

Newsletter

PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

In the field of energy, local self-governments have to plan the needs and methods for energy supply, adopt programmes and plans for construction, maintenance and use of energy facilities, as well as programme for efficient energy use on the local level.

Energy efficiency and local development

Ana Pavičić-Kaselj

Saving energy by improving energy efficiency costs much less than the production, transfer and distribution of energy from the power plant, and it also results in multiple economic and environmental benefits. By introducing energy efficient technologies in households, energy consumption is reduced, and electricity bills accordingly, but what is much more important is the fact that saved money remains with the local population who can perform works to improve energy efficiency. Energy efficiency thus has multiple effects, reduces air pollution and GHG emission, improves secured supply and reduces dependency on energy import, while at the same time it creates new jobs through local employment, which undoubtedly promotes local development.

Within their jurisdiction, local authorities perform activities that directly ensure the interests of their citizens. In the field of energy, they have to plan the needs and methods for energy supply, adopt programmes and plans for construction, maintenance and use of energy facilities, as well as programme for efficient energy use on the local level. Promotion of green, compact and energy efficient local self-governments is a foundation for sustainable development. Energy and industry policies are based on strategic and integrated approaches that include support and participation of local self-governments, stakeholders and citizens. Local self-government can promote energy efficiency in the territory they cover by developing and adopting Sustainable Energy Action Plans - SEAP)¹.

¹ By signing the Covenant of Mayors, mayors are obligated to develop a SEAP that has to be submitted to the European Commission

Even though initially planned to be used for promotion between cities through Covenants of Mayors, there are no obstacles to also replicate SEAP on the municipal level, especially having in mind that municipalities in some countries are much larger than cities in other.

Implementation of SEAP improves efficiency of public local structures and services, and supports measures for improvement of energy efficiency in housing, commercial and industrial sector. This way local self-government together with the central government and local administrations of European countries share equal responsibilities and accept obligations to fight global warming by implementing different programmes, projects and initiatives for improvement of energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources.

Partnership

The ambitious goal to reduce GHG emissions by more than 20% in relation to the reference year is only possible with active involvement and participation of local self-governments, numerous stakeholders and citizens themselves. Therefore, when developing SEAP, the following should be taken in consideration:²

within a year. Sustainable Energy Action Plan is a base document which uses collected data about the current situation and identifies precise and clear guidelines for implementation of projects and measures for energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources on the city level, and which will result in reduction of CO₂ emission by more than 20% by 2020.

² According to the information available to the author during the participation in the project CENEP <http://cenep.net/hr>

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- Strengthen institutional capacities of local administration – appointing and training responsible persons and provide starting funds for project creation;
- Ensure systematic cooperation with relevant bodies of the state administration, strategically plan the implementation of adopted policies on the national level and actively advocate for local interests on the national level;
- Be involved in the system of planning European and regional projects. Plan and prepare projects to apply for EU funds and ensure that they are harmonised with the public policies;
- Use good practice examples of other European cities and possibilities to establish cooperation and exchange of experiences (friend cities, twinning projects, etc.);
- Improve coordination on the local level between institutions in charge of energy policy issues (local development agencies, local economic development offices, local energy agencies, and civil society organisations);
- Form a working group consisting of relevant experts for energy efficiency and appoint the coordinator of the group. Through partnership and consultations, the working group shall define measures, sources of funding and timelines for implementation and the coordinator shall be responsible for implementation of measures;
- Involve citizens as equal partners in the development of SEAP. Organise public meetings, discussions and workshops and involve citizens in order to determine their needs and possibilities. Inform citizens about benefits of energy efficiency, especially possibilities to obtain financial support and about savings;
- Organise energy corners or energy counselor which citizens can address and ask about energy efficiency in households;
- Plan and allocate funds from local budgets for co-financing of energy efficiency measures in households, public structure, public lighting, industry and transportation;
- Include local contractors in the implementation of energy efficiency projects in order to promote local entrepreneurship and raise the standards of the local community.

