

Strengthening regional – cooperation during the EU integration process and increase economic competitiveness of rural areas



commissioned by



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

**Boban Ilik – SWG Secretariat
Dresden November 2007**

Open Regional Fund (ORF)

Foreign Trade Promotion in South-East Europe

gtz Partner for the Future.
Worldwide.



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What is ORF?

Instrument of the German Technical Cooperation aimed at developing regional cooperation and strengthening capacities for EU accession in the SEE countries through promotion of competitiveness and foreign trade.

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Why such a Fund ?

- Promotion of regional cooperation in view of EU Accession.
- Strengthening sustainable structures for promoting competitiveness and foreign trade in SEE.
- Flexible instrument to provide timely and tailor-made solutions to issues of common interest.
- Mainstreaming of knowledge gained in bilateral projects



Expected Impacts from ORF

- Increased exports and employment
- New investments
- Improved cooperation among companies in the region (through working groups, networks, associations, clusters etc.)
- Improved service offers from business/trade promotion organizations (chambers, associations, private service providers)
- SME use the services from business/trade promotion organizations
- Improved business and investment climate in SEE countries

[ORF Project for the SWG]

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areas**



[SWG -Background information]

The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) has been established based on the Leipzig Agenda Document 2004, during the Agricultural Policy Forum 2005 entitled “Rural Development –Opportunities for Cooperation in the SEE” in Macedonia & Serbia - June 2005.



[Background information]

SWG has been established:

- On the basis of a common wish to establish an informal organization, consisted of representatives of institutions responsible for rural development in the respective countries and territories of South Eastern Europe (SEE)



[Background information]

SWG has been established:

- to work on rural development
on sustainable principles through:

- networking and permanent cooperation
between all stakeholders of rural development
in the region.

Members



Ministries of Agriculture from:

- Albania
- Bulgaria
- Macedonia
- Montenegro
- Serbia
- UNMIK Kosovo
- AP Vojvodina (Secretariat)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina (R. Srpska)

Expected membership from:

- Croatia
- Slovenia ?
- Romania
- Federation of BiH



Project Objective

The Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development provides concrete contributions for the improvement of the economic competitiveness of the border rural regions.



Project Components

Project Component 1:

- **EU Approximation - Policy and Professional Dialogue**

Project Component 2:

- **Cross – border project design and preparation**

Project Component 3:

- **Trade promotion - Local and regional people-to-people Actions for Rural Economic Development**



Activities to be carried out:

- Identification and analysis of economic development potentials in selected rural border regions significant to foreign trade
- Development and implementation of concepts for the utilization of these economic potentials (for example the development of regional brands, rural tourism)
- Support in the establishment, i.e. the further development, of institutional structures that promote rural development in the border regions

Activities to be carried out:

- Identification, planning and implementation of bilateral cross-border cooperation projects
- Establishment of an Internet based communication and information platform
- Promoting of regional exchange of know-how on the different working levels.



Expected results

- Permanent regional co-operation on EU-integration topics with major emphases on the **economic development of rural areas**
- Increase partners` ability in fine-tuning of **rural development policies** in relation to the EU (preparation of rural development programmes 2007-2013) and the implementation of rural development measure
- Foster sustainable overall development of rural areas, work in relation to poverty reduction in rural areas, support activities in the creation of new jobs, help with the empowerment of young farmers and women through diversification of activities in rural areas and support activities to increase the attractiveness of rural areas in SEE

Contacts

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[www.seerural.org]

www.seerural.org is the official web site of the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group.

www.seerural.org is an internet platform promoting cooperation for sustainable rural development in South-East Europe.



South Eastern Europe
SWG RRD
Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group