



# Guide

## for establishing institutional mechanisms for cooperation of local self-government units with the diaspora

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## Introduction



The topic of this Guide is, as the name suggests, the establishment of institutional mechanisms for cooperation of local self-government units with the diaspora.

The Guide deals with topics such as: the concept of diaspora and its importance for the home country, the legal basis for cooperation with the diaspora, strategic documents recognizing the importance of cooperation with the diaspora, opportunities for cooperation of local governments with the diaspora and the importance of cooperation with the diaspora community and institutional mechanisms for cooperation of local self-government units with the diaspora.

Recommendations for the selection of the mechanism of local self-government units for cooperation with the diaspora are also given.

We hope that this Guide will be useful to local governments in establishing and defining the scope and forms of cooperation with the diaspora.



## Diaspora



The word diaspora (diaspora) is of Greek origin and denotes members of one people who live separately from the motherland, that is, the mother country.

Such a broad definition has no restrictions in terms of time, place of birth, citizenship and sense of belonging. In addition, there is no restriction in terms of permanence of staying abroad, but the diaspora also includes people in temporary labor migrations.

Thus, the diaspora also includes people born abroad, who may have the citizenship of the country to which their parents or ancestors immigrated (second and third generation of migrants, born abroad). The experience of identity and sense of belonging can apply to both countries (country of origin and country of reception).

*The Law on Diaspora and Serbs in the Region* itself defines the term diaspora as:

- Citizens of the Republic of Serbia living abroad;
- Members of the Serbian people and emigrants from the territory of the Republic of Serbia and the region and their descendants.

In terms of this Guide, the diaspora will mean all of the above, and the most important characteristic of members of the diaspora will be their willingness to contribute to the development of the country, region, or place of birth.

Emigration phases from Serbia can be divided into six key periods:

- 1) Economic emigration from the end of the 19th century to the First World War, mainly to America,
- 2) Between the First and Second World War, including the return of migrants from overseas countries to Serbia (1930s),
- 3) War and post-war political emigration in the 1940s and 1950s, mostly to overseas countries,
- 4) Economic emigration in the period from 1960 to 1980, when mostly low-skilled workers left the country and went to the countries of Western Europe,
- 5) Political and economic emigration in the 90s of the 20th century, which was characterized by the departure of a large number of highly qualified people, the so-called brain drain and
- 6) The wave that begins in 2000 and is still in progress.

From the above, it can be concluded that the Serbian diaspora is extremely heterogeneous, that there are different motives of emigration, that members of the diaspora come from different social backgrounds, with different levels of education, and thus with different experience of reception in host countries.

Within the Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia for 2010, an estimate of the size of the diaspora based on the destination country was made (Estimation of the size of the diaspora based on the

destination country, Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia for 2010, International Organization for Migration (IOM))

Table 1. Estimation of diaspora size based on the destination country

Destination country	Estimated diaspora population
The USA	1.000.000
Canada	200.000
Chile	5.000
Brasil	8.000
Argentina	5.000
Norway	2.500
Sweden	75.000
Denmark	7.000
Finland	4.000
Germany	500.000
Benelux	50.000
Great Britain	80.000
France	120.000
Switzerland	120.000
Italy	20.000
Austria	300.000
Russian Federation	20.000
Former USSR countries	3.000
Turkey	15.000
Cyprus	5.000
China	3.000
Australia	200.000
New Zealand	7.000
South Africa	20.000
Africa, the rest	5.000
total	2.774.500

This is also the last Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia, in which an estimate of the size of the diaspora based on the destination country was published.

Within the Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia for 2014, a table of the size of the diaspora in EU Member States based on the destination country and by gender is given, source Eurostat (Citizens of the Republic of Serbia living in EU Member States in 2012 and 2013, based on gender, *Migration profile of the Republic of Serbia for 2014*, Government of RS)

Table 2: Citizens of the Republic of Serbia living in EU member states in 2012 and 2013, based on gender

Destination country	2012.			2013.		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Germany	215.189	109.277	105.912	216.628	108.773	107.855
Austria	111.642	57.866	53.776	111.303	57.469	53.834
Italy	51.103	26.778	24.325	41.678	21.066	20.612
Slovenia	7.317	5.108	2.209	7.784	5.433	2.351
Belgium	7.109	3.643	3.466	6.937	3.546	3.391
Sweden	6.127	3.200	2.927	6.409	3.389	3.020
Hungary	8.388	4.440	3.948	4.894	2.752	2.142
Spain	3.245	1.658	1.587	3.173	1.594	1.579
The Czech Republic	2.081	1.401	680	2.253	1.504	749
The Netherlands	141	68	73	2.116	962	1.154
Romania	417	277	140	1.460	1.059	401
Finland	901	501	400	832	456	376
Denmark	660	329	331	788	392	396
Slovakia	665	493	172	716	523	193
Bulgaria	643	369	274	645	367	278
Poland	248	213	35	252	217	35

There are no precise data on the number of members of the diaspora. It is estimated that the number ranges from four to five million.

Regarding the territorial analysis of migration movements, there are three large emigration zones in the Republic of Serbia:

- 1) Central and eastern parts of the country - Branicevski, Borski and Pomoravski districts,
- 2) Southern parts of Zlatibor and Raska districts and
- 3) Parts of Pčinja and Jablanica districts, especially the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac.

The central and eastern parts of the country have been known for significant emigration since the 1981 and 1991 censuses, while the other two emigration zones emerged mostly in the 1990s.

The changes of the structure of the number of migrants in relation to the countries of migration, according to the data from the census held from 1971 until today, is given in the following table.

Table 3. Structure of people at work - residence abroad based on the country in which they work or reside (in %)

Foreign country	Year of the census				
	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
Serbia	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Austria	19,7	23,4	24,9	21,2	22,5
France	13,7	12,5	8,3	6,5	6,5
Germany	45,8	37,1	25,0	24,8	17,9
Switzerland	3,3	9,3	13,9	15,8	13,1
Sweden	4,3	4,6	3,7	3,4	3,5
Benelux countries	1,7	1,6	1,3	2,3	2,0
other European countries	2,5	2,8	4,3	13,0	16,8
The USA	2,6	2,7	2,7	3,9	4,3
Australia	3,4	2,3	1,9	1,8	1,2
Canada	1,4	1,4	2,3	2,6	2,0
other non-European countries	0,5	1,1	1,2	1,4	1,6
unknown country	1,1	1,3	10,5	3,3	2,4
former Yugoslav countries	/	/	/	/	6,3

Source: Serbia in the process of external migration, Republic Statistical Office (2014)

According to the results of the Census of Population from 2011, the percentage of people at work and residence abroad in the total population, in regions is: Belgrade (2.81%), Vojvodina (2.55%), Sumadija and Western Serbia 4.91%), Eastern and Southern Serbia (6.65%). The percentage in the total population of the Republic of Serbia is 4.20 %. A person at work - residence abroad is considered a person who has been at work - residence abroad for a year and more than a year.

Out of 9 districts in the region of Eastern and Southern Serbia, in two districts the relative percentage in their total population is around or over 15%, with the percentage of Braničevo district being around 21%.

In addition to these municipalities with "extreme" values of relative percentages (Malo Crniće with 33%, Kučevo with 30% and Žabari with 31%), in the same area, there are municipalities from which a quarter of their inhabitants are at work – residence abroad (Veliko Gradiste: 25.1% and Petrovac na Mlavi: 25.2%). In addition, external migrants from the municipalities of Golubac (19.1%), Žagubica (18.7%) and Požarevac (11.4%) have very noticeable percentage in this area.





The Bor district also includes two municipalities that participate with a quarter of their population in the foreign migrant population - Negotin (with 25.8%) and Kladovo (with 25.0%). This group of municipalities should also include the Municipality of Boljevac from the Zajecar area, which has a percentage of 9.7%.

The population of the northeastern parts of central Serbia (especially people of Vlach nationality) has a long external migration tradition, which, by all accounts, is passed down from generation to generation.

You can find more information in the publication entitled "Serbia in the Process of External Migration - Census", published by the Republic Statistical Office in 2014.

The next Census is scheduled for the year 2021, and the new data on external migration will be available.



