

Serbia. The role of the network of municipal offices for local economic development promoted by the Regional Agency REDASP in Sumadija and Pomoravlje

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The development by [the Regional Agency for economic development REDASP](#) of the Offices for Local Economic Development, since in 2005 in the 13 municipalities of the territory of the Šumadija and Pomoravlje region, constitutes an innovative governance tool for the design and implementation of territorial strategies for sustainable development.

These offices, indeed, allows both the Regional Agency REDASP to promote more appropriate and effective local development initiatives, and the local governments and stakeholders to improve their own competences and capacity, and thus their ownership of development strategies. The initiative for the formation of OLED in the municipalities in the region was launched by REDASP, together with local governments, in order to foster a systematic and coordinated approach to the issues of local and regional economic development and to support local municipalities in planning and implementation.

Following the establishment of the offices, REDASP's activities were first focused on the capacity building of the representatives of the local governments and on the staff training at the offices, particularly regarding strategic planning, team management, project cycle management, as well as in maintaining and improving the relationships with state institutions and donor organizations.

Since their establishment and strengthening, offices for LED and their representatives have represented an innovative crucial link between the Regional agency and local communities in all the processes of creating local sustainable development strategies. Through the organization of local forums and thematic working groups within an intensive participatory approach, the offices animate the whole community in the local planning processes and in the elaboration and implementation of the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development 2011-2021.

In addition, an intensive networking among the LED offices in the region is promoted with the organization of specific Forums, in order to strengthen an horizontal flow of information and experiences, as well as stimulating a collective debate on particular field of intervention of the OLED, like the small and medium enterprise development.

Combined therefore, REDASP and LED offices constitute the core network for development processes in the region. REDASP provides know how, coordination, guidance and capacity building, while LED offices, as crucial focal points for REDASP's activities in each municipality, create in an innovative way a leverage



on the local level, making the interventions as effective as possible, providing the needs assessments and feedbacks from the spot.

A fundamental innovative role is played by the OLED in the regional and local development planning process coordinated by REDASP, where the project ideas proposed by the stakeholders are used to design 3 year activity plans and 1 year actions plans (collectively evaluated at the end of each period). With this regard, the Regional Agency has developed a web-based tool for project design, scoring and selection (www.olednetwork.rs), which allows in a cost effective, simple and accessible way to gather and evaluate project ideas. Scoring in each priority areas is done in several steps using criteria that narrows down the selection providing the opportunity for an innovative, effective and democratic adoption of annual action plans.

For instance, in the elaboration process of the Regional Strategy, more than 100 users registered on the web tool and 511 project ideas were inserted and scored.



For more information

[REDASP Report](#)

[OLED II Forum 2010 Report](#)

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