

“Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration”

Minutes of the 17th meeting of the Stakeholders Group for the cross-border region of “Sharra”



April 20th, 2017

Jegunovce, Macedonia

I. INTRODUCTION

Time and place:

April 20th, 2017, Restaurant “Antonio” in Jegunovce Macedonia

Participants

The structure of the participants on the 17th Stakeholder Group (SHG) meeting included 11 members of the Stakeholder Group of “Sharra” cross-border region. The meeting was organized and moderated by the SWG Head Office staff and the Sharra PMU office.

The full list of participants from the meeting can be found at:

ANNEX 1: List of participants_17th Sharra SHG Meeting

II. MEETING PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME

10:30 – 11:00 **Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering**

11:00 – 11:15 **Welcome speech**

Mr. Darko Spasoski, Secretary of the Municipality of Jegunovce
Mr. Flamur Sylejmani, Vice-president of “Sharra” Stakeholder Group
Mr. Emrullah Spahiu, Regional Coordinator of “Sharra” Cross-border Region
Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Sharra” Cross-border Region

11:15 – 12:10 **Overview of the activities within the EU project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration” related to implementation of ABDA in in the “Sharra” cross-border region**

Mr. Emrullah Spahiu, Regional Coordinator of “Sharra” Cross-border Region
Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Sharra” Cross-border Region

12:10 – 12:30 Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Sharra” Cross-border Region

12:30 – 12:45 Conclusions and future activities

12:45 - 13:00 Press conference

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch

Departure of the participants

III. MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The regular 17th Stakeholders Group Meeting aimed at presenting the realised and future activities related to the implementation of the ABD approach in the “Sharra” cross-border region, update with the new development in the region and information regarding the foreseen activities under the project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration”, with the main focus on the results from this project and possible future activities and upcoming projects.

The topics of the meeting were the following:

- Overview of the activities within the EU project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration” related to implementation of ABDA in in the “Sharra” cross-border region;
- Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project.

Minutes of the meeting

The meeting was opened with a welcome speech by Mr. Darko Spasoski, Secretary of the Municipality of Jegunovce and Mr. Flamur Sylejmani, Vice-President of the “Sharra” Stakeholder Group, who welcomed the participants and emphasised the importance of

the regional cooperation for overall development of the region and they both expressed the support of the overall activities of SWG and the “Sharra” Stakeholder Group in the region.

On behalf of SWG Project Management Unit office in “Sharra”, the Regional Coordinator Mr. Emrullah Spahiu welcomed all participants and thanked for the participation. He once again stressed the importance of the regular stakeholder’s group meetings and the importance of stakeholder’s active role in the regional initiatives and activities.

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Sharra” cross-border region, presented the program of the meeting and the issues to be discussed.

Session I

Overview of the activities within the EU project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration” related to implementation of ABDA in in the “Sharra” cross-border region

The first session included a presentation on the general achievements during the period June 2015 – April 2017 of the implementation of the European Union funded project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration”, emphasizing the objectives of the project regarding the implementation of the ABD approach in Sharra cross-border region.

The session included information regarding the results from the successfully realised People-to-People events in the cross-border region of Sharra. During this phase of the project implementation a total of nine (9) regional events have been successfully realised and their impact significantly improved the regional cooperation and have contributed to the economic development of the region.

In the second part of the presentation, the results from the eight (8) Stakeholder Group meetings that have been held during this phase of the project implementation were presented. The Regional Coordinator and Regional Manager thanked the members of the Stakeholder Group of the cross-border region of Sharra for their support in the implementation of the activities during this phase of the project.

During this session, the Regional Manager and the Regional Coordinator stressed the importance of the integrated economic development as a platform for cooperation between the local population, business sector, farmer's community and rural community actors in the cross-border region, by organizing joint actions, sharing information on resources and promotion of the joint offers.

Session II

Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project

In the last session, the Regional Manager, Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, presented some information regarding the application and evaluation process within the second call of the ABD Grant scheme in the cross-border region of Sharra. She presented some figures regarding the project applications, mentioning that the expectations for the second call in the cross-border region of Sharra have been achieved. In total, there were 14 project applications submitted, from which eleven (11) project applications from Kosovo*, two (2) from Albania and 1 (one) from Macedonia. Approved projects are as follow: in Macedonia – 1 project application (2 applicants) and in Kosovo* - 5 projects (6 applicants).

Meanwhile, because of insufficient grant funds, two (2) project applications that succeed the evaluation process with the necessary points were put on the waiting list for future possible support. Also, it was stressed that the project applications submitted were mainly focused in the sectors of agriculture and tourism.

Conclusions and future activities

In the last session of the meeting, the following conclusions were drawn:

- The current phase of the EU funded project: "Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration" implemented in the period June 2015 – April 2017, in the cross-border

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

region of Sharra, included the implementation of regional activities, such as Stakeholder Group meetings, People-to-People events, workshops for capacity building for the stakeholders, facilitation of development of project applications, etc;

- The implementation of the project provided opportunities for organization of regional events which contributed to the improvement of the local and regional economy, but also a chance for people from the neighboring countries to better get to know each other's culture and tradition;
- The Stakeholder Group for the cross-border region of "Sharra" should continue to include other different stakeholders, especially from the business sector and possibly work on developing common business ideas;
- The ABD grant scheme within LEIWW project implementation was considered a good opportunity to improve the rural development in the cross-border region of Sharra;
- At the end of the meeting a press conference was organized with local and national media in order to promote and share information regarding the regular meeting of the Stakeholder Group for the cross-border region of "Sharra" and the closure of the project financed by the European Union "Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration".

Prepared by:

Emrullah Spahiu
Regional Coordinator of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

Bojana Jovanovska
Regional Manager of "Sharra" Cross-border Region