## The importance of diaspora

Although heterogeneous, the diaspora is a source of many resources: human (level of education, skills and knowledge, knowledge of world trends, knowledge of markets outside the home country), financial and entrepreneurial (remittances from abroad, potential for foreign direct investment, real estate purchase, business investment, humanitarian activities, etc.), social (networks within the diaspora, mainly within associations, networks of diaspora representatives with entities from the host country, professional ties, family and friendly ties, links with the local community, social networks in the country of origin, etc.) and cultural (norms, ideas, values and habits that the representatives of the diaspora possess).

Important characteristics of the diaspora are the knowledge of the mother tongue, knowledge of culture, business culture in the country of origin, as well as the emotional connection with the country of origin and with the place of origin and local culture.

More than 3.4 billion euros arrive in Serbia annually through remittances from the diaspora (National Bank of Serbia, data for 2018), which represents 15% of the gross domestic product of Serbia. The Republic of Serbia is the fifth in the world for remittances per capita.

In other countries, the ratio of remittances to investments is 50%: 50%. In the Republic of Serbia, that ratio is 90%: 10%. This data clearly indicates that investment from the diaspora is the potential in the Republic of Serbia.

If they decide to invest in the country of origin, depending on their experience, knowledge and expertise gained abroad, the representatives of the diaspora in the home country generally develop products intended for export. Knowledge of world trends and markets, the business networks they have built, gives them an advantage over domestic entrepreneurs.

Investments by members of the diaspora can stimulate the development of the economy in the country of origin, introduce innovations and influence the improvement of the country's access to the global labor market and the global knowledge and innovation network.

It can also affect the networking, ie connecting entrepreneurs and decision makers from the home country with entrepreneurs and investors abroad.

The Diaspora can also provide mentoring services, both to entrepreneurs and to highly educated and scientific staff from the home country. Diaspora investors have less aversion to political instability and economic crises in their home country than other foreign investors. Most foreign investors decide on an investment that will result in a quick return on investment, which is not always the case with diaspora investors, who often have long-term investment goals.

All these resources represent a comparative advantage of the diaspora over domestic and, very importantly, foreign investors.



## Legal basis for cooperation with the diaspora

Relations with the diaspora and the cooperation of the home country with the diaspora is based on the Article 13 of the **Constitution of the Republic of Serbia** ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 98/2006), which reads: "The Republic of Serbia protects the rights and interests of its citizens abroad." The Republic of Serbia is developing and improving the relations of Serbs living abroad with their home country. "

The relationship between the homeland and the diaspora is considered one of the priorities of the Republic of Serbia, which is stated in the **Declaration on declaring the relationship between the homeland and the diaspora a relationship of the greatest state and national interest** ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 86/2006). The Declaration states that the relationship between the homeland and the diaspora is considered a relationship of the greatest state and national interest. The Declaration recognizes the importance of achieving material conditions for the return of the diaspora to the homeland, as well as the importance of cooperation with the diaspora and enabling members of the diaspora to "bring their material and spiritual goods, which, in addition to their presence and the presence of their descendants, will supplement and enrich Serbia."

**The Law on Diaspora and Serbs in the Region** ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 88/2009) legally regulates the manner of preserving, strengthening and establishing ties between the Diaspora and Serbs in the region and the home country, the competence and mutual relationship of Serbian official institutions in performing activities in the area of relations with the diaspora, constitution and competence of the Assembly of Diaspora and Serbs in the region, establishment of the Budget Fund for Diaspora and Serbs in the region, establishment of the Council for Diaspora, registration of organizations in the diaspora, etc. The law defines the term diaspora and it includes:

- Citizens of the Republic of Serbia living abroad;
- Members of the Serbian people and emigrants from the territory of the Republic of Serbia and the region and their descendants.

## Strategic documents related to cooperation with the diaspora

**The Strategy for Preservation and Strengthening of the Homeland and Diaspora** ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 4/2011 and 14/2011). The strategy was adopted without a set period of validity. In accordance with the Law on Planning System ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 30/2018), which has been adopted in the meantime, the strategy is usually adopted for a period of five to seven years. Having in mind the elapsed time since its adoption, the adoption of a new public policy document is under consideration.

In addition, the two-year Action Plan envisaged by the previous Strategy was never adopted.

The priorities of the previous Strategy were:

Priority 1: Positioning of Serbia as the home country of all its citizens living abroad, Serbs in the region, as well as members of the Serbian people emigrating from the territory of RS and from other regions and their descendants

Within this priority, a special goal has been recognized: Creating conditions for improving the position of the diaspora and Serbs in the region

Priority 2: Better use of diaspora capacity

With specific objectives:

2.1. Creation of conditions for business connections and cooperation of business entities in Serbia with business entities in the diaspora and the region

2.2. Better use of professional, scientific and technological resources of the diaspora / Serbs in the region

2.3. Better use of cultural, educational and sports resources of the diaspora / Serbs in the region

Priority 3: Preservation of national identity

With specific objectives:

3.1. Support to the organization and implementation of educational work abroad

3.2. Preservation and nurturing Serbian culture in the diaspora

3.3. Improving informing the diaspora about activities in the home country and the home country about activities in the diaspora / region

The Strategy and Action Plan do not recognize the role of local self-government in cooperation with the diaspora.

**The Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2020 - research for innovations** ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 25/2016) and the Action Plan for the

implementation of the Strategy for the period from 2016 to 2020 recognize the significance and role of the diaspora.

Within the specific Objective 1: Encouraging excellence and relevance of scientific research in the Republic of Serbia, the prominent thing is

Measure 1.6: Establishment of a special fund for science, with expected outcomes:

1.6.3 Support will be provided to the development and training of young talented researchers and returnees who have resided in renowned international scientific institutions

1.6.4 Strengthening cooperation with the scientific diaspora.

Within the specific objective 4: Ensuring excellence and availability of human resources for science and economy and social activities, the prominent thing is

Measure 4.4. Strengthening cooperation with the diaspora including the expected outcomes:

4.4.1 Inclusion in the educational and scientific system of well-known scientists from the diaspora will facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experience from eminent laboratories and institutions around the world

4.4.2 Creation of a catalog of the Serbian scientific diaspora interested in participating in the work of expert committees or cooperation in educational and research initiatives and establishing coordination mechanisms for the implementation of this activity in practice.

**Strategy on economic migration of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2027, which was adopted in early 2020**, in the analysis of the institutional framework does not recognize local government as a relevant institution, but recognizes it as a stakeholder.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1: Establishing and strengthening institutional capacities for monitoring and improving the quality of economic migration data.

MEASURES:

1. Strengthening the capacity of institutions responsible for monitoring migration (according to the type-combined: regulatory and management-organizational);
2. Upgrading or reforming the existing institutional framework to meet the need for more efficient management of economic migration (according to the type - combined: regulatory and management-organizational);
3. Establishing a greater degree of coordination to support the inclusion of the concept of economic migration in development policies (according to the type - combined institutional-managerial and provision of goods and services);
4. Establishment of a regular, updated, synchronized statistical base for monitoring migration flows in the Republic of Serbia (according to the type - combined institution-managerial and provision of goods and services).

*Within this specific objective, it is stated that it is necessary to achieve greater coordination at the local level, i.e., strategic and operational connection of local Migration Councils with Youth Offices and Local*

*Employment Councils. This is all that in the Strategy directly refers to the institutions at the local level that should deal with cooperation with the diaspora.*

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2: Improving living and working conditions in the economic and social sector.

MEASURES:

1. Continuation of the implementation of structural reforms and raising the efficiency of the public sector (according to the type - combined institutional-managerial and provision of goods and services);
2. Strengthening institutional capacities for creating support for attracting direct investments (according to the type - combined institutional-managerial and provision of goods and services);
3. Development of programs for retaining human capacities from the category of deficit occupations, (according to the type - incentive);
4. Improving the capacity of the market economy in accordance with the strategic recommendations of the European Union (according to the type - incentive);
5. Development of programs for attracting and including foreigners of different educational profiles on the labor market of the Republic of Serbia (according to the type - combined: regulatory and incentive);
6. Strengthening the struggle for the law enforcement, against corruption and nepotism, (according to the type - combined: regulatory and managerial-organizational).

