new walking paths, areas for rest and play were presented to over 1,000 people from the area during the Green weekends organized at these sites.



Connecting Pearls – city of Leskovac
1. Municipality of Kriva Palanka
2. Centre for the development of Jablanica and Pčinja districts

<https://www.gradleskovac.org/index.php/vesti/zeleni-dani-u-kanjon-u-reke-vucjanke-16-8-2022>
<https://connectingpearls.com/en/the-municipality-of-kriva-palanka/>

The project was implemented by the City of Leskovac, Centre for the development of Jablanica and Pčinja districts RS and Municipality of Kriva Palanka, MK with total value of 236.444,50 (73,51% EU contribution).

Discover more touristic attractions: [Connecting pearls](#)



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Centres for innovative development of social entrepreneurship - contemporary perspective of social integration of young people

The overall objective of the project is to support young people to develop their own potentials and to start social entrepreneurship through additional education and opportunities to test their ideas in practice. Best practice stories at: [Centres for innovative development of social entrepreneurship](#)

The project was implemented by Economic and trade school Vranje, Centre for Regional Cooperation and Sustainable Development Eco Balkan, Ljig, RS and High school "Pero Nakov", Kumanovo, MK with total value of 188,713EUR (85% EU contribution).

"For example, we had joint workshop and competition with students from other schools where we had to develop ideas on start-up businesses and produce a business proposal and a short film about our ideas. My colleague and I had an idea about sweets shop, we had to do research by visiting sweet shops in the area in order to understand how their business works and get best examples and put them in our proposal. This helped us understand much better how the business development ideas work," says Marina Đorić, one of the students who participated in the project.

Improvement and protection of human health and environment by reducing pollution risks through efficient waste management

The project aims at strengthening of communal utilities' capacities for regular waste management and risks management, as well as reduction of litter sites and rising awareness among citizens about the risks of pollution to human health. Decrease of dump sites in the project area of 50%, equipping the "green oasis" and mini parks, training of employees, students and citizens for better understanding the risks and solutions in the ecology area. Almost 1,000 waste containers and bins were purchased and put into use during the project implementation.

The project was implemented by Public Utility Komrad Vranje, RS and MK public utility companies as partners: Communal Hygiene Skopje, Public Utilities Petrovec and Zelenikovo, with total value of 265.679 EUR (85% EU contribution).

"We hope that we have managed to raise the level of our services as well as the awareness of the utmost importance of the ecological issues. We have laid bases through documents elaborated in the projects to apply for further financing of these important activities. We also feel far more confident in it, after the participation in the EU funded CBC project!" - said Nela Cvetković, the executive director of the PUC Komrad, Vranje.

The partnership itself and the benefit for the region were recognized also through the high interest and engagement of stakeholders in the final conferences of the project held in Skopje and Vranje:

[Improvement and protection](#)



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SEEDS of Inclusiveness – Social Enterprises for Economic Development and Social Inclusion

The aim of the project is to contribute to the development of an inclusive society through the support to social entrepreneurs in empowering disadvantaged citizens, establishment of cross-sectoral and cross-border networks between social enterprises, local businesses and governments and promotion of social entrepreneurship as a means of social cohesion.

The project is implemented by TRAG Foundation, Optimistic Association, RS and ARNO Association, MK, with total value of 187.066,28 EUR (EU financing 84,99%).

“As this is the area where the development is as slow as important it is, every step forward in the right direction can be considered to be a new milestone for strengthening social enterprises and encouraging their cross-border cooperation”- Biljana Dakić Đorđević, TRAG executive manager

The activities started by creation of a methodology for mapping the ecosystems of the social economy, conducting mapping and creating a capacity building methodology. The wider public was informed about the project through a call for applications for participation in the “Academy of social economy”

[SEEDS of Inclusiveness](#)

Borderless photo hunting – a common nature-friendly sustainable tourism product in the cross-border region of Serbia and North Macedonia



The projects aims at building capacities in the CB region to launch and manage an alternative nature-friendly tourism product – photo hunting tourism. The equipment for hunt stand points (animal feeders, mineral sites) was installed and staff trained to use the new equipment. Tourist info materials were prepared and published, web site elaborated and the partners started the promotional campaign using traditional and modern channels.

