2008 discharge: European Agency for Reconstruction

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PURPOSE: presentation of the final accounts of the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) for the financial year 2008.

CONTENT: this document sets out a detailed account of Agency's expenditure in 2008. According to this document, the final budget of the EAR - whose main head office is based in Thessalonica - Greece), amounted to **EUR 236.5 million** (compared to EUR 250.2 million in 2007).

As regards the staffing policy, the EAR officially set out 93 posts in its establishment plan. 61 are currently occupied + 32 local staff and 19 contract staff giving a total of 112 posts assigned to administrative and operational tasks of the Agency.

It should be noted that the Agency terminated all its activities at 31.12.2008 after transferring all CARDS programmes to the Commission.

The principal operational activities in 2008 were as follows:

KOSOVO

(a) Multisectorial returns empowerment of Roma communities and social economic development assistance to minority communities;

(b) Support for civil society and the media;

(c) Institutional and policy support for the ministries of Justice and Internal Affairs;

(d) Strengthening of border management bodies and construction of border crossing facilities;

(e) Capacity building of the Agency for European Integration;

(f) Support of decentralisation;

(g) Drafting of public procurement law, internal audit strategy;

(h) Assistance to the Ministry of Trade and Industry on SME development, investment promotion, metrology and direct assistance to small-scale businesses for marginalised groups;

(i) Support for the Statistical Office of Kosovo;

(j) Support for the Ministry of Agriculture;

(k) Sustainable forest management;

(l) Livestock breeding;

(m) Development of food safety control systems;

(n) Support for the energy sector including transmission network, support for the ministry of energy, support for the Kosovo Electric Company, support for the Energy Regulatory Office, support for the supply of coal, revenue collection, environmental actions for coal mines;

(o) Environmental upgrades including support for water and waste utilities and construction of a water treatment plant;

(p) Vocational Education Training Programme;

(q) Support for the transport sector with a planning and strategy for a multimodal transport.

SERBIA

(a) Draft laws in public administration reform;

(b) Supply of equipment to border police;

(c) Support for juvenile detention centres;

(d) Introduction of capitation payment in State primary health care facilities;

(e) Support for privatisation;

(f) Training support for enterprises;

(g) Support for implementation of the EIB education sector loan;

(h) Economic development programmes for poorest municipalities;

(i) Upgrading of the existing border crossing infrastructure and facilities at Presevo;

(j) Renovation of municipal infrastructure;

(k) Reform of the statistics office;

(l) Support for facilitation of FDIs;

(m) Support for vulnerable groups including refugees and displaced people;

(n) District heating renovation and modernisation;

(o) Installation of a new ash transport and disposal scheme for the Nikola Tesla B thermal power plant.

MONTENEGRO

(a) Support for refugee and IDP integration;

(b) Strengthening environmental management through legislative reform and refurbishment of waste water treatment plants in Podgorica and in coastal cities;

(c) Upgrading road infrastructure in coastal areas;

(d) Assisting public administration reform;

(e) Electricity utility unbundling/restructuring, energy efficiency strategy;

(f) Providing management expertise to companies;

(g) Police reform;

(h) Prison reform;

(i) Creating animal identification and registration system;

(j) Fishery resource management;

(k) Assisting in social inclusion reforms through support for civil society organisations.

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

(a) Twinning support on money laundering, corruption and organised crime, statistics, air quality, financial control;

(b) Completing the establishment of the National Animal Identification System;

(c) Fostering the performance of SMEs and the development of a Human Resource Development Fund;

(d) Helping civil society organisations and municipalities to promote economic development across borders with the EU Member States;

(e) Support for the elimination of industrial hotspots, municipal waste water management and healthcare risk waste management;

(f) Construction of administrative headquarters to house the association of municipalities;

(g) Support for the programming of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and its tendering;

(h) Support for implementation of professional standards in prison administrations;

(i) Elaborating a National Transport Strategy.

The complete version of the final accounts may be found at the following address: http://eca.europa.eu