



Newsletter II/2013

Bucharest, July 2013

Dear Reader,

You receive the 5th Newsletter issued by the Swiss Contribution Office for Romania on the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme (SRCP), with the latest news on the status of its implementation and development.

The Annual Meeting of the Swiss- Romanian Cooperation Programme

Switzerland and Romania met in Bucharest, 13 – 16 May 2013, for the Annual Meeting of the Swiss Contribution to Romania.



The Annual Meeting proved to be an important step in ensuring effective carrying out of the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme (SRCP) and a timely opportunity to take stock of the progress already achieved and discuss the work plans for the coming period. The meeting was held with participation from Berne of representatives of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The Romanian delegation was led by Secretary of State in the Ministry of Public Finance, Dan Manolescu, and it comprised members of the National Coordination Unit in charge of the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme and of the Paying Authority.

Swiss delegation from right to left: Franziska Keller, Ulrich Stürzinger, Ambassador Lebet, Thomas Stauffer, Thomas Krajnik

SRCP Communication Strategy

During the Annual Meeting 2013 the Communication Strategy of the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme (SRCP) and a supporting background document have been adopted.

The goal of the Communication Strategy is to make the Swiss Contribution to Romania known by the Romanian public generally and by opinion-makers in particular. The solidarity of Switzerland in supporting the reduction of economic and social disparities needs to be recognised, so that the bilateral relations between Romania and Switzerland are strengthened.

Roma Inclusion Fund

Line 1 of the Roma Inclusion Fund aimed at improving living conditions for Roma and other vulnerable groups. Two projects out of the selected projects, namely “Together for Empowerment” and “Social Inclusion and Improvement of living conditions for Roma and other vulnerable groups in Mures, Cluj and Bihor” have started implementation and they will provide integrated health and education. The overall goal of the projects is to improve the living conditions and the social inclusion. Target

groups are Roma and other vulnerable groups in the region, in particular Roma children (education), young adults (vocational skills and income promotion), children and women (health and social assistance). It is expected, depending on the activity (education, health, vocational training and income) that approximately 90% of the beneficiaries will be Roma. The targeted regions are Cluj, Bihor, Mures, Dolj, Gorj and Olt.

To achieve this goal, the project intends to apply a combination of various interventions in the following three fields: education, health and social assistance, vocational education and income promotion. The stakeholders of project “Social Inclusion and Improvement of living conditions for Roma and other vulnerable groups in Mures, Cluj and Bihor” are [HEKS](#), [FAER](#), [Diakonia](#) and [Pestalozzi](#) Foundations. The stakeholders of project “Together for Empowerment” are [Terre des Hommes](#), [Roma Centre Amare Rromentza](#), [Impreuna - Agency for Community Development](#), [PACT](#), [Habitat for Humanity](#), [Sastipen](#) and [Pestalozzi](#) Foundations.

A workshop was organized in March by the Programme Management Unit (PMU) of the Roma Inclusion Fund to discuss the concept for the implementation of **Line 2** “Empowerment and awareness building”. The overall objective of Line 2 is to provide opportunities for empowering Roma and their communities and building awareness and acceptance within the majority population.

Thematic Fund Security

The Thematic Fund linked to “Security” in Romania makes available a total of CHF 18'000'000 addressing Schengen issues, promoting socially based security and combating organized crime and corruption.



Official launching of the project, speakers' panel from right to left: Ambassador Lebet, quaestor-in-chief Marian Tutilescu, Colonel Mircea Olaru, Thomas Stauffer

From this amount, CHF 1'600'000 have been allocated to the project “Strengthening the capacity of the Romanian Gendarmerie”. The objective of the project is to transfer knowledge and expertise in two areas where Switzerland has accumulated substantive experience and credibility at international level. Firstly, the project will strengthen the public order management capacity of the [Romanian Gendarmerie](#) during sporting events, especially with an international dimension. Secondly, the project will seek to promote sustainable tourism development by strengthening public safety and security and preventing environmental crime in mountain areas.

The official launching of the project took place on 13 March in the presence of Romanian and Swiss representatives. The project includes a wide-range of national and Swiss partners, including but not limited to: Ministry of Administration and Interior, General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police, Romanian Football Federation, Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Directorate of Biodiversity, NGOs, local public authorities and the media, World Economic Forum, Savatan/VS Police Academy, Valais cantonal police and Verbier Municipal police.

