



EDITORIAL

ON THE WAY TO A NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR SERBIA

Dear readers,

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce to you the first newsletter of the "SDGs for All" Platform, which has just successfully completed its first year of work.

Supporting our Serbian partners on their European path is the overarching strategic framework of our bilateral development cooperation.

Having in mind the above-mentioned, let me also congratulate the Government of Serbia for expressed readiness to initiate the work on a new National Sustainable Development Strategy - thereby reaffirming its strong commitment to accelerating reforms and growth.

To advance towards a sustainable Europe by 2030, this is a great opportunity to align ongoing reforms in the environmental, social and economic spheres and to bring together under one roof the objectives stemming from the EU accession, the Green Deal and respectively the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, as well as other key reform agendas.

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of the new strategy can be considered not only as an opportunity, but also as a great momentum to "build back better"; a chance to enhance coordination between public institutions - and across the public, private and civil sectors.

This endeavour should be used to jointly agree on long-term goals that will help Serbia get where we all want to see it, and in this endeavour we would like to continue to support our Serbian partners.

The main challenge will be to define achievable and relevant targets for all citizens, in line with the principle of "leaving no one behind".

We trust that the quality and technical solidity of the output will derive from an inclusive, participatory process - twinning the bottom-up and top-down approach.

The German and the Swiss governments stand ready to continue supporting their Serbian partners at central and local level, from the public and non-governmental sectors, in order to develop a sound and coherent development framework that encompasses international reform agendas and local realities.



Christian Schilling, Head of Development Cooperation at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Serbia

ments, state and non-state actors, come together to define common goals and work hand in hand to achieve them.

In this sense, we aim to raise awareness on the importance of implementing the SDGs and support our partners in facilitating an inclusive dialogue on reform priorities in accordance with the 2030 Agenda and in line with other national strategies.

As ambitious as the 2030 Agenda is, I am not revealing any secret by stating that it was also a challenge for Germany to find a suitable approach to "nationalize" the SDGs and adapt them to the country context.

In 2002, Germany's first National Sustainability Strategy was adopted, which has been updated and further developed regularly.

As a first step, a series of regional conferences were held in different parts of Germany at the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020.

As a partner in development cooperation for more than 20 years we strongly and actively support Serbia on its way to sustainable development through a society-wide dialogue for the benefit of all of its citizens.

Yours sincerely,

Christian Schilling

NEWS

SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPIONS IN ZAJEČAR

The Responsible Business Forum and Smart Kolektiv held a workshop in Zaječar on the role of the business sector in the achievement of sustainable development.

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NEW PUBLICATION OF BELGRADE OPEN SCHOOL: A FEW WORDS ABOUT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Belgrade Open School's project team published "A Few Words about Sustainable Development" under the "SDGs for All" Platform in order to better acquaint citizens with important environmental issues, which are contained in SDGs - clean water and sanitary conditions, available and renewable energy, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water and on land.

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CONTRIBUTING TO THE 2030 AGENDA IMPLEMENTATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

The Centre for Advanced Economic Studies (CEVES) published two analyses of how to improve the economic aspects of sustainable development - "A Pathway to Social Consensus on Key Objectives for Sustainable Urban Development" and "Reducing Inequalities - a Pathway to Sustainable Development".

Link 1

Link 2

WebinarJam poster for "Dostupnost zdravstvene zaštite, prevencija i lečenje drugih bolesti u doba pandemije COVID-19" on 11. mart u 10:00. Includes logos of ODRŽIVI RAZVOJ ZA SVE, various NGOs, and speakers: Prof. Dr Dušan Milisavljević, Prof. Dr Snežana Simić, Sarita Bradas, and Moderator Ljubica Gojčić.

HEALTHCARE, PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF OTHER ILLNESSES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Centre for Democracy and "Ana and Vlade Divac" Foundations held a webinar on "Access to Healthcare, Prevention and Treatment of Other Illnesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic" on 11 March 2021.

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THIS ISSUE'S INTERVIEW

SERBIAN MUNICIPALITIES ARE PREPARED TO HELP FAMILIES TO RECONCILE WORK AND PARENTHOOD: AN INTERVIEW WITH GORDANA BJELOBRK



According to a survey on the reconciliation between work and parenthood in local self-government units (LSGs) conducted by the Ministry for Family Welfare and Demography, only every fifth municipality or town in Serbia, in co-operation with local employers, have defined policies aimed at providing support to families with small children, single parents or young married couples, which would enable them to reconcile work and parenthood better.

Therefore, we spoke with Ms Gordana Bjelobrk, a demographer from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, who emphasised the necessity for the active involvement of local self-government units in an urgent issue relating to the rehabilitation of procreation and parenthood.

"Given the fact that local self-government is responsible for the quality of life of the citizens living in its territory and that it can recognise the needs of parents in the best possible manner, LSGs should act strategically and should have a clearly defined action plan, measures and activities that would ensure sustainable reproductive behaviour of citizens in the long-term", said Bjelobrk.

Infographic titled "Actions taken by Serbian municipalities to aid families with children". Statistics include: 1/5 of municipalities have defined actions for families with small children; 13.5% allow for flexible working hours; 16% provide one-off allowance when children start school; 43% plan for parenting affirmation; 16.2% allow for work schedule rearrangement; 76% reimburse children's medical costs; 78.4% provide one-off allowance for child birth.

Ms Bjelobrk added: "Based on the survey results, we can conclude that flexible working hours, as one of the benefits most frequently used by employers worldwide, are not sufficiently immanent in this country. She also pointed out that a majority of municipalities do not provide for flexible working hours, however a half of them is prepared to provide such work arrangements in the future."

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Logos of partner organizations: BOS Belgrade Open School, bfpe, CEVES, FUNDATION ANA AND VLADJE DIVAC, FCD, smart KOLEKTIV, toc, Nemacka saradnja, Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, and giz.