



9. MEETING SECTORAL MONITORING COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN CROATIA

IV. Component of IPA programme

11th November 2011 (09.00 - 11.00)

Grand Hotel Park Conference Room

Šetalište Kralja Zvonimira 39, 20000 Dubrovnik

Content:

- 1. Agenda of the meeting
- 2. List of participants including scanned "List of attendance"
- 3. Minutes on the topics discussed





AGENDA 9. Meeting Sectoral Monitoring Committee for the Operational programme Human Resources Development in Croatia

- 1. **Co-chairing of the Committee** (statements and approval of Agenda) (Head of Operating Structure and European Commission)
- Follow up and adoption of the Minutes of the 8th Sectoral Monitoring Committee, IPA Component IV held on 6 May 2011 in Ilok (HOS and European Commission)
- 3. Current state of play of implementation of the HRD OP operations under 2007-2011

Survey of HRDOP grant scheme beneficiaries – **Questionnaire analysis** (HOS and Operating structure)

- 4. **Revision of the HRD OP, programming period 2007 2013** (Head of Operating Structure, NIPAC and Commission)
- 5. **Preparation for ESF** (HOS, CODEF and Operating Structure)
- 6. Annual Audit Activity Report for the year 2011 (Audit Authority)
- 7. Visibility activities in the 2011 and implementation of the Communication Action Plan (HOS)
- 8. AOB
 - Date and venue for next meeting of the Committee (Co-chair)





LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

9th Sectoral Monitoring Committee for the Operational Programme Human Resources Development in Croatia

11 November 2011Grand Hotel Park Šetalište Kralja Zvonimira 39, 20000 Dubrovnik

European Commission	
Michael Morass	Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Jean-Marie Moreau	Head of Operations Section 1- Institution Building and Social Cohesion,
Jelena Jakulj	Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Rima Joujou Deljkić	Delegation of the EU to the Republic of Croatia
Dijana Kuzman	Delegation of the EU to the Republic of Croatia
Ministry of Finance	
Dubravka Flinta (substitute)	Head of the National Fund
Marina Brezak	National Fund
Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds	
Hrvoje Dolenec (NIPAC)	CODEF
Ana Papadopulous	CODEF





Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship – Regional competitiveness Operational Programme – IPA Component IIIc	
Marija Rajaković (substitute)	Director of Directorate for Regional Competitiveness
Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship	
Krešimir Rožman (co-chair)	State Secretary and HOS
Katarina Ivanković Knežević (substitute)	Director of Directorate for International Cooperation in the field of Labour and Social Security
Marica Misir	Head of Department for preparation and implementation
Stella Čužić	Head of Department for financial management
Luka Rajčić	Department for coordination and programming
Filip Miličević	Department for coordination and programming
Monika Pozderac	Department for preparation and implementation
Ana Vlček	Department for financial management
Naida Mekić	Department for monitoring and evaluation, Secretariat of SMC
Ivana Šuman	Department for monitoring and evaluation, Secretariat of SMC
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	
Mirjana Radovan (substitute)	Directorate for Social Welfare
Natalija Bokulić	Directorate for Social Welfare
Vladimir Šomen	Directorate for Social Welfare
Jasna Bubić	Directorate for Social Welfare



Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

2007HR05IPO001





Ministry of Science, Education and Sport	
Jasminka Majsec	Directorate for Secondary Education
Hrvoje Bakić	Directorate for Secondary Education
Mirna Štajduhar	Directorate for Secondary Education
Iva Čolak	Directorate for Secondary Education
Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education	
Ana Buljan	Assistant Director
Mile Živčić	Assistant Director
Nada Trgovčević Letica	AVETAE DEFCO
Anita Tomić	AVETAE DEFCO
Suzana Mašić	AVETAE DEFCO
Luka Kevešević	AVETAE DEFCO
Croatian Employment Service	
Ankica Paun Jarallah (member)	Director of Croatian Employment Service
Kristina Alerić	Deputy Director
Sanja Mesarov	Head of Department for Financing and Contracting of EU projects (CES DFC)
A representative of the Government Office for Gender Equality	
Tamara Šterk (substitute)	Government Office for Gender Equality
Socio-economic Partners	
Ana Miličević Pezelj (member)	The Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia



Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

2007HR05IPO001





Representatives of Civil Society	
Lidija Pavić- Rogošić (member)	NGO "ODRAZ" (Sustainable Community Development)
Tom Kačinari	Association of Croatian volunteers of the Homeland War
Ivana Kordić	Volunteers Centre Zagreb
The Government Office for cooperation with NGOs	
Marina Buza-Vidas	Head of Department for Implementation of EU Programmes and International Cooperation
National Foundation for Civil Society Development	
Cvjetana Plavša Matić	Director
Agency for the Audit of European Union Programmes Implementation System	
Neven Šprlje	Director
Mirko Gravara	Head of Department for audit of IPA component IV – Human Resources Development
Ministry of Public Administration	
Tatjana Čorlija Milivojević	Ministry of Public Administration







9. Meeting Sectoral Monitoring Committee for the Operational programme Human Resources Development in Croatia

11th November 2011 (09.00 - 11.00)

Grand Hotel Park Conference Room Šetalište Kralja Zvonimira 39, 20000 Dubrovnik

MINUTES

The ninth meeting of the Sectoral Monitoring Committee (SMC) for the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (HRD OP) under the IPA Framework Agreement and Financing Agreement concerning the multi-annual operational programme Human Resources Development took place in Dubrovnik, on 11th November 2011 (09.00 - 11.00) at Grand Hotel Park, Šetalište Kralja Zvonimira 39, Dubrovnik. This was the third Sectoral Monitoring Committee meeting that was held in a different region than Zagreb.

Opening statements and approval of the Agenda

The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr Michael Morass, Deputy Head of Unit in DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) of the European Commission and Mr Krešimir Rožman, State Secretary for Labour in the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship (MELE) and the Head of the Operating Structure of the IV. Component of IPA programme in the Republic of Croatia.

Mr Michael Morass chaired the delegation of the European Union, which included representatives of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Croatia. Mr Krešimir Rožman chaired the delegation of the Republic of Croatia,





which included representatives of the relevant bodies nominated as members of the Sectoral Monitoring Committee (hereafter, SMC) and number of observers (complete list in Attachment).

Mr Rožman greeted all present and thanked for the support that was given to the Operating Structure stressing out that the great progress was made in the implementation of the HRD OP in the last year. Namely, 157 individual contracts within the 8 Grant schemes (GS) are currently in the implementation phase total value of 19 million EUR (16,15 million EU contribution). In addition, 9 new Grant schemes are also under way within the next financial period, for 5 GS the tendering process has been finalised, for 1 GS the tender is open and for 3 GS the tendering process is expected to start in the following period.

After introductory words from the side of Mr Rožman, Mr Morass also welcomed all the participants of the SMC expressing the pleasure for being in Dubrovnik an having an opportunity to visit two grant projects under implementation having in mind that the successful implementation of the HRD OP in general is possible only if there is an effective implementation on the ground. Furthermore, Mr Morass highlighted that this is the first SMC Meeting after finalization of the Croatia's negotiation process meaning that the respective preparations for the European Social Fund (ESF) are now becoming much more concrete, building on the current IPA structure. In the following period the work done so far needs to be further intensified, having in mind all the changes from the period of accession onwards and preparation activities referring to the Europe 2020 and the European Employment Strategy. Mr Morass highlighted the impressive results achieved so far within the implementation of the HRD OP, emphasizing the importance of the partnership approach and stressing that this meeting is a good platform to discuss all the open issues from the last SMC meeting, particularly tackling the issues related to the fastening of the grant procedures.

Upon the formal opening of the Meeting, the Agenda was adopted.

Follow up and adoption of the Minutes of the 8th Sectoral Monitoring Committee, IPA Component IV held on 6 May 2011 in Ilok

It was agreed among the members that the Minutes from the eight Sectoral Monitoring Committee Meeting, held on 6th May 2011 in Ilok are now formally adopted.