SPECIAL OBJECTIVE 3: Adjusting the education system to the needs of the economy, with an emphasis on monitoring innovations, brought by the fourth industrial revolution, especially in the field of development of new occupations and education profiles and creating conditions for attracting foreign students.

MEASURES:

1. Adjusting the enrollment policy system with the needs of the labor market (according to the type - combined: regulatory and managerial-organizational);
2. Construction of mechanisms for linking science and economy, through the introduction of incentive measures for greater prominence of economy for research and development, as well as increasing the number of researchers in the economy, number of patents and technical solutions (according to the type - combined: institution-managerial and incentive);
3. Development of special programs and projects for the return of highly educated labor force (according to the type - combined: institutional-managerial and incentive);
4. Providing appropriate professional training and professional development of young people and creating conditions for their return (according to the type combined: regulatory and managerial-organizational incentive);
5. Encouraging the mobility of students and researchers and strengthening the capacity of higher education institutions to attract foreign students and researchers (according to the type - combined: institutional-managerial and incentive).

SPECIAL OBJECTIVE 4: Improving cooperation between the diaspora and the homeland and encouraging transnational entrepreneurship.

MEASURES:

1. Improving the mechanisms for on-line informing the diaspora about all relevant information (according to the type - combined: regulatory and educationally informative);

2. Encouragement of tangible and intangible investments of the diaspora and continuation of the development of investment guides (according to the type incentive);
3. creating conditions for optimizing the potential of the diaspora through formal remittance flows, increasing the impact of foreign exchange remittances on the development and greater engagement of the diaspora at the local level (according to the type - combined: institutional-managerial and incentive);
4. Strengthening transnational entrepreneurship with returnees, as well as members of the diaspora who maintain business ties with the Republic of Serbia, (according to the type combined: institutional-managerial and incentive).

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 5: To create conditions for monitoring, encouraging and supporting circular and return migrations.

MEASURES:

1. Establishment and institutionalization of return and circular migration programs and their greater social affirmation (according to the type combined: institutional-managerial and incentive);
2. Development of mechanisms for regular monitoring of return and circular migrations (according to the type combined: institutional-managerial and incentive).

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6: Creating conditions for more efficient management of internal migration flows

MEASURES:

1. Improving the skills and competencies of the workforce in rural areas, with the aim of raising entrepreneurial potential (according to the type - combined: regulatory and educationally informative);
2. Creation of incentive employment policies in order to transform these areas suitable primarily for young people, (according to the type - combined: incentive, regulatory and managerial-organizational);
3. Strengthening the capacity of local institutions in the planning and implementation of migration and development projects, (according to the type - combined: regulatory and educational-informative).

## Institutions dealing with cooperation with diaspora

The Law on Diaspora and Serbia in the Region gives the authority to the **Ministry in charge of cooperation with the Diaspora**, to accomplish the following:

- 1) Propose to the Government the adoption of acts and undertaking measures determining the Government's policy towards the diaspora and Serbs in the region and, in this regard, prepare documentation, information and analyzes in the field of relations with the diaspora and Serbs in the region;
- 2) Monitor the situation in the field of relations between the home country and the diaspora, as well as the home country and Serbs in the region, determine and study the consequences of the situation and take measures or propose to the Government the adoption of regulations and measures authorized by the Government;
- 3) Keep records of organizations and associations of organizations in the diaspora, as well as records of organizations and associations of Serbs in the region.

In the period from 2004 to 2012, the Republic of Serbia had the Ministry of Diaspora as part of the RS Government. During 2012, the newly appointed government transformed the Ministry of Diaspora into an Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the region, as part of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The affairs of the Office were taken over by the Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2014. **Organizations in the Diaspora**, in terms of the Law, include voluntary forms of association of members of the Diaspora, in order to promote Serbia and affirm Serbian state interests and ethnic identity, as well as the realization of cultural, educational, scientific, humanitarian or sports cooperation with the home country with a non-profit goal, in accordance with the regulations of the foreign country where the diaspora lives, i.e., Serbs in the region.

It is estimated that there are more than 1,300 organizations and associations in the world today, including various organizational forms within the Serbian Orthodox Church, whose activities are mostly focused on preserving the national and cultural identity of the Serbian people abroad.

This Law also stipulates that the highest representative body of the Diaspora and Serbs in the region is the Assembly of the Diaspora and Serbs in the region, whose competence is, among other things, to determine the problems of the Diaspora and Serbs in the region and propose measures to overcome them, determines the strategy, elects Councils of the diaspora and Serbs in the region, supervises their work and decides on the termination of the mandate of their members.

The assembly consists of 45 delegates from the diaspora and Serbs in the region.

The delegates are respected people in the area in which they live, ready to work to preserve and strengthen relations between the home country and the diaspora, as well as the home country and Serbs in the region, and are elected for countries or parts of countries where there is a significant number of members of the diaspora, that is, Serbs in the region, with the following numbers:

- Four diaspora delegates, each for: The United States of America and Germany;
- Three diaspora delegates each for Austria, Switzerland, and Australia and New Zealand;



- Two diaspora delegates each for Canada, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- One diaspora delegate for the countries of Central and South America;
- One diaspora delegate for Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg;
- One diaspora delegate for Denmark;
- One diaspora delegate for Italy;
- One diaspora delegate each for Norway, Finland and Iceland;
- One diaspora delegate each for the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus;
- One diaspora delegate each for Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania;
- One diaspora delegate each for Spain and the Portugal;
- One diaspora delegate each for Greece, Bulgaria and Cyprus;
- One diaspora delegate each for Turkey, the Middle East, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait;
- One delegate of the diaspora each for the People's Republic of China and the countries of Asia without the Russian Federation;
- One diaspora delegate each for the Republic of South Africa and other African countries;
- One Serb delegate in the region for: Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania.

The Prime Minister, Ministers in charge of Diaspora, Foreign Affairs, Interior affairs, Finance, Economy, Education, Culture, Labor and Social Policy, Youth, Sports and Religion, one representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Chambers of Commerce of Serbia, Standing Conferences of Towns and Municipalities and Public Service of Radio Television of Serbia , participate in the work of the Assembly.

The Assembly of Diaspora and Serbs in the region has permanent working bodies:

- 1) Diaspora Economic Council;
- 2) Council for Status Issues of the Diaspora;
- 3) Council for cultural, educational, scientific and sports cooperation.

**The Economic Council of the Diaspora** represents the interests of the Diaspora and proposes to the Assembly measures for:

- 1) Creating conditions for the inclusion of members of the diaspora in the economic system and business life of the Republic of Serbia, as well as the return of members of the diaspora to the Republic of Serbia;

2) Creating conditions and a favorable environment for investment programs and projects of organizations in the diaspora and individuals from the diaspora;

3) Development and improvement of cooperation with local self-government units and regional Chambers of commerce.

The Government forms **the Council for Diaspora**, in order to consider certain issues, give proposals, opinions and expert explanations regarding the determination and conduct of policy towards the Diaspora, as well as giving opinions and proposing activities that will be funded by the Budget Fund for Diaspora and Serbs in the region.

The Diaspora Council consists of representatives of the ministries responsible for education, science, culture, religion, finance, economy and regional development, foreign affairs, internal affairs, defense and diaspora.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia has a **Committee for the Diaspora and Serbs in the region**, whose competence is to consider draft laws and other general acts in the field of improving relations with the diaspora and Serbs in the region, as well as other issues related to:

-preservation, strengthening and realization of the connection between the home country and Serbs in the region;

- improving the position and protection of the rights and interests of members of the diaspora and Serbs in the region;

- creating conditions for the use, learning and nurturing of the Serbian language and the Cyrillic alphabet, preservation and nurturing of the Serbian cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious identity of the diaspora and Serbs in the region;

- creating conditions for the return of members of the diaspora to the Republic of Serbia and their inclusion in the political, economic and cultural life of the Republic of Serbia, etc.