The project is implemented by Hunting Association of Serbia, Hunting Association “Golub”RS and Hunting Association “Slavisko Pole”Rankovce and Hunting Association of Macedonia, MK, with total value of 165.606 EUR (85% EU contribution).

The first organized tour in Bujanovac attracted lots of interest of hunters but even more of nature lovers and groups of people and organizations that emerged during the



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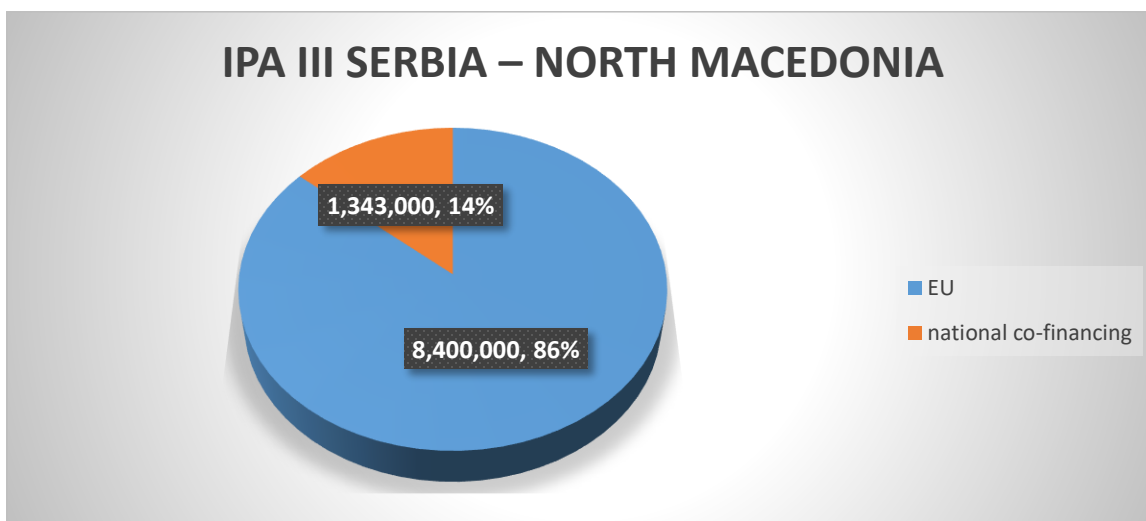


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pandemic, who treasure and support opportunities to socialize outdoors. Follow the news for such opportunities at: [borderless hunting](#)

So, let us finish our very first Newsletter with more good news.

At the IPA Committee held on 3 June 2022, the European Commission adopted the new Cross-Border Cooperation Programme IPA III SERBIA – NORTH MACEDONIA for the period 2021-2027. The total value of this program is 9,734,117.65 million Euros, of which the EU finances 8,400,000 euros. The Programme’s overall objective/impact is to promote good neighbourly relations, foster the Union integration and contribute to social, economic and territorial development of the Programme cross-border area by improving social and cultural inclusion and health and by developing sustainable tourism.



In Serbia the Programme covers the following area: Jablanica district: City of Leskovac and municipalities of Bojnik, Lebane, Medveđa, Vlasotince and Crna Trava. Pčinja district: City of Vranje with two city municipalities: Vranje and Vranjska Banja, and municipalities of Vladičin Han, Surdulica, Bosilegrad, Trgovište, Bujanovac and Preševo.

In North Macedonia: North – East Region: municipalities of Kratovo, Lipkovo, Kumanovo, Staro Nagoričane, Rankovce and Kriva Palanka Skopje Region: municipalities of Aračinovo, Čučer Sandevo, Ilinden, Petrovec, Sopište, Studeničani, Zelenikovo, and municipalities Butel, Gjorče Petrov, Šuto Orizari, and Gazi Baba of the City of Skopje.

There have been numerous opportunities where we presented the CBC Programme Serbia- North Macedonia: Info days and sessions, 2 Kick- off conferences for the occasion of launching 2 Calls for proposals, Partner search forum, trainings in project cycle management and trainings for grant beneficiaries, to name some of them. We shall talk more about “facts and figures” soon on [MEI](#).

We have become **good friends**, and it seems that more **new opportunities** are waiting for us! To receive our Newsletter regularly, subscribe to it on our web-site [homepage](#)!

We wish you a successful end of the year and look forward to a more vivid communication in the New Year. The contacts of the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Programme are [contact](#).