Scholarships and Research

Projects of 24 Romanian researchers were selected following the seventh regular open call. The 24 Romanians are part of a group of 80 researchers, who will carry out part of their research at Swiss institutions.

The Sciex Programme between Switzerland and the New Member States of the EU (Sciex-NMSch) is part of the Swiss contribution to the EU enlargement and aims at establishing scientific partnerships in order to develop, on the long term, individual researchers' capacities, to foster innovation and to establish networks between researchers.

Once more, this call was marked by an increase of the submitted proposals - mostly resulting from an increase in proposals coming from the Humanities and Social Sciences. The majority of the selected projects concern the Natural and Technical Sciences: Engineering Sciences (12 projects), Basic Biological Research (12 projects), Chemistry (11 projects), Physics (9 projects), and Environmental Sciences (9 projects). 19 projects will be conducted in the Humanities and Social Sciences ([read more](#)). For further information regarding the calls please visit <http://www.sciex.ro/> and <http://www.sciex.ch/>.

Thematic Fund Civil Society Participation: NGO Block Grant

In the framework of the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme, 4'974'617 CHF were committed for financing 44 projects to strengthen Romanian NGOs and to enable their active participation in policy processes.

On May 10, 2012 the Swiss Intermediate Body (SIB) for the Thematic Fund "Civil Society Participation" , a consortium formed by [KEK-CDC](#) Consultants, [CSDF](#) and [REPF](#) launched the first Call for Proposals for the NGO Block Grant that is aiming to strengthen Romanian NGOs and to enable their active participation in policy processes. It offers support in two major domains: social issues and environmental protection.

This first round of Call for Proposals was very successful showing a high demand from Romanian NGOs. The SIB received 779 project proposals within the deadline of July 12, 2012. 109 concerned the environmental domain and 670 the social domain. Due to the high number and good quality of applications received the Steering Committee decided to reallocate additional CHF 2.4 million to the first round of Call for Proposals; a total amount of CHF 5 million was therefore available ([read more](#)). The complete list of the financed projects is available [here](#).

Thematic Fund Partnership and Expert Fund: Partnership Block Grant

The first round of Call for Proposals for the Partnership Block Grant under the Thematic Fund "Partnership and Expert Fund" was very successful showing a high interest of the nongovernmental sector from Romania and Switzerland. There were received a total of 116 project proposals. Due to the high number and good quality of applications received, the initial allocated amount was increased with 20% (i.e. CHF 0.5 million) to a total of CHF 3'000'000. The evaluation process resulted in 14 projects recommended to be financed and thus a total amount of CHF 2'816'358 has been committed so far. These projects will promote and enhance institutional partnerships between Romanian and Swiss partners and cover various thematic areas as education, social, culture, environment etc. Small grants ranging from CHF 10'000 to CHF 100'000 and large grants ranging from CHF 100'001 to CHF 250'000 were offered ([read more](#)). The complete list of the financed projects is available [here](#).

Thematic Fund Health

The Swiss Intermediate Body, together with the Ministry of Health from Romania initiated the process of selection the Execution Agencies that will be in charge with the implementation of the projects "Improving quality of services in paediatric intensive care units through the development and implementation of a training program" and "Improving quality of pre-hospital and hospital emergency services through the development and implementation of a training program" respectively. The tender for the selection of the Executing Agencies within the Reform Fund linked to Health Issues Thematic Fund has been launched by public announcement in February 2013 and the selection process lasted until May, 2013. For further information regarding the calls please visit: <http://www.cred.ro/> and <http://www.ms.gov.ro/> .

The estimated duration of implementation of the two projects is of 24 months.

Environment and Infrastructure

The selection of the Project Outlines (PO) within the [Energy Cities programme](#) was opened on 25 March and concluded on 10 April. 12 eligible proposals were submitted and evaluated by independent experts following the approved methodology and selection criteria. Presently a total of 10 projects are proposed for selection for a total funding of 38'970'404 CHF, out of which 33'124'843 CHF represents Swiss contribution. The selected POs cover rehabilitation of urban district heating systems (2) rehabilitation of public buildings (2), public transport (2), urban regeneration (1) and public lighting (3).

Kind regards,

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