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **the Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region is established**, whose competence is:

- monitoring the position of citizens of the Republic of Serbia living outside the Republic of Serbia;

- providing support to the process of improving the conditions for exercising the right to vote for citizens of the Republic of Serbia living abroad

- providing assistance in preserving and developing the spiritual, national and cultural identity of the Serbian people outside the Republic of Serbia;

-improving the ties of emigrants, citizens of the Republic of Serbia living abroad and their organizations with the Republic of Serbia;

-informing emigrants, citizens of the Republic of Serbia abroad, about the policies of the Republic of Serbia;

-providing assistance in the process of inclusion of emigrants, people of Serbian origin, people of Serbian origin and citizens of the Republic of Serbia living abroad in the political, economic and cultural life of the Republic of Serbia and their return to the Republic of Serbia, etc.



**The Business Council for the Diaspora** of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce was established with the aim of better representing the Republic of Serbia in the world and attracting investments. It consists of representatives of 47 successful companies from Serbia and 21 representatives of state institutions.

**The Development Agency of Serbia (RAS)** was established to perform development, professional and operational activities to encourage and realize direct investments, promote and increase exports, develop and improve the competitiveness of economic entities, reputation and development of the Republic of Serbia in the field of economy and regional development. Therefore, it represents an important institution for cooperation with the diaspora.

**A Regional Development Agency** is a company or association established to perform activities or improve regional development and is one of the subjects of regional development in terms of the Law on Regional Development. There are 16 accredited regional agencies operating in the Republic of Serbia.

The Regional Development Agency performs the following tasks:

- 1) participates in the preparation and implementation of development documents and monitors their implementation in the region and local self-government units;
- 2) Cooperates with autonomous provinces and local self-government units in the preparation and implementation of local development plans;
- 3) Represents the interest of the region in relations with the National Agency and the regional agency and, within its competence, participates in the implementation of adopted development documents;
- 4) Prepares and implements professional training programs for the needs of development of companies and entrepreneurship, development of infrastructure and development of institutions and organizations and for improving the capacity of local self-government units;
- 5) Monitors and implements measures and implements development projects for which it is authorized;
- 6) Performs international, cross-border and inter-municipal cooperation activities within its competence;
- 7) Maintains an information system of importance for the region and area;
- 8) Performs other tasks in accordance with the founding act.

Given the activity they perform, regional agencies represent a significant resource for cooperation with the diaspora.

**Local Diaspora Offices:** At the initiative of the Ministry of Diaspora, ie the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region, 14 Diaspora Offices have been established in Serbia. There are offices in Nis, Smederevo, Kladovo, Kucevo, Ada, Pozarevac, Veliko Gradiste, Paracin, Despotovac, Golubac, Krusevac, Arilje, Trgoviste and Rekovac (<https://tamodaleko.co.rs/adresar-kancelarija-za-dijasporu/>)

The results of the desktop research show that within the municipal or city administration of these units of local self-government there are no systematized jobs where these tasks are performed, nor are there formal organizational units within the municipal / city administration. Diaspora offices operate through activities of a contact person for cooperation with the diaspora.



The current practice shows that the diaspora obtains information by contacting the embassy or consulate or the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, the Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and possibly the Office for Local Economic Development in the municipality / city.

The competencies and programs of these institutions are often separated from each other. It is common for one of the institutions to initiate a program of cooperation with the diaspora, not knowing that another institution is already implementing or has implemented such a program. Better communication and networking is necessary, in order to achieve better effects, which have been at a law level so far.

It is important to note that the institutions in charge of attracting investments do not differentiate between representatives of the diaspora and other foreign investors.

This difference is not recognized in the Law on Investments either. There is currently no specific program for diaspora investment and diaspora investment increase. The ICMPD study found that a locally based approach, involving regional development agencies and local economic development, could be more effective than focusing at the national level, although there is no doubt that only synergistic efforts of central level decisions and policies can support local initiatives and development. In essence, there is a need to build trust between representatives of the diaspora and local authorities, whether at the local or central level of the RS government. (Link up! Serbia– Feasibility study on Encouraging Investment from the Diaspora, International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) (2017).

## The importance of the diaspora for local communities

The interest of the diaspora is focused primarily on the homeland, the local area of origin, more than on the home country. It is often a characteristic of the area of eastern Serbia that members of the diaspora invest in the construction of houses in the place of origin in which they will stay only a few days a year and in which they will probably never live.

The total amount of remittances from abroad, as the most common type of support for a family that remained in the home country, is constantly increasing and has not decreased even during economic crises. Even in cases when members of the diaspora decide to invest in their home country, in most cases it is an investment in their hometown. Of the total number of investments from the diaspora, 90% refers to investments in the place of birth or region. This data tells us about the great potential that local governments can use in order to develop the local community.

In addition, the diaspora invests in a young, qualified workforce, performs quality training of employees and equips the company with modern equipment.

In addition to entrepreneurial investments, the diaspora is often interested in investing in infrastructure projects in their hometown, endowment, organization of humanitarian actions, etc. Their motive is not exclusively making of a profit, but also the desire to contribute to the development of the homeland and motives of an emotional nature.

Local governments can further encourage infrastructure investment by offering diaspora investors a public-private partnership and other forms of cooperation.

The importance of investors from the diaspora is also the fact that they have great potential for lobbying foreign companies to invest in Serbia, the region or at the local level. Members of the diaspora often organize events intended for representatives of certain economic sectors and branches from the home country and the host country, thus contributing to the networking and promotion of the domestic economy on the international market.

Local governments should recognize the diaspora as an important partner for local economic development and beyond, for sustainable development, as well as a significant resource for financing strategic projects.

In this regard, and given the insufficient development of mechanisms at the local level that cooperate with the diaspora, with the establishment of institutions for cooperation with the diaspora or entrusting that competence to an existing body or institution, it is necessary to start training employees who will deal with this work. In addition, it is necessary to develop a training program for employees in local self-government units, which should be included in the annual training program of the National Academy of Public Administration.

## Position and role of local self-government in cooperation with the diaspora

The competencies of local self-government are set forth by *the Law on Local Self-Government*.

Among other things, local government:

- adopts and implements programs to encourage local economic development, undertakes activities to maintain existing and attract new investments and improves general business conditions;
- takes care of the protection, improvement and use of agricultural land and implements rural development policy;
- takes care of the development and improvement of tourism, crafts, catering and trade
- takes care of the construction, reconstruction, maintenance and use of local roads and streets and other public facilities of municipal importance;
- regulates and ensures the performance and development of communal services, local transport, use of construction land and business premises;
- takes care of meeting the needs of citizens in the field of education (preschool education and primary and secondary education and upbringing), scientific research and innovation activities, culture, health and social protection, child protection, sports and physical culture
- performs other tasks of local importance set forth by the law as well as tasks of direct interest to citizens, in accordance with the Constitution, law and statute.

The unit of local self-government through the unit for local economic development and investment support is the subject of investment support, in accordance with the *Law on Investments*. As such, the Local Economic Development and Investment Support Unit provides professional assistance and support to investors in the realization of investments.

The competent body of the local self-government unit encourages investment attraction with local development policy instruments, takes care of existing investments and their expansion, number and total value of investments and quality of investors, applies standards of favorable business environment and makes decisions on measures to encourage local self-government competitiveness.

Measures to encourage competitiveness contain in particular the following elements:

- 1) Designation of bodies as investment support units;
- 2) Strengthening the analytical basis for more precise and databased creation of development policies, instruments and measures in the field of local economic development;
- 3) Establishment of transparent mechanisms of constant communication and cooperation with the economy;
- 4) Simplification of local procedures for investment realization;
- 5) Balancing the local labor market;
- 6) Development of communal and local economic infrastructure;
- 7) Use of information and communication technology in order to achieve more efficient communication;
- 8) Formulating local subsidies based on local strategic documents.



Local economic development and investment support activities are the task of Offices for Local Economic Development, administrative bodies, public authorities, and legal persons established by the local self-government, natural persons (employed or appointed), chambers, associations, who have enough knowledge to provide professional assistance to the investor and are designated by the local government units.

Two or more local self-government units may jointly designate a body entrusted with the work of the local economic development and investment support for the territory of those local self-government units.