Current state of play of implementation of the HRD OP – operations under 2007-2011

Mr Rožman invited responsible persons from the relevant sectors to give a short overview of the state of play of implementation within the following HRD OP Priorities/Measures;

- Ms Marica Misir, Head of Department for Preparation and Implementation within MELE, started by giving a short overview of the progress achieved in relation to the **Priority 1** - Enhancing access to employment and sustainable inclusion in the labour market.

- Afterwards, Ms Mirjana Radovan, Head of Department within the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, proceeded with the **Priority 2** – Reinforcing social inclusion of people at a disadvantage, **Measure 2.1** Supporting access to employment by disadvantaged groups and **Measure 2.3** Development of Social services to improve employment opportunities

- Ms Jasminka Majsec and Mr Hrvoje Bakić from the Directorate for Secondary Education within the Ministry of Science, Education and Training, continued for the Measure 2.2 Supporting access to education by disadvantaged groups and Priority 3 – Enhancing human capital and employability.

- Ms Marica Misir continued the presentation of the state of affairs with the **Priority 4** – Technical Assistance.

- Ms Stella Čužić, Head of Department for Financial Management in MELE continued with the financial view of implementation of Operational programme 2007-2011.

- Mr Filip Miličević, Expert Advisor in MELE concluded with the presentation on the questionnaire analysis on the HRD OP grant scheme beneficiaries conducted with the aim of creating the system base for comprehensive monitoring of project implementation and support to the grant beneficiaries.

Mr Rožman thanked the Operating structure, and opened a discussion among the members.

Mr Jean Marie Moreau, Head of operations Section 1 in the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Croatia (DEU) welcomed all presented, stressing out that good progress has been achieved so far, emphasising the importance of its continuation, however noting the importance of tackling some delays that might occur within the programming period 2010/2011. Moreover, he commended on the fact that the presentations referred also to the sustainability of the action





suggesting even more emphasis on it when presenting the overall progress of the HRD OP, especially when it comes to Monitoring sheets and the assessment of the real achievement of the activities in correlation with the purpose of the project itself. In addition, Mr Moreau highlighted the pyramid structure of the reports (number of projects cascading into several reports) prepared in the context of IPA Component 1 - Transition Assistance and Institution Building as a good reference point for the further enhancement of the reporting process. Mr Moreau also suggested that for the future SMC Meetings the presentation of the state of play could begin with the financial progress of the HRD OP, also recommending the break between the different points on the Agenda. As a last remark, he raised a question regarding the procedures for certification of expenditure and the importance of its time process having in mind the risk of not achieving the N+3 rule, given that the current process is time consuming and one could consider certain ways for improvement, especially when it comes to the grant schemes.

Katarina Ivanković Knežević, Director of the Directorate for International Cooperation in the field of Labour and Social Security in MELE thanked for the constructive suggestions that will be taken into account. Referring to the certification of expenditure, Ms Ivanković Knežević stated that this issue is closely related to the question of monitoring. Namely, quarterly reporting was introduced in order to be able to secure the successful certification process within the IV. Component of IPA. That is to say that the aspect of monitoring of sustainability within the grant schemes is currently on the level of the bodies responsible for priority/measure (BRPM) and implementing bodies (IB). One could consider whether and to what extent to include beneficiary institutions in this process, however also clearly defining the role of BRPM in the following period.

Furthermore, Ms Dubravka Flinta, Head of the National Fund in the Ministry of Finance also referred to the certification process, firstly thanking the implementing bodies, Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE DEFCO) and Croatian Employment Service (CES DFC) for all the efforts made to secure successful certification. By the end of this year it is expected that the total amount of certified expenditure will be 16 million EUR, exceeding the N+3 target for this year. However, it is true that certain procedures need simplification and our goal for the following period is to tackle this issue.





Referring to the previously stated, Mr Morass expressed satisfaction that de-commitment risk will be avoided this year, however stressing that there are still some steps that need to be taken, emphasising on the importance of avoiding the next year de-commitment risk.