Sustainable development of towns and municipalities

Measures for improvement of energy efficiency defined in SEAP create an obligation for local self-government, institutions and companies owned or co-owned by cities, and they are focused on the following areas:

- Reducing energy consumption in the civil engineering sector, both for public and for housing and commercial buildings;
- A quality, energy and environmentally efficient public transport in cities;
- Energy efficient and environmentally friendly public lighting;
- Urban development of cities by principles of energy and environmental sustainability;
- Continuous informative and educational activities and campaigns about ways to increase energy efficiency and reduce CO₂ emissions, with the goal to raise awareness about the necessity to save energy;
- Support to programmes and initiatives of different physical and legal entities in order to increase the use of renewable energy sources;

- Promotion of local energy production from renewable sources and cogeneration.

Examples of good practice in Croatia

The market of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in Croatia has become more dynamic in the last few years. In 2013, budget funds of more than 20 million eur are planned to support energy efficiency measures, partly from the national, and partly from local budgets. The fields targeted by supported include: civil engineering, public lighting, clean transport, industry, projects focused on renewable energy sources and projects of civil society organisations. In March and April 2013, measures of the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund approved the funds for energy investments in more than 12,000 households, for 18 projects on energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in the buildings in tourism sector and other commercial buildings, and for energy inspections in order to issue energy certificates about energy properties of public buildings. As many as 13 counties (of 21 counties in total), 20 towns and 16 municipalities provide subsidies of minimum 50% for purchasing and installing solar collectors, biomass boilers, photovoltaic systems, gas pumps and wind generators in households – family households and apartment buildings.³ Additionally, 7 towns co-finance a minimum of 50% for the installation of heat manifolds and thermostatic valves in family houses and apartment buildings.⁴

Apart from co-financing instruments, most prominent practice in the field of energy efficiency⁵ is in the City of Koprivnica that decided to build a “Green Block” with low-energy apartment buildings as an example of low-energy construction with the aim to ensure sustainable local development. In the period 2010-2012, in the “Green Block”, the first two low-energy apartment buildings were built, of the seven planned in total. The buildings belong to the highest energy grade: A+ (passive building) and as apartment buildings with 28 apartments, those are the first passive buildings in Croatia, and at the same time the first passive buildings built by the model of socially supported housing construction (POS). Selling price of 1m² net commercial area is 1,000 Euro. The Agency for Socially Supported Housing Construction acquires funds for construction of apartments according to the provisions of the Law on Socially Supported Housing Construction (Law on POS), and they implement the project in close cooperation with local architects and contractors. The City of Koprivnica gave up 100% of communal revenues, and thus helped the successful implementation of the project “Green Block”. A low-energy apartment of average size 60 m², total consumption for heating and cooling is at monthly average between 50

3 http://www.fzoeu.hr/hrv/pdf/Odluka%20UO%20IE%20u%20kucanstvima_2013.pdf

4 http://www.fzoeu.hr/hrv/pdf/Odluka%20UO_2013.pdf

5 According to the information available to the author through participation in the jury for award In Puls in the field of energy efficiency. <http://udruga-gradova.hr/Default.aspx?art=372>

and 60 Euro, whereas total expenses (including water, gas for cooking and electricity) amount to around 100 Euro per month, which fully justifies expectations about a high-quality, and at the same time economical housing.

By rationally distributing energy through systematic planning, the City of Sisak introduced a new systematic approach in solving the problems of managing energy in buildings owned by the City. Dilapidated wooden doors and windows in buildings owned by the City are replaced with high-quality aluminium doors and windows (heat transfer coefficient $U = 1.4 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$) that will save energy and improve comfort. Further more, in order to increase the energy properties of buildings and replace dilapidated and health hazardous asbestos cover plates in the primary school Galдово and kindergarten Bubamara, the project were implemented that included replacement of cover plates and heat insulation of roof with a steel pokrova i toplinske izolacije krovišta čeličnim trapezoidal plastic sheets. Also, within a heating project in the regional school Hrastelnica, a boiler room was built with capacity 50kW, operating on bio fuel, and a working system developed with remote monitoring of energy and water consumption for the overall territory of the City of Sisak. Total funds invested in energy efficiency measures in the City of Sisak in the period 2009-2012 is 1 million Euro from the local budget. After the initiation of the first projects and first positive results, the team for energy efficiency was formed from the existing structure of employees in the City of Sisak, consisting of two employees, and no additional expenses were made.

