



European Union

The European Agency for Reconstruction in Kosovo News bulletin, March 2003

Better public buildings for better local administration: the rehabilitation programme continues

The staff of the municipal administration and district court in Glllogovc/Glogovac had a good reason to celebrate when the new annex to their building was completed. Both institutions had been sharing a tight space in Glllogovc small town hall. Every day, they would also receive hundreds of visits from the community. The new annex cost €200,000, and was funded by the EU, as part of a Public Buildings Programme managed by the European Agency for Reconstruction. The construction was carried out by a local contractor ORKA, from Prizren. The annex to the town hall now houses the district court.

The project is part of a programme amounting to more than €20 million, and covering a total of 36 public buildings. Projects include the construction of new buildings, adding new annexes, creating additional floor spaces, and upgrading existing infrastructure. The goal is to improve public buildings in Kosovo, which will help the local administrations perform their work. And there are many satisfied beneficiaries.



The new District Court annex to the
Town hall in Glllogovc/Glogovac



The ex-Social Security tower that will
soon host the Agency in Pristina

The programme includes works on 16 town halls, six courthouses, four prisons, a student's dormitory complex in Pristina, and several new hospital blocks. "Public infrastructure in Kosovo was in a terrible shape after all those years of neglect, followed by the conflict. Enormous amounts of work has been done to repair it," says Otto Roman Barnert, Agency Programme Manager. "Just to look at these buildings now is rewarding enough. The EU has rightfully chosen to allocate funds for the rehabilitation of these buildings since it is crucial to the functioning of so many important institutions."

One part of this programme is the complete rehabilitation of the old social security building in the centre of Pristina, which will be used as the new premises of the European Agency for Reconstruction. It was severely damaged during the conflict. Work has almost been completed, and has turned the building into modern office space. Soon, the Agency is expected to move into the new location and thereby to free the space in the Museum of Kosovo building that was temporarily allocated to it back in summer of 1999.

Job-related training under way

As part of the overall EU effort to help Kosovo develop an efficient market economy, some €3 million has been directed towards training women and men in the wide spectrum of job-related skills. The EU funded project to improve vocational education and training (VET) in Kosovo started in November 2002 with the establishment of a team of experts from the German company PEM GmbH, and Ireland's FAS Training and Employment Authority. They are expected to continue work until April 2004. The project counterparts are the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Representatives from both of the ministries, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Trade Unions are part of a steering committee to monitor the project. It has already met twice.

A major early step in identifying those areas where training is most needed was a survey of 300 employers, done in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. The findings will help to determine the subjects that need to be given priority when developing the curriculum. Eight VET centres and 15 schools have already been selected for piloting the project and they are in the process of receiving modern training equipment. Students in schools and unemployed adults are expected to receive training to European standards in three occupational areas: business administration, electronics and information technology. Sophie Sakalis, the Programme Manager at the European Agency for Reconstruction said: "This programme will be a major step forward for Kosovo in promoting the transferability of skills and freedom of movement of labour in the region."

Garbage disposal begins at home

Efforts to improve the disposal of rubbish in Kosovo received a boost last month with the delivery of four large BOMAG compactors worth over €1 million. Pictured right, BOMAGS are massive vehicles capable of compacting large amounts of waste into smaller, more manageable loads. They are essential pieces of modern equipment in EU landfills. The



The BOMAG compactor for Prizren landfill

BOMAGS have already been distributed to Pristina, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Prizren and Pec/Peja, where they will be used at new sanitary landfills being constructed by the European Agency for Reconstruction. Twenty local members of staff at the waste utility companies have undergone training for this machinery. Carried out by specialists from Germany, the training has proved to be a great success. The construction of six new sanitary landfills is well underway and it is expected that the site in Gjilan will be operational within three months. These landfills are part of an important programme managed by Agency to improve the environment in Kosovo.

Solid waste management was identified as one of the most important fields for EU assistance in Kosovo. Immediately after the conflict, the public waste utilities were in chaos: they lacked basic equipment, such as trucks for waste collection; and the province was short on bins, especially in Pristina. The situation with the disposal sites was even worse: there was not a single dumpsite that would have come even close to EU standards.

Since then, with the help of the EU and the Agency, major improvements have been made ranging from providing basic equipment to the waste utilities, upgrading existing dumpsites, constructing new sanitary landfills, and offering institutional assistance to the sector as a whole.

But the success of the programme is ultimately down to the cooperation of the people of Kosovo. "People need to understand that tremendous work has gone in to reorganising and equipping the waste utilities, and that the groundwork for proper solid waste management in Kosovo has been laid. But ultimately this is a process that starts at the household level," said Alan Brown, Environment Programme Manager at the Agency.

The European Agency for Reconstruction in Kosovo

Start of operations: February 2000

| At 17/03/2003 | Budget 1998 | Budget 1999 | Budget 2000 | Budget 2001 | Budget 2002 | Budget 2003 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Size (€ millions) | 7 | 116 | 256.5 | 315.5 | 134.4 | 49 |
| Committed | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | NA |
| Contracted | 97% | 98% | 98% | 92% | 73% | NA |
| Paid | 97% | 96% | 92% | 78% | 23% | NA |

Key sectors: energy, good governance & civil society, enterprise development, agriculture, water & environment, transport, housing, health.

The European Agency for Reconstruction is responsible for the management of the main EU assistance programmes in Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It was established in February 2000 and has its headquarters in Thessaloniki, and operational centres in Pristina, Belgrade, Podgorica and Skopje. It is an independent agency of the European Union, and overseen by a Governing Board composed of EU Member States and the Commission.

It now oversees a total portfolio of some €1.6 billion across its four operational centres.

The objectives of new EU-funded programmes managed by the Agency are: to support good governance and institution building (including public administration reform and support for the rule of law); to further invest in infrastructure and continue supporting the development of a market economy; and to support social development and the strengthening of civil society.

The Agency plays its part within the EU's process of 'Stabilisation and Association' which is currently launched with five countries in South Eastern Europe. Other EC-funded assistance includes macro-financial, humanitarian, democratisation, customs and fiscal planning aid, as well as support for educational exchange programmes. All of the above are in addition to the bilateral contributions made by EU Member States.



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