Additionally, Ms Ivanković Knežević underlined that the questionnaires for the grant scheme beneficiaries are significant for monitoring of sustainability of projects, especially since the intention is to have 2 types of questionnaires, one for the first implementation stages and the other one for the end of the project implementation. This data would give us the right information on grant beneficiaries needs and problems they are faced with.

Following the discussion, Ms Ana Miličević Pezelj, representative of Socio-economic partners suggested that it would be important to have the right information after 1 year following the end of the project to be able to see the real impact and sustainability of projects. Ms Ivanković Knežević informed the members that this aspect was recognised as very important and precisely for that purpose evaluations of specific projects as well as the whole HRD OP are planned in the future.

Moreover, Ms Jelena Jakulj, from Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion suggested for the next SMC to have the presentation on the results from current grant schemes including also all problems and open issues they are faced with and the ways to tackle them. Ms Ivanković Knežević informed the members that, given that referred issue is extremely important, on the spot checks on the project level are being conducted regularly, in certain cases grant beneficiaries are being contacted directly by implementing bodies with a view to secure smooth implementation.

Furthermore, Ms Ankica Paun Jarallah, Director of Croatian Employment Service raised an issue of the monitoring of indicators and the possibility of introducing the quality information system that would enable final beneficiaries to insert the relevant data and thus facilitate the whole process. Referring to the mentioned point, Ms Flinta stated that until the year 2013 the existing monitoring information system would be used, given that it would be extremely difficult to change it in this stage. However, preparations for the new system that would facilitate entering of data, having in mind the level of the final beneficiaries are underway.

In addition, Ms Cvjetana Plavša Matić, Director of the National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society mentioned that the Foundation has developed uniformed system of management





and communication with their beneficiaries that could be easily adjusted to this specific situation and the future needs.

Ms Lidija Pavić Rogošić, from the NGO "ODRAZ" (Sustainable Community Development) as the nominated representative of the civil society in the SMC welcomed the discussion on the indicators and monitoring, highlighting the importance of impact indicators that would focus on the real impact of projects and how they create positive changes in the society. Mr Rožman, Ms Radovan and Mr Morass agreed that the impact and sustainable outcomes of projects are extremely important in this context.

Revision of the HRD OP, programming period 2007 – 2013/2

Mr Rožman informed the members that it was agreed with the representatives of the European Commission that the revision of the HRD OP will take place in the following period, considering there is a need for further extending the programming period of the HRD OP to the years 2012 and the first half of the year 2013. Currently, the revised HRD OP is undergoing the process of consultations and further harmonisation.

Furthermore, Ms Ivanković Knežević emphasised that the Operating structure prepared two versions of the draft revised Operational programme. 'Version A' included new priority, Priority 5 "*Strengthening the role of civil society for better governance*" including two measures, Measure 5.1 "*Promotion of Social dialogue*", that would be managed by the existing Operating structure bodies and Measure 5.2 *"Strengthening the role of Civil Society Organizations for socio-economic growth and democratic development*", that would be managed by two new bodies in Operating structure, The Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs as a Body responsible for Priority/Measure and The National Foundation for Civil Society Development as the Implementing body. 'Version B' followed the current Operational programme rationale without the new priorities and new structure.

Considering that the inclusion of this new priority was recognised as an important factor, however having in mind that it assumes the successful finalisation of the accreditation process of the two previously mentioned bodies, Ms Ivanković Knežević opened a discussion and invited the SMC members to give their comments/support on the proposal of including the new priority into the Operational Programme Human Resources Development.



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Ms Ivana Kordić, representative of the civil society from the 'Volunteers centre Zagreb' supported the introduction of the new priority in the Operational programme, emphasising their existing excellent cooperation with the two newly proposed institutions. Moreover, she raised a question regarding the possibility to focus the interventions directly on the development of infrastructure for volunteering within the Measure 5.2, where Ms Ivanković Knežević stated that the practice is to have a wider formulation where all relevant areas are covered including volunteering.