## Activities aimed at strengthening cooperation with the diaspora

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the diaspora is one of the most important partners for local governments, not only in the field of socio-economic development, but also in the infrastructural development of the community. The diaspora has too much potential for local governments to make contacts and cooperation with the diaspora ad-hoc. There is practically no local self-government in Serbia that does not have its own diaspora. The size and characteristics of the diaspora (phases of emigration, predominant level of education, etc.) differ and considering that, the scope and intensity of activities, as well as the established mechanism for cooperation will differ from municipality to municipality / city.

Activities for establishing and developing cooperation with the diaspora, among others, can be:

1. Identification of key development priorities and specific projects to make a joint program with the diaspora (joint funds), innovative development practices (business incubators, clusters, social enterprises, women's networks, business services, activities of the Chamber of Commerce, trainings) and various participants in the community - representatives of the private sector, science, public sector (hospitals, schools), international organizations, civil society organizations;

### 2. Diaspora mapping

It is important to collect data on the diaspora (size, geographical distribution of population, gender, age, education, skills, employment status, property status, contribution to trade, level of direct investment and remittances, participation in networks, groups, organizations and associations with development goals);

### 3. Identification of partners in the diaspora and their interests

It is important to recognize existing diaspora initiatives - community programs, networks, associations, professional and business clubs and find ways to support and connect them with the development needs of the local community;

### 4. Identification of ways in which the diaspora can make a specific contribution to development

It is necessary to classify the diaspora according to profession, qualifications and skills and include them in solving the challenges identified in certain sectors - information technology, health, education, etc.;

5. Developing incentives that will attract the diaspora to participate in local community development programs;

### 6. Identification of the main obstacles to cooperation with the diaspora

(Inadequate transport infrastructure, banking system, bureaucratic procedures, weak partnerships, corruption, lack of support networks, unclear interlocutors in local and national government, weak consular services, etc.);

7. Choose adequate social measures and policies both direct (tax relief, matching funds, human capital programs, information campaigns, diaspora gathering events in the homeland, scholarships, etc.) and indirect (infrastructure development, reduction of bureaucratic procedures, development of partnerships, development of stimulating business instruments);

8. Build the capacity of local self-government to work with the diaspora;



## 9. Ensure policy coherence

It is important to ensure the coherence of policies towards the diaspora at the national, regional and local levels, but also the coherence of domestic policies with the policies of destination countries at all these levels. It is also necessary to ensure the compatibility of diaspora policies with development policies;

## 10. Involve representatives of the diaspora in the consultation process when creating planning and policy documents.

For all these activities, it is necessary for the municipality / city to have a proactive approach to the diaspora and to treat the cooperation with the diaspora as a process of dialogue between the two sides.

Due to all the above, it is important for local self-government to recognize migration and the diaspora as a development resource that should be identified in local strategic documents. In addition, cooperation is necessary both horizontally (local services, municipal / city administration departments and local government representatives) and at the vertical level (cooperation with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and all other participants that have contacts with the diaspora).

Local governments can use various mechanisms to encourage investment from the diaspora. In addition to the classic investment of capital in starting your own business and buying shares of companies in the home country, we should also mention the types of investments that are not used enough, and in recent years local governments are starting to use them (public-private partnership and municipal bonds).

The previously mentioned **public-private partnership** is established by making a public-private partnership contract with or without elements of a concession. A public-private partnership is a long-term cooperation between a public and a private partner to provide financing, construction, reconstruction, management or maintenance of infrastructure and other facilities of public importance, as well as services of public importance (e.g., utilities).

When it comes to communal services, through a public-private partnership, the following services are established and realized: purification and drainage of atmospheric and wastewater, production, distribution and supply of thermal energy, municipal waste management, urban and suburban passenger transport (except public regular passenger transport by trolleybuses and trams), cemetery and burial management, funeral activities, public car park management, provision of public lighting, market management, street and road maintenance, cleanliness of public areas, maintenance of public green areas, chimney sweeping services, zoohygiene activities

**Municipal bonds** are debt securities issued by local governments, which give the owner the right to repay the principal, interest, as well as other rights defined by the decision on the issuing municipal bonds. The most common purpose of issuing municipal bonds is to finance strategically important projects, i.e., capital investment expenditures.

Local governments can borrow in the country and abroad, i.e., in the domestic and foreign markets. In addition, local governments can borrow in domestic and foreign currency. Municipal bonds can be issued and sold to pre-selected investors and then we are talking about private placement or they can be issued by public offering to an indefinite number of buyers, when it comes to public placement of municipal bonds. Considering this, the local government can direct municipal bonds to the diaspora as a buyer.

## Internal organization of LSG

The internal organization of local self-government units is regulated by the Law on Local Self-Government. According to the law, local self-government is exercised in the municipality, city and the city of Belgrade. The bodies of the municipality are the Municipal assembly, the Mayor, the Municipal council and the municipal administration.

**The Municipal Assembly** is the highest body of the municipality that performs the basic functions of local government and represents the legislative body of local government.

The Municipal Assembly establishes permanent or temporary working bodies to consider issues within its competence. The working bodies give an opinion on the draft regulations and decisions made by the municipal assembly and perform other tasks determined by the municipal statute.

The executive bodies of the municipality are the Mayor and the Municipal council.

### Mayor:

- 1) Represents the municipality;
- 2) Proposes the manner of resolving issues on which the Assembly decides;
- 3) Is in charge of budget execution;
- 4) Directs and harmonizes the work of the municipal administration;
- 5) Adopts individual acts for which he is authorized by law, statute or decision of the Assembly;
- 6) Performs other tasks determined by the statute and other acts of the municipality.

The statute of the municipality may stipulate that for certain areas (economic development, urbanism, primary health care, environmental protection, agriculture, etc.) assistants to the mayor are appointed. Assistants to the mayor are appointed and dismissed by the Mayor.

Assistants to the mayor initiate activities, propose projects and form opinions on issues that are important for development in the areas for which they are appointed and perform other tasks ordered by the Mayor. They are appointed in the office of the Mayor for the longest period of office.

In a municipality of up to 15,000 inhabitants, one assistant to the Mayor may be appointed, in a municipality of up to 50,000 inhabitants, a maximum of two assistants, and in a municipality of up to 100,000 inhabitants, a maximum of three assistants.

**The Municipal council** consists of the Mayor, the Deputy of the municipality, as well as the members of the municipal council whose number is determined by the statute of the municipality. The Municipal council:

- 1) Proposes the statute, budget and other decisions and acts adopted by the Assembly;
- 2) Directly executes and takes care of the execution of decisions and other acts of the Municipal assembly;
- 3) Makes a decision on temporary financing in case the municipal assembly does not adopt the budget before the beginning of the fiscal year;

4) Supervises the work of the municipal administration, annuls or repeals acts of the municipal administration that are not in accordance with the law, statute and other general acts or decisions issued by the Municipal assembly;

5) In the administrative procedure in the second instance on the rights and obligations of citizens, companies and institutions and other organizations decides on administrative matters within the competence of the municipality;

5a) Monitors the implementation of business programs and coordinates the work of public companies whose founder is the municipality

5b) Submits a quarterly report on the work of public enterprises to the Municipal Assembly, for further reporting in accordance with the law governing the legal status of public enterprises;

6) Takes care of the execution of the entrusted competencies within the framework of the rights and duties of the Republic, ie the autonomous province;

7) Appoints and dismisses the head of the municipal administration, ie heads of departments;

8) Performs other tasks, in accordance with the law. The municipal council may establish its own working bodies.

**The municipal administration** is formed as a single body, and municipal administrations can be formed for certain areas in municipalities with over 50,000 inhabitants. In a municipal administration formed as a single body, internal organizational units (such as the Office for Local Economic Development) may be established to perform related tasks.

The bodies of the **city** are the City assembly, the Mayor, the City council and the City administration. The city authorities perform the tasks given by the municipal bodies, as well as other tasks determined by the law and the city statute. The provisions of the law that refer to the Municipal assembly, the Mayor and the Municipal council also apply to the City assembly, the Mayor and the City council.

The city administration is formed as a single body or as several administrations for individual areas.

In a city of up to 100,000 inhabitants, the Mayor may appoint a maximum of three assistants, and in a city with more than 100,000 inhabitants, the mayor may appoint a maximum of five assistants.

## Possible institutional forms of cooperation with the diaspora at the local level

Local self-government can regulate the area of cooperation with the diaspora in several ways, depending on the needs, size of the diaspora and human and institutional resources.