Energy Week organised by the City of Zagreb has been continuously implemented for three years in a row. The event organised in 2012 lasted for three days, gathering representatives of numerous international and national institutions, and including 38 different activities on energy and environmental protection, possibilities for management of natural resources, consequences and fight against global warming, rational use of energy, implementation of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy sources, environmentally acceptable fuels, development and application of new technologies, application to EU calls for proposals, possibilities for economic development and project funding. In cooperation with around 70 partners, an international conference was organised, as well as separate technical conferences, panels, seminars and presentations. The programme of Zagreb Energy Week involved all kindergartens (206 locations, around 7000 pre-school children), all primary schools (114 locations, around 7000 first grade students) and all secondary schools in the City of Zagreb (67 locations, around 9000 first grade students) where adequate educational materials were distributed, and the children's interest raised about energy related topics, and where educational event was organised for students about energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. Overall cost of the Zagreb Energy Week was 26,000 Euro, and it was financed from the budget of the City of Zagreb, whereas the employees of the City Of-

fice for Energy, Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development were in charge of the overall organisation.

Conclusion

By having a joint approach to solving the problem of spatial exclusion, energy poverty and better housing conditions, we reach the key elements of local development in a way that towns and municipalities become more beautiful and livelier, as well as more competitive. Construction of "green and healthy" towns and municipalities goes beyond simple reduction of CO₂ emissions. It results in a comprehensive approach to environmental protection and energy where many components of the natural ecosystem intertwine with those from the social, economic, cultural and political systems and create a single, unique system. A successful and dynamic local administration plays an important role in the benefit of not only their citizens, but surrounding settlements as well. Its influence is necessary to avoid rural depopulation and to promote a balanced territorial development. Sustainable local self-government has to have attractive open public spaces and promote sustainable, inclusive and healthy mobility, in a way that cycling and walking are attractive, and public transport favoured. Higher energy efficiency in buildings increases economic and energy vulnerability, and related innovation, technologies and services in construction and energy sectors are important drivers of local development.

However, local development also requires technological and social innovations, which have to be harmonised with the overall development of a certain area. Environmental protection cannot be separated from demographic, economic, social and cultural problems. Green and clean mobility should consider the needs of older people and families with small children, as well as conditions for development of small and medium-sized enterprises. The use of renewable energy sources, such as solar panels or biomass, has to respect architectural and cultural heritage, as well as tourism potentials of towns and municipalities. Green settlements have to be affordable in order to avoid spatial segregation. It is necessary to gradually renew in terms of energy the existing public, as well as housing and commercial buildings. ■



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Risk Analysis - Monoculture Farming

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Balance in food production versus available land resources was the key for survival of civilizations through the human existence anywhere in the world. One of the most important aspects that define all civilizations is that they all depended on food production nutrition type that is used also as the basis of society building (structure, economy religion...). In order to survive all cultures selected best crop types and best quality seeds that promise best yields to feed the society. So, we can say that monoculture (one culture) farming is not an invention of modern man since it was pursued in past as well as today. Historical revolution in agriculture production built the society and monoculture farming provided manageable economy not so much different from today.



But even observing the size of the population versus the size of the planet we could say that monoculture farming was at insignificant scale in the past and could not have an impact on environment whatsoever since just a small amount of land has been cultivated. Historians and economists will disagree. Some say that impact caused by monoculture farming in the past was even more severe since any unwanted event could not have been mitigated as today with international trade. Answer to the question why civilizations vanished in some cases could do more with the failure in sustaining food production than with anything else. There is plenty of evidence of famine and wars over scarce food resources due to the pests and parasites invasions in literally "biblical" proportions. Dinosaur disappearance might not be an exception.

So what is the proportion of monoculture farming over biodiversity today? Some studies give alarming figures that in China alone, number of crops produced in 1940 dropped from 10,000 to no more than 300 crop varieties today. More alarming is that China in agrarian technology terms is still considered as undeveloped world with traditional agriculture base.