Furthermore to the issue of revision of the HRD OP, Ms Miličević Pezelj, representing all 5 associations of the trade unions, raised a question regarding the role of social partners by stating that they have submitted a written statement regarding the revised HRD OP that was not yet forwarded to other SMC members. Moreover, the social partners were expecting MELE's invitation for a meeting in order to agree on and identify the needs of Croatian social partners for strengthening their capacities. In addition, she emphasised that the 'version A' of the revised HRD OP is acceptable especially comparing it to the 'version B' that was seen as a complete surprise considering that it does not contain Priority 5 at all.

Further to the stated, Ms Pavić Rogošić representing the civil society organisations supported the introduction of the new priority in the HRD OP stressing the importance of building the civil dialogue as well as social dialogue through the IV. Component of IPA.

Referring to the all mentioned above, Ms Ivanković Knežević pointed out that social partners were and will be in the future eligible applicants/partners in the grant schemes within the HRD OP. Recognising their need for capacity building new Priority was proposed within the 'version A', having in mind that the Measure 5.1 will be directly focused on promotion of social dialogue.

However, although the 'version B' does not contain the new Priority, being aware of social partners' capacities and having identified the need to improve social dialogue, special attention was envisaged through the activity *"Support to potential grant beneficiaries in the preparation of their applications"*, where one of the objectives would be strengthening of social partners and their capacities.

Ms Ivanković Knežević stressed a strong support to the 'version A' of the proposal, however noting that there is a risk of prolonging the accreditation process for the two new bodies in which case the implementation would be prolonged for some time but not abolished. Bodies of the





Operating Structure would continue to undertake all necessary measures in order to ensure all preconditions for the implementation of the new priority.

Mr Morass also commended the inclusion of the new priority in the revised HRD OP 2007-2013/2, stating that the same rationale of the revised HRD OP could be also applied for the first 6 months of the European Social Fund (ESF) (second half of the year 2013).

Tamara Šterk from Government Office for Gender Equality stressed the importance of building the capacities of trade unions to be able to act on an equal terms with the State as well as employers' association.

Furthermore, Ms Tatjana Čorlija, representative of the Ministry of Public Administration acting as an observer on the SMC, also supported inclusion of these two new institutions in the Operating structure having in mind their current role and experience in all the activities referring to the civil society organisations.

Ms Jelena Jakulj pointed out that it would be useful to deliver all the comments and statements on the proposed revised OP HRD so far to all the member of the SMC.

In the end, Ms Marina Buza-Vidas, representative of the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, emphasized that the inclusion of the new priority, having in mind the expertise and absorption capacities of potential applicants to calls to be launched under the *Strengthening the role of Civil Society Organizations for Socio-Economic Growth and Democratic Development* measure, is to support the quality implementation of other priorities under the IPA IV, guaranteeing at the same time good absorption of funds available.

As a conclusion to the discussion referring to the revision of the HRD OP and the support of the members towards inclusion of the Priority 5 into the HRD OP, it was agreed that the 'so-called' 'A working version' of OP HRD would in the forthcoming period remain the reference document of the resources allocated within the new Priority.

Afterwards, the discussion was opened regarding the evaluation committees and assessment procedures for the grant schemes reaching the conclusion that continuous efforts need to be made when it comes to assessment and evaluation procedures of the project proposals within the grant schemes.





Preparation for ESF

Referring to the preparation process for the implementation of the European Social Fund, Mr Hrvoje Dolenec, State Secretary of CODEF and NIPAC stated that for the first period of European Social Fund, namely the second half of the year 2013, the HRD OP is to follow the rationale of the 'version A' of the revised HRD OP 2007-2013/2. Moreover, for the new ESF HRD OP 2014 - 2020 it was pointed out that, given that the programme is to be ready by the end of the year 2013, the preparation activates are under way. It is expected to have the first draft of the ESF HRD OP 2014-2020 by the end of the year 2012.

Mr Luka Rajčić, Head of Section in MELE presented activities planned for the forthcoming period related to preparation of the ESF OP, emphasising that draft ESF HRD OP for the second half of 2013 is in the consultation process in the forthcoming period.

