

HD European Consulting Group (HD-ECG)

is an international consulting company established in Belgrade in 2001. It was established on the belief that Serbia and South Eastern Europe have huge potential and offer major opportunities for business. Joint Austrian and Serbian ownership brings a unique combination of expertise from a long-standing EU Member State with an in-depth understanding of the SE European context and the realities of transition economies. Since its creation, HD-ECG has risen to be the leading company in Serbia in the implementation of EU funded technical assistance contracts.

Supporting Tourism in Serbia

Tourism is identified as a potential driver of economic growth as stated in the Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Serbia and under Serbia's Multi Annual Indicative Programming Document. Despite Serbia's unique natural, archaeological and cultural assets (with eight UNESCO world heritage sites) and its pivotal location in SE Europe, the tourism sector in Serbia is clearly underperforming.

The international market still does not view Serbia as a major tourist destination. Serbia has the potential to win a much larger market share of both international and domestic tourists, but in order to realise this potential, Serbia needs to adapt to their expectations. The development of tourism will also help to ensure the development of positive international image of the country and to build closer relations with other EU countries.



A training session for tourism sector stakeholders, facilitated by Team Leader Janez Sirse. Around 200 people will benefit from formal training sessions or workshops under the project.

In May 2010 a consortium led by HD-ECG started a two-year EU-funded project Support to Implementation of the National Strategy for Tourism, the purpose of which is to:

- Develop the capacity of the National Corporation for Tourism Development (NCTD);
- Develop action plans to enable Public Private Partnership (PPP) investment;
- Raise quality standards;
- Support NCTD and other Government institutions responsible for the implementation of the National Strategy for Tourism;
- Support the market positioning and branding of Serbia on the international tourism map.

The HD-ECG team is working closely with the key stakeholders, including the Ministry for Economy and Regional Development, the National Corporation for Tourism Development and the National Tourist Organisation of Serbia.

<http://www.tourismsupport.rs>

Other Ongoing Projects

The last week of September saw the kick-off meeting of the two-year VET Support to Serbian Detention Facilities which aims to deliver a strategy and a sustainable system of education and training for the prison population. HD-ECG is leading a consortium that includes AARHUS TECH (Denmark) and Berufsbildungswerk-Unternehmen für Bildung (Germany).

A consortium comprising HD-ECG (lead) and PR/marketing companies SVA d.o.o. and GREY Worldwide, recently commenced implementation of Publicity Services for Rabies and Classical Swine Fever Vaccination Campaigns.

Serbia's mortality rate for breast and cervical cancer mortality is one of the highest in Europe. Around 250 people attended the Launch Conference of the project Implementation of the National Screening Programme for Colorectal, Cervical and Breast Cancer, held on 26 September.

<http://www.screeningserbia.rs>

ISO 9001:2008

Certificate reg. no. 75 100 502022
for Providing consulting services in
technical assistance projects in public sector

HD-ECG operates an ISO 9001-accredited Quality Management System.



Technical Assistance to Successful NGOs from the Anticorruption Grant Scheme 2009 was launched in March 2011 in Bosnia Herzegovina. This was a significant step in the development of HD-ECG, as this is the first project outside of Serbia for which the Company is consortium leader. Our partners are dbb akademie (Germany) and EPRD Ltd. (Poland).

HD-ECG is supporting the US-based non-profit organization IREX to implement the USAID funded Serbia Media Assistance Program, which aims to encourage a legally sound, economically viable media sector that provides professional and independent news and information.

Recently Won

Together with Deloitte d.o.o. (lead partner) HD-ECG have been awarded the EuropeAid contract Further Support to the Implementation of Decentralised Implementation System in Serbia. The contract value is €460,000.

Strengthening the Team

In order to facilitate continued growth of the business, two experienced professionals have recently joined the HD European Consulting Group team in Belgrade.

David Ford is the new Business Development Director at HD ECG. David has thirty years' professional experience and has worked internationally since 1991. He has extensive experience in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey – experience that is directly relevant to the countries of South Eastern Europe. Prior to joining HD-ECG, David was Director at WYG International. David commented, "I'm delighted to have joined the talented and dynamic team that is ECG. This region has so many exciting opportunities and I'm looking forward to contributing to the further growth of the company".



Vojislav Milošević has extensive experience in civil society development, European integration and management of EU funded projects. Before joining HD-ECG as Business Associate in September, he spent more than 10 years as Project Manager at European Movement in Serbia, for which he continues to serve on the Main and Executive Boards. Vojislav is President of the Managing Board of the Fund for Support to Civil Society in Serbia and Vice-President of the European Bureau for Conscience Objection – Balkans. Vojislav said: "I am glad that I will have an opportunity to continue my work on developing Serbia and the region through HD-ECG, and hope that my experience and enthusiasm will help to generate new energy and ideas."

Celebrating 10 years

The huge increase in EU funds has caused several of the larger EU technical assistance contractors to establish offices in Belgrade since 2008. It was back in 2001, when EU assistance to Serbia was only beginning to shift from emergency assistance and humanitarian aid to longer-term development assistance, and few people were thinking about candidate status, that joint owners Danijel Pantic and Bernhard Hulla formally established HD European Consulting Group in Belgrade.

"Although the situation was very difficult at the time, Danijel and I were convinced that Serbia's future lay in Europe and that the Western Balkans offered real opportunities. Of course I'm delighted that our vision has been proved correct and that ECG has been so successful", commented Bernhard.

On 17th May 2011 the team held a celebration to mark the company's 10th birthday.