As well as in the history, today nobody in the food production process chooses monoculture farming willingly and awareness of issues is widely spread among all interest groups. Nevertheless, because of established

momentum, because of food shortage that the world faces today, nobody has a backup plan to respond to so many "needs" and "wants". In that respect, monoculture is used both by developed and undeveloped nations in food industry today. A rational mind should investigate this interrelationship of systems before it makes any choice and opinion on the contemporary issues like aflatoxin concentration in milk, very much salience topic nowadays in Serbia or mad cow disease from recent history, E-coli outbreaks, etc.

The first wave of modern monoculture farming was introduced with industrialization and migration to urban areas. Meat and poultry diet induced high demand for animal food crops (corn and soya beans) as secondary element in food chain. In food process production, it is twice as difficult a task to produce meat, but a huge demand gives society and policymakers less choice what to do about it. Agrarian green revolution from 1940 provided the technology to cater the high demand for animal protein human base nutrition to the growing population first in developed countries and then to distribute the surpluses in developing countries. Through a simple observation of the policy action of the most developed world agro economy, we can see that in the U.S. today, less than 3% of population that are farmers feeds other 97% and plus some other world economies that cannot protect their market. That alone creates a world scale momentum in favor of quantity that monoculture provides over quality. The same economy drive is present anywhere in the world including Serbia where profits are imperative and agribusinesses have no choice but to follow the market interests and produce more with less.

Second wave of monoculture farming, far more significant and influential is introduced with the biotechnology and genetically modified crops, known also as the Gene Revolution. Regardless to the controversy on the GMO crops safety around the world (that I personally find the debate as irrational in most part), the technology itself has been built on the positive experience from the green revolution and it introduces the extreme forms of monoculture farming never seen on the face of the earth before.

Last wave, yet not fully exercised is new energy commodity crops production practice, driven on the renewable energy doctrine as positive progressive solution to feed the world energy needs. This radical proposal (I

might say decadent) to feed our cars with corn created another food scarcity thus derived monoculture farming to its extreme to insure the food security.

But all these actions would come at the cost in different forms: Environmental, health, social and in final outcome economical.

Monoculture farming is technology driven production method that uses standardized equipment, synthetic fertilizer, pesticides and perpetually drags monoculture farming as imperative without any other alternative on sight. But how can we talk about sustainability when the technology process does not involve natural cycles and uses of farm waste like manure and crops waste in the process and instead of following nature to its own cycle of life, once the assets and resources in production cycle, we created more environmental problems with it. Because of same culture farming pest control becomes more and more difficult task that have in long run only one solution:-Use more pesticides. Hybrid seeds could lose their ability to reproduce and provide farmers with fewer choices but to use what market demand and what will be the most profitable solution for them. In the foreseeable future, experts claim that this production pattern will make fields less fertile that as conclusion will cause hunger to the world. Another significant impact is underestimated by all parties involved and that is that missing biodiversity in flora would have a tremendous impact on fauna that depends on it. Other major environmental impact that should not be neglected are: erosion, algae blooms due to the waters nutrient enrichment, pest and weeds invasion and on the monoculture pesticide side effect on public health and many more.

Cost of doctrine that drive the monoculture farming practice as only alternative are high to the society in terms of the environmental impact and public health issues that we all willingly accept. Capacity to produce commodity crops in any other method is compromised as inefficient and as such, they have no place in the emerged global market economy. Those gave less choice in favor of the resilient diverse production doctrine.

Policy implications vary from the point of interest and different value setting. Agrarian production behavior today has more to say about profit end economical incentive to the farmers then about anything else. The

biggest evidence in that respect is that world food market has no boundaries to the variety and culture of item in question and that gives a political aspect of the issue a very high place. Monoculture farming is recognized as a dominant logical step toward "sustainable" economy both in developed and developing part of the world. For those nations that reached "sustainability" in food production it remains to be a dogma. Even though all stakeholders take the stand to defend biodiversity in political and economical agenda, in reality we have the most extreme status-quo that human history has ever recorded.