Annual Audit Activity Report for the year 2011

Mr Neven Šprlje, Director of the Agency for the Audit of European Union Programmes Implementation System greeted all present and stated that the preparation of the Report for the year 2011 is undergoing as planned.

Mr Jean Marie Moreau referred to the European Commission's Court of Auditors audit findings, namely the issue of quality of consultants/experts within the service contracts, proposing for the future to conduct the interviews as a part of evaluation process in order to secure smooth implementation and quality of experts.

Referring to the mentioned issue, Ms Ivanković Knežević stated that the Operating structure always insisted on the high quality of experts, however noting that it is sometimes difficult to be certain about the quality of experts before the actual implementation starts. Moreover, she made a proposal to the SMC Secretariat for the next Meeting to prepare a full list of all audits of the Operating structure bodies.

Visibility activities in the 2011 and implementation of the Communication Action Plan

Ms Ivana Šuman, Expert Assistant in MELE gave a presentation on the visibility activities undertaken in implementing the Communication Action Plan in the last period.





AOB

Mr Tom Kačinari, newly appointed member of the SMC from the Association of Croatian volunteers of the Homeland War greeted all the present with a pleasure for being involved in the work of this Committee and supported the fact that the Croatian volunteers of the Homeland War are included as target groups within HRD OP. Additionally, Mr Kačinari emphasised the need for more training of Croatian Homeland War veterans/volunteers regarding the possibilities offered within the EU funds as they are not yet sufficiently informed and raised a question regarding the translation possibilities for the work of this Committee.

Mr Rožman stressed out that efforts are made to translate as much documents as possible within the available capabilities.

In the end, Mr Morass thanked all the participants for their contributions stating the importance of the continuation of further activities, especially with the aim of preparation for the European Social Fund.

Mr Rožman also thanked all the participants a good and fruitful discussion and invited those who are participating at the SMC Meeting, and have not yet signed the Declaration of impartiality and confidentiality, to sign and submit it to the Secretariat of the SMC in order to assure confidentiality and impartiality in the work of the SMC.

Date and venue for next meeting of the Committee

The members agreed that the next SMC meeting will be held within 6 month period, stating that the actual date would be determined afterwards.





General conclusions and main points of topics discussed:

- Progress made in the implementation of the HRD OP 2007-2011 in the last year (157 individual contracts in implementation within the 8 Grant schemes, total value of 19 million EUR (16,15 million EU contribution)). 9 new Grant schemes within the programming period 2010/2011 underway (5 GS tendering process is finalised, 1 GS tender is open, 3 GS tendering process is expected to start);
- Referring to the certification of expenditure for the year 2011, expected amount for certification is 16 million EUR by the end of the year, exceeding the N+3 target for this year;
- Revision of the HRD OP is necessary because of the extension of the programming period of the HRD OP to the years 2012 and first half of the year 2013. For the second half of the year 2013 the new ESF HRD OP is under preparation;
- 'A working version' of the revised OP HRD 2007-2013/2, that includes new Priority 'Strengthening the role of civil society for better governance' and assumes the accreditation of the two new bodies in the Operation structure (National Foundation for Civil Society development and Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs), would in the forthcoming period remain the reference document of the resources allocated within the new Priority;
- Secretariat of the SMC would, in the forthcoming period, submit received written statements on the draft of the revised HRD OP to all the members of the SMC;
- Draft ESF HRD OP for the second half of the year 2013 will follow the rationale of the 'version A' of the revised HRD OP 2007-2013/2. The consultation process on the draft with the relevant stakeholders is underway;





- For the new ESF HRD OP 2014-2020 the preparation activates are under way;
- Draft meeting minutes will be delivered to the SMC members for endorsement within 15 working days following the day of a meeting.

Agreed by:

Co-chairperson

Co-chairperson

Michael Morass Deputy Head of Unit, DG EMPL Krešimir Rožman State Secretary, MELE Head of the Operating Structure