The following can be in charge of cooperation with the diaspora:

1. Council (municipal / city assembly) for cooperation with the diaspora
2. Council (municipal / city council) for cooperation with the diaspora
3. Member of the municipal / city council in charge of cooperation with the diaspora
4. Advisor for cooperation with the diaspora
5. Assistant to the president of the municipality / mayor in charge of cooperation with the diaspora
6. Office for Local Economic Development
7. Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora
8. Entrusting the work to another legal entity
9. Association of several local self-government units.

## Municipal / City Assembly Council for Cooperation with the Diaspora

### Institutional framework

The council is an assembly (municipal / city assembly) working body. Working bodies give an opinion on draft regulations and decisions made by the municipal assembly and perform other tasks determined by the municipal statute (Article 36, paragraph 2 of the Law on Local Self-Government).

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

Considering the characteristics of the working body of the Assembly, the jurisdiction of the Diaspora Council would be:

- Discussing certain issues, giving proposals, opinions and expert explanations related to determining and conducting the policy of the municipality / city towards the diaspora
- giving an opinion on draft regulations and decisions made by the municipal / city assembly
- performing other tasks determined by the statute and the rules of procedure of the municipal / city assembly.

The Council for Cooperation with the Diaspora may organize a public hearing on draft decisions and other regulations decided by the Municipal Assembly.

The organization and implementation of the public hearing, as well as informing the president of the municipal / city assembly and the public about the opinions and attitudes expressed at the public hearing, are regulated in more details by the rules of procedure of the municipal / city assembly.

From the above, it can be concluded that this is an advisory body of the legislature at the local level. The Mayor, other heads of the municipal / city administration, as well as experts, scientists and representatives of other organizations and citizens may participate in the work of the Assembly working body, upon invitation, without the right to decide.

In performing tasks within its scope, the working body may, through its president, request from the municipal / city administration data and information relevant to its work. The manner of work of the council is given by the municipal / city decision on working bodies.

This working body can initiate the drafting and proposing of acts in the field for which it was established, as well as give a negative opinion on the proposal of the general act submitted to the Municipal / City assembly and thus prevent the adoption of the document or return the document for revision.

### *Budget expenditures*

The required funds relate to payments for the work of members of the working body. Members of the working body are generally paid according to the attendance of council sessions, which is regulated by the general act of the municipality / city. Other operating costs (costs of preparation and realization of the session are financed within the existing expenditures of the municipal / city administration, with the engagement of the employees in the municipal / city administration.

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### *The main advantages*

The work of this body requires minimal budget expenditures.

### *The main disadvantages*

This working body is not of operational characteristics and is engaged primarily in the phase of submitting draft regulations and amendments to regulations to the municipal / city assembly for adoption.

### *To whom it is recommended*

This institutional form of cooperation is recommended to small municipalities, which do not have a significant percentage of the diaspora in relation to the total population.

## Council (municipal / city council) for cooperation with the diaspora

### *Institutional framework*

The Municipal / City council, as the executive body of the local self-government unit, may establish a Council for Cooperation with the Diaspora. The competence of the Council is: considering, preparing and giving proposals on issues within the competence of the Municipal / City council, taking appropriate measures to harmonize the work of bodies and organizations in the process of preparing acts and materials for the municipal / city council session, monitoring the execution of its acts, etc.

The Council for Cooperation with the Diaspora informs the Municipal Assembly that a certain draft decision or other act of the Municipal Assembly, ie the President of the Municipality / Mayor, affects the position of the Diaspora, especially if it is about economic support programs or changes in local public revenue policy.

The president and members of the Council are appointed by the municipal / city council by a majority vote of the total number of council members, for the duration of the mandate of the municipal / city council. The number of members is determined by the decision on appointment. As a rule, the President of the Economic Council can be appointed from the ranks of businesspersons, ie entrepreneurs. The Economic Council works and decides at the session, in the manner and according to the procedure provided for the work of the municipal council. The Economic Council adopts conclusions, recommendations and opinions, which it submits to the Mayor, the Municipal / City council and the Municipal / City assembly with a proposal to respond appropriately within the competence of these bodies.

The manner of work of the Council is prescribed by the Rules of Procedure of the municipal / city council. The act on the formation of the working body determines its tasks, composition, mandate, manner of work and deadline within which the entrusted work will be performed.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

- Initiates and proposes the adoption of general acts related to cooperation with the diaspora;
- monitors the adoption and changes of the strategy and plans of economic development, monitors the implementation of plans and programs of local economic development, gives initiatives related to economic development and opinion on priority projects of local economic development and capital investment plan;
- monitors activities to promote the economic potential of the municipality / city;
- initiates and monitors the collection of data for the purpose of creating a database on the diaspora;
- encourages mutual networking of members of the diaspora, by professions and activities, with prominent individuals and representatives of the economy at the local level;

- initiates visits to diaspora associations and visits of diaspora representatives to the municipality / city;
- makes proposals for improving the work of the municipal / city administration (especially the organizational unit of the municipal administration dealing with local economic development), public companies, institutions, organizations and services founded by the municipal / city assembly, all in order to improve cooperation with the diaspora .

#### *Budget expenditures*

The required funds relate to payments for the work of members of the working body. Members of the working body are generally paid according to the attendance of council sessions, which is regulated by the general act of the municipality / city. Other operating costs (costs of preparation and organizing sessions are financed within the existing expenditures of the municipal / city administration, with the engagement of existing employees in the municipal / city administration.

#### *The main advantages*

Since this is a working body of the executive body, the Council for Cooperation with the Diaspora of the municipal / city council has greater operational capabilities compared to the working body of the municipal / city assembly. The Council achieves more intensive, easier and less formal cooperation with municipal / city bodies, primarily municipal / city administration and institutions, organizations and public enterprises founded by local self-government. Given that the emphasis of the work of the Council for Cooperation with the Diaspora is focused on local economic development, intensive cooperation with the Office for Local Economic Development is necessary.

#### *The main disadvantages*

Although it is a working body of the executive, and not the legislative body of the local self-government unit (municipal / city council), this body has a more advisory than executive role. This working body adopts opinions and conclusions at its sessions and for the efficient work of this body it is necessary to engage the municipal / city administration in terms of professional, technical and administrative support.

#### *To whom it is recommended*

This institutional form of cooperation is recommended to municipalities that do not have a significant percentage of the diaspora in relation to the total population and that do not need more intensive cooperation with the diaspora.



## Member of the municipal / city council in charge of cooperation with the diaspora

### *Institutional framework*

The municipal / city council is the executive body of the municipality / city and consists of the president of the municipality / mayor, deputy president of the municipality / deputy mayor, as well as members of the municipal / city council whose number is determined by the municipal statute and elected by the municipal assembly, for a period of four years. The president of the municipality / mayor is also the president of the municipal / city council.

The municipal council, whose members are elected by the municipal assembly on the proposal of the mayor, can have up to five members for municipalities up to 15,000 inhabitants, up to seven for municipalities up to 50,000 inhabitants, up to nine for municipalities or cities up to 100,000 inhabitants, or up to 11 for cities over 100,000 inhabitants.

Members of the municipal council may be in charge of one or more specific areas within the competence of the municipality. Members of the municipal council can be permanently employed in the municipality / city. Due to the similarity of work, it is recommended that a member of the municipal / city council dealing with local economic development cooperate with the diaspora.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

Jurisdiction and job description depends on whether the member of the municipal / city council is employed in the municipality / city or not. If a member of the municipal / city council is not employed, he / she performs tasks within the competence of the Council of the municipal / city council for cooperation with the diaspora.

If a member of the municipal / city council is employed, he / she performs tasks identical to those of the assistant to the mayor / mayor for cooperation with the diaspora.

In both cases, professional, technical and administrative support of the municipal / city administration is required, ie the Office for Local Economic Development, if it is formed in the municipality / city.

### *Budget expenditures*

If a member of the municipal / city council is not employed, he gets the payment for his work according to the attendance at council sessions or on a monthly basis. The member of the municipal / city council in charge of LED is given competence for cooperation with the diaspora, so that there are no additional expenses for the work of the council member.