Under those circumstances, the last refuge to escape the worst case scenario is saving seeds. Saving biodiversity becomes an imperative and a matter of national security in many countries around the globe. N.I. Vavilov Research Institute of Plant Industry, established in 1894, is just the first of many established to collect the world seeds and fight hunger in Russia and in the world. This, as one of many facilities better-known as "doom's day vaults" are the only weapon that the world has against environmental impact caused by monoculture farming today and the only assets for the future agriculture and policymakers depend on them. Social and economical cost is most neglected of all the factors. Agriculture is not immune from the point of establishing society values and corporate behavior tends to control the food production process. In new agriculture dogma under the gene privatization and property rights legislature mostly supported by the WTO, farmers will not be able to save the seeds and repeat cycle on food production. Monoculture farming in that regard is a great tool and imperative in building monopoly on food production process that in the absence of any alternatives can lead to greater social impacts and more over it becomes a matter of national security. Food supply security in today's world determines sovereignty more than anything else in this century.

Serbia's unique social and economic settings present both opportunities and constrains for the biodiversity protection and reducing the need for monoculture farming. Seed market is open and there are little to none regulations on production of commodity crops but the development in that directions are ongoing. For the sake of argument, let's use a simple example: Last year's policy on farm subsidies as incentive per yield quantity rather than per planted plot area made some political and social turmoil in Serbia. I for myself

could argue that proposed policy is economically justifiable, efficient from the point of fair gains and reward of measurable success. Another external gain is honest reporting of the yield quantities and data would be valued in the National Statistical Office. A typical win-win scenario, but is it? By pursuing the certainty and high yield to insure the high subsidy margin, seed market would shrink to fewer alternatives that would be favorable by the government programs, banks and insurance agencies and unwillingly by farmers and consumers.

Having said this, it is reasonable to expect that considering all, monoculture farming, will definitely be intensified and enforced with more drastic measures considering gene revolution, genetically modified crops and ethanol production. It is also likely to expect the situation becoming even worse. There are a few challenges like this where policymakers must choose sides from so wanted diversity versus human lives having in mind that one billion people today do not have enough calories to survive the day. As with almost anything else, there are pros and cons and I could present solid arguments for both options. I have only the proposition based on my personal value statement:

-If by chance one person or a family spends a half of its income on food, they would benefit the monoculture farming more than others, and excess money in his pocket he might invest in education and entrepreneurship endeavors to get out from the poverty lane – main drive of monoculture farming. If they spend quarter or less of his income on food, he might pursuit alternative sources, preferable local food from farmers market.

As for the Serbian agrarian policy and national defense policy if you will, following the example of the developed world, it is imperative to the best of our ability to preserve and enrich the existing gene reservoirs in flora and fauna, to promote and support local, high valued organic food production as an alternative to the industrial food production. ■

Outdoor In - Zubin Potok Tourism Development

InTER has been awarded by the European Delegation in Kosovo with a 2-year grant to implement the project "Outdoor In - Zubin Potok Tourism Development". The project is financed within the EURED 3 grant scheme. The project aims to contribute to economic development and quality of life in Zubin Potok municipality and other municipalities in the northern Kosovo through improving conditions and creation of potentials for tourism development. The expected results of the project are to advance institutional capacity for development of tourism in Zubin Potok municipality, to improve the conditions of tourism infrastructure, to increase capacity of service providers, to initiate tourist-generating activities and to promote tourism potentials. Implementation of the project has started on 1 March 2013 and will last till 28 April 2015. ■

2013 TRAIN Alumni

InTER has been selected to participate in the 2013 TRAIN Alumni Programme, implemented by the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP). The purpose of the Programme is to provide opportunity for former TRAIN participants to produce a joint cross-country policy paper, conceived by two researchers from think tanks within in the Western Balkans (i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia). Within the Programme, InTER will together with the Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS) on the policy research that will explore the early bird experience in implementation of the customs and Integrated Border Management agreements between Kosovo and Serbia, and assess their impact on trade exchange and freedom of movement. ■



Elaboration of the Hungary-Serbia Cross-Border Co-operation Programme in harmony with the requirements of the future IPA II regulation for the 2014-2020 financial period

In consortia with HitesyBartuczHollai Euroconsulting Kft and VitalPro Kft, both from Budapest, and Razbor d.o.o. from Zagreb, InTER has been awarded by the European Commission with the contract to elaborate the Hungary-Serbia Cross-Border Co-operation Programme with respect to the requirements of the Structural Funds and future IPA II regulation for the 2014-2020 financial period. The assignment will last for 14 months, from February 2013 till the end of March 2014. ■



On-going programme evaluation of the Hungary - Serbia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013

InTER has joined a consortia lead by HitesyBartuczHollai Euroconsulting Kft from



Budapest in carrying out the on-going programme evaluation of the Hungary - Serbia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013. The purpose of this assignment is to design and implement the overall independent assessment of the Hungary - Serbia IPA Cross border Cooperation Programmes through a series of evaluation exercises. InTER will contribute to the assignment with fieldwork research and evaluation activities in eligible bordering areas of Serbia. The assignment will last 15 months, starting from April 2013. ■

Olof Palme International Centre: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Serbia Programme 2013-2014

Olof Palme International Centre from Stockholm has continued cooperation with InTER on monitoring and evaluation of the Serbia Programme 2012-2014. OPIC Programme in Serbia is implemented within 5 trade unions in Serbia that are located in Kragujevac, Novi Sad and Belgrade. Within the scheme of the extended cooperation, OPIC and InTER has signed a new Contract for the following two years that include production of 4 monitoring reports (one per every 6 months), as well as two evaluations: mid-term and a final one. Monitoring of the Programme indicators will be performed through in-depth field interviews with partner organizations and relevant national institutions, as well as through surveys and focus groups with the target groups (women and youth at the decision making positions within targeted trade unions). ■



Evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of development assistance to the Republic of Serbia per sector

In cooperation with Maxima Consulting d.o.o. from Belgrade, InTER has been assigned by the International Management Group and Serbian European Integration Office to carry out an external evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of development assistance to the Republic of Serbia per sector. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide an impartial and comprehensive assessment of the international development assistance to the Republic of Serbia for eight sector (and thematic sub-sector) specified in the Needs Assessment Document (NAD) for 2011-2013. The evaluation covered the period 2007-2011 and encompassed more than 1,400 projects (grants and concessional loans) through more than 30 development partners - EU, bilateral and multilateral donors and international financial institutions. InTER provided three experts for this assignment who were engaged in evaluation of three sectors: agriculture and rural development, competitiveness and civil society, media and culture, as well as contributed to the overall quality of the evaluation report. ■

External evaluation of the project "Support through housing solutions for vulnerable people in the South of Serbia"

InTER has been contracted by Caritas Luxembourg to carry out an external evaluation of the project "Support through housing solutions for vulnerable people in the South of Serbia". This project has been implemented within the Housing sector of the Serbia Sustainable Development Strategy in the Southern Region 2012-2014. Evaluation has been carried out in May 2013. ■



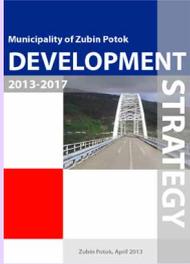
External evaluation of the pro- ject "Support to education"

InTER has been contracted by Caritas Luxembourg to carry out an external evaluation of the project "Support to education". This project has been implemented within the Education sector of the Serbia Sustainable Development Strategy in the Southern Region 2012-2014. Evaluation has been carried out in May 2013. ■



PUBLICATIONS

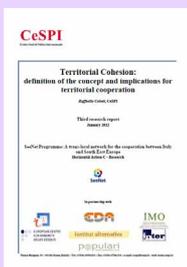
Zubin Potok Development Strategy 2013-2017



Within the scope of the EU-funded Entrepreneurship Initiative Support Project, InTER has provided technical assistance for preparing the Development Plan for Zubin Potok Municipality 2013-2017.

The publication is in Serbian and English language and it is available on InTER website.
www.lokalnirazvoj.org

SeeNet Report "Territorial Cohesion: definition of the concept and implications for territorial cooperation"



InTER has published a research: Assessment of Scope and Scale of Business Services Provision in Vojvodina in 2011 within the 3rd SeeNet Report "Territorial Cohesion: definition of the concept and implications for territorial cooperation".

The publication is in English language and it is available on InTER website..
www.lokalnirazvoj.org

3rd Southeast Europe

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