### *Main advantages*

If the local self-government unit chooses this model, ie to add the competence of cooperation with the diaspora to the member of the municipal / city council responsible for local economic development, it will not have additional costs.

### *Main disadvantages*

This model works only when the local government unit already has an Office for Economic Development or another form of organization that deals with that area.



*To whom it is recommended*

This model is recommended to local self-government units that have a permanent member of the municipal / city council, responsible for local economic development and a functional Office for Local Economic Development or another organizational unit or other way of organizing local economic development.



### *Institutional framework*

The Advisor for Cooperation with the Diaspora is an official whose position, given the nature of the work, could be within the Office for Economic Development of the municipality / city. Depending on the needs and available human resources, this officer may perform other related tasks within the Office for Economic Development.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

The position's responsibilities and duties are:

- creates and updates a database on the diaspora (selectively according to the host country, according to the activity in which the representatives of the diaspora are engaged, networks in which they are involved, etc.);
- maintains regular contacts with the diaspora through e-newsletters, social networks, etc.;
- monitors and participates in activities and projects to promote the economic potential of the municipality / city;
- participates in the creation of draft general acts related to cooperation with the diaspora;
- participates in the development of strategies and plans for economic development, implementation of plans and programs of local economic development, provides initiatives related to economic development, participates in the preparation and implementation of local economic development projects and capital investment plans and other plans and strategic documents related to the diaspora;
- informs the diaspora about investment opportunities in the municipality / city, support programs and incentives at the local and state level;
- participates in the organization of networking of local and businessmen from the diaspora;
- participates in the organization of meetings and visits of local businessmen and representatives of local authorities and businessmen from the diaspora;
- edits an electronic guide for the diaspora;
- edits internet presentations of the municipality / city intended for the diaspora or pages for the diaspora on the official website of the municipality / city;
- creates and updates a database of diaspora associations;
- produces and distributes an electronic bulletin of the municipality / city intended for local economic development and cooperation with the diaspora;
- answers inquiries from members of the diaspora
- performs other tasks as ordered by the immediate manager and the head of the municipal / city administration.

### *Budget expenditures*

This model causes expenses related to the salaries of the employee (advisor) and possibly expenses for the purchase of equipment (computer equipment, furniture). In case of using existing human resources (by taking on employees from other offices) and using existing equipment, there are no additional budget expenditures.

### *The main advantages*



Since this position is part of the Office for Local Economic Development, the Advisor for Cooperation with the Diaspora uses databases and all other products of the Office.

*The main disadvantages*

Since he is not completely independent, the advisor, if necessary, performs other tasks as ordered by managers, which are primarily related to local economic development.

*To whom it is recommended*

It is recommended to local self-government units that have a higher share of the diaspora in the total population, in which the needs for cooperation with the diaspora are significant, but do not require full-time engagement.



## Assistant to the president of the municipality / mayor in charge of cooperation with the diaspora

### *Institutional framework*

The statute of the municipality / city may stipulate that for certain areas (economic development, urbanism, primary health care, environmental protection, agriculture, etc.) assistants to the Mayor are appointed.

Assistants to the Mayor are appointed and dismissed by the Mayor. Assistants initiate, propose projects and form opinions on issues that are important for development in the areas for which they are appointed and perform other tasks ordered by the Mayor. Assistants to the president of the municipality / mayor are appointed in the office of the president of the municipality / mayor for a maximum period during the term of office of the president of the municipality / mayor.

The assistant may also have cooperation with the diaspora within. According to the similarity of the area, this competence should be assigned to the assistant in charge of local economic development. The assistant to the president of the municipality / mayor has operational capabilities and available logistics (close cooperation with the municipal / city administration, primarily with the LED office). It can initiate, monitor and participate in activities related to cooperation with the diaspora, initiate and participate in the drafting of general acts concerning the diaspora and participate in the work of the Municipal / City council without the right to vote.

This gives him wide possibilities for the organization and organization of work. In addition, which is very important, the assistant mayor has intensive cooperation with the mayor.

For the successful work of the assistant for cooperation with the diaspora, it is necessary to have an operational Office for Local Economic Development within the municipal / city administration, with adequate human resources (in terms of professional knowledge, knowledge of foreign languages, required skills, etc.).

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

The position's responsibilities and duties are:

- initiates and proposes the adoption of general acts related to cooperation with the diaspora;
- monitors the adoption and changes of the strategy and plans of economic development, monitors the implementation of plans and programs of local economic development, gives initiatives related to economic development and opinion on priority projects of local economic development and capital investment plan;
- monitors and participates in activities and projects to promote the economic potential of the municipality / city;
- initiates and monitors the collection of data for the purpose of creating a database on the diaspora;
- organizes networking of local and businessmen from the diaspora;
- organizes meetings and visits of local businessmen and representatives of local authorities and businessmen from the diaspora;
- initiates and monitors the development of an electronic guide for the diaspora;

- initiates and monitors the creation of an internet presentation of the municipality / city intended for the diaspora or a page for the diaspora on the official website of the municipality / city;
- initiates and monitors the development of a database of diaspora associations;
- initiates and monitors the development and distribution of the electronic bulletin of the municipality / city intended for local economic development and cooperation with the diaspora;
- monitors and coordinates the procedure of submitting answers to q from members of the diaspora;
- coordinates between the LED office and other organizational units of the municipal / city administration (property service, urban planning service, communal services, etc.) and institutions, organizations and public enterprises founded by the municipality / city;
- performs other tasks related to the improvement of cooperation with the diaspora.

The above-mentioned job description is included in the decision on the appointment of the assistant to the president of the municipality / mayor. Likewise, in the Decision on municipal / city administration, the mentioned tasks are within the competence of the Office for Local Economic Development.

#### *Budget expenditures*

This model does not require additional expenses because the jobs are assigned to the already employed person (assistant for local economic development).

#### *The main advantages*

As mentioned above, if the local government chooses this way of organization, the opportunities for cooperation with the diaspora are great. It is necessary to have an LED office or similar organizational unit that will perform operational and professional tasks.

#### *The main disadvantages*

The negative side of such an organization is that with the termination of the mandate of the Mayor, the mandate of the assistant for cooperation with the diaspora also ends. The next mayor can appoint an assistant for cooperation with the diaspora, but it is unlikely that it will be the same person, which usually entails the introduction to work and the creation of a network of contacts, which takes time.

#### *To whom it is recommended*

It is recommended to municipalities that have a significant need for cooperation with the diaspora, as well as a functional Office for Local Economic Development or another form of organizing this work.

### *Institutional framework*

The Local Economic Development Office is organized as a separate organizational unit within the municipal / city administration. The organization and competence are legally regulated by the Decision on the municipal / city administration. The post/posts of employment are regulated by the Rulebook on internal organization and systematization of posts of employment in the municipal / city administration.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

The Local Economic Development Office, among others, may perform the following tasks:

- creates and updates a database on the diaspora (selectively according to the host country, according to the activity in which the representatives of the diaspora are engaged, networks in which they are involved, etc.);
- maintains regular contacts with the diaspora through e-newsletters, social networks, etc.;
- Creates and improves the database of projects and locations for investment, sectoral and market analysis, data on the export offer of domestic companies and investment and other economic potentials of the municipality / city;
- Implements projects related to promoting the economic potential of the municipality / city;
- creates drafts of general acts related to cooperation with the diaspora;
- participates in the development of strategies and plans for economic development, implements plans and programs of local economic development, provides initiatives related to cooperation with the diaspora, prepares and implements projects of local economic development, capital investment plan, etc.;
- informs the diaspora about investment opportunities in the municipality / city, support programs and incentives at the local and state level;
- identifies the needs of the diaspora - organizes networking of local and businessmen from the diaspora;
- organizes meetings and visits of local businessmen and representatives of local authorities and businessmen from the diaspora;
- develops an electronic guide for the diaspora;
- edits internet presentations of the municipality / city intended for the diaspora or pages for the diaspora on the official website of the municipality / city;
- creates and updates a database of diaspora associations;
- produces and distributes an electronic bulletin of the municipality / city intended for cooperation with the diaspora;
- responds to requests of members of the diaspora - performs other tasks ordered by the first superior and the head of the municipal / city administration.

### *Budget expenditures*

Expenditures refer to salaries of employees and necessary expenses for equipping the Office (computer equipment, furniture, office maintenance costs).

### *The main advantages*

There are no additional salary costs and other costs because the existing resources of the Office for Local Economic Development are used. Due to the similarity of jobs, it can be expected that the functional Office for Local Economic Development also performs these jobs (cooperation with the diaspora) successfully.

### *To whom it is recommended*

It is recommended to local self-government units that have functional Offices for Economic Development.



### *Institutional framework*

Like the Office for Local Economic Development, the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora is organized as a separate organizational unit within the municipal / city administration. The organization and competence are legally regulated by the Decision on the municipal / city administration. The post / posts of employment are regulated by the Rulebook on internal organization and systematization of posts in the municipal / city administration.

The Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora is a place of contact, connection and support for representatives of the diaspora who intend to invest in the municipality / city. The Cooperation Office is an information point and service for both the diaspora and local businesspersons, local decision makers, local and state institutions.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

The Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora can perform the following tasks:

- creates and updates a database on the diaspora (selectively according to the host country, according to the activity in which the representatives of the diaspora are engaged, networks in which they are involved, etc.);
- maintains regular contact with the diaspora through e-newsletters, social networks, etc.;
- in cooperation with the Office for Local Economic Development, creates and improves the database of projects and locations for investment, sectoral and market analysis, data on the export offer of domestic companies and investment and other economic potentials of the municipality / city;
- monitors and participates in activities and projects to promote the economic potential of the municipality / city;
- creates drafts of general acts related to cooperation with the diaspora;
- participates in the development of strategies and plans for economic development, implements plans and programs of local economic development, provides initiatives related to cooperation with the diaspora, participates in the development of local economic development projects, capital investment plans, etc.;
- informs the diaspora about investment opportunities in the municipality / city, support programs and incentives at the local and state level;
- identifies the needs of the diaspora - organizes networking of local and businessmen from the diaspora;
- organizes meetings and visits of local businessmen and representatives of local authorities and businessmen from the diaspora;
- creates an electronic guide for the diaspora;

- edits internet presentations of the municipality / city intended for the diaspora or pages for the diaspora on the official website of the municipality / city;
- creates and updates a database of diaspora associations;
- produces and distributes an electronic bulletin of the municipality / city intended for cooperation with the diaspora;
- responds to requests of members of the diaspora - performs other tasks ordered by the first superior and the head of the municipal / city administration.

### *Budget expenditures*

Expenditures refer to the salary / salaries of employees and the necessary expenses for equipping the Office (computer equipment, furniture, office maintenance costs). The office can also be formed by transferring the employees from other positions, e.g. from the Office of Local Economic Development. In that case, there will be no additional expenses for employees' salaries. In addition, it is possible to use an already equipped office, and there will be no additional costs of equipping and maintaining the office. It depends on the available human and other resources which variant will be applied, ie what the costs of the Office will be.

### *The main advantages*

Due to the nature of the work, the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora is expected to cooperate intensively with the Office for LED and other organizational units of the municipal / city administration (property service, urban planning service, communal services, etc.) and institutions, organizations and public enterprises whose founder is the municipality / city, including close cooperation with the Cabinet of the president of the municipality / mayor.

Given that it is organized as a separate organizational unit within the municipal / city administration, the Office is relatively independent in its work.

The positive side is that with the termination of the mandate of the mayor, there are no changes in the human resources engaged in the Office and the Office continues to work practically unhindered.

### *To whom it is recommended*

This is the most efficient and therefore the most demanding model and is recommended to local self-government units that have a significant share of the diaspora in the total population and want to establish long-term and comprehensive cooperation.

In such cases, the best results will be obtained if the local self-government establishes the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and appoints an assistant to the president of the municipality / mayor for cooperation with the diaspora.

## Entrusting the business to another legal entity

### *Institutional framework*

The local self-government unit establishes services, public enterprises, institutions and organizations, determined by the statute and supervises their work. Founder - local self-government may entrust affairs of public importance to services, institutions, etc. Depending on the focus of cooperation with the diaspora, they can be the House of Culture (“Dom kulture”), the Agency for Local Economic Development, the Museum or some other legal entity. It is important that the entity entrusted with the job has the capacity for it.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

Jurisdiction and job description are the same as in the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora.

### *Budget expenditures*

Depending on available human and other resources, additional costs may or may not be incurred. The situation is the same as in the case of the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora.

### *The main advantages*

If the job is entrusted to a legal entity, a short introduction to the business and greater efficiency, effectiveness and economy in work are expected due to the similarity of the business and the already formed networks that this entity already has. By this, we mean cooperation with organizational units of the municipal / city administration (property service, urban planning service, utility service, etc.) and institutions, organizations and public companies founded by the municipality / city, including close cooperation with the Cabinet of president of the municipality / mayor. It would be good if this entity also had previous experience in cooperating with the diaspora.

Given that it is organized as a separate legal entity, it has a high level of independence in its work.

### *Main disadvantages*

This model requires a more serious approach to establishing and maintaining communication between the founder and the legal entity entrusted with the job. In addition, it is necessary to establish a system of supervision over the implementation of entrusted tasks and over the use of financial resources.

### *To whom it is recommended*

It is recommended to those local self-government units that already have an existing functional entity with sufficient capacity to cooperate with the diaspora.

## Association of several local self-government units

### *Institutional framework*

According to the provisions of the Law on Local Self-Government, local self-governing bodies and services establish cooperation and associate with other local self-government units and their bodies and services in areas of common interest. Therefore, they can form joint bodies, enterprises, institutions and other organizations and institutions, in accordance with the law and the statute.

In case of establishment of a joint body, service, company or other organization established on the basis of a concluded contract on cooperation of local self-government units, their heads are appointed or dismissed, and competent bodies of local self-government units decide on their responsibilities and termination of duties in accordance with the law.

Employees exercise their rights, obligations and responsibilities in the unit of local self-government in which the seat of the joint organizational form is established.

When the agreement stipulates that the joint body decides on the rights and obligations of citizens in the administrative procedure, the competent bodies of local self-government units retain their competence in the second-instance procedure, in accordance with the law.

Funds for financing the work of the joint body are provided in the budgets of local self-government units that have acceded to the agreement in proportion to the scope of work performed by the joint body for them. According to the above, several local self-government units, most often in the case of neighboring municipalities, can establish a joint service - the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora.

### *Jurisdiction and job description*

Jurisdiction and job description are the same as in the case of the establishment of the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora by one local government unit

### *Budget expenditures*

The costs of the Office are the same as in the case of the establishment by one municipality, but they are shared by all local self-government units that have concluded a contract, in proportion to the volume of work performed for individual local governments.

### *The main advantages*

This model is economical because the costs of the Office's work per unit of local self-government are significantly lower than in the case when the founder is one local self-government.

### *The main disadvantages*

It is necessary for the contract to precisely define the rights and obligations of the contracting parties - local self-government units. There is also a risk that work for the benefit of some municipalities will be neglected.

### *To whom it is recommended*

This model is recommended for local self-governments that have good cooperation and a similar structure of the diaspora or a similar focus of cooperation.

**Review of institutional mechanisms  
for cooperation of local self-government units with the diaspora**

Institutional form of cooperation with the diaspora	to whom it is recommended
Council (municipal / city assembly) for cooperation with the diaspora	LGUs that do not have a significant percentage of the diaspora in relation to the total population and do not need more intensive cooperation with the diaspora.
Council (municipal / city council) for cooperation with the diaspora	
Member of the municipal / city council in charge of cooperation with the diaspora	LGUs that have a higher share of the diaspora in the total population and need more intensive cooperation with the diaspora.
Advisor for cooperation with the diaspora	
Assistant to the president of the municipality / mayor in charge of cooperation with the diaspora	
Office of Local Economic Development	LGUs who have a significant share of the diaspora in the total population and want to establish long-term and comprehensive cooperation.
Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora	
Entrusting the work to another legal entity	LGUs that already have an existing functional entity with sufficient capacity to cooperate with the diaspora.
Association of several local self-government units	LGUs that have good cooperation and a similar structure of the diaspora or a similar focus of cooperation.

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