

SUPPORT TO ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION OF RURAL AREAS IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE (SEDRA II)

The challenge

The Southeast European countries are characterised by great disparities between the urban and rural areas. Even though rural areas are home to almost half of the total population of these countries, the living environment for the rural population is increasingly unfavourable due to the continuous population ageing, youth emigration and high unemployment.

With agriculture still being the main economic activity in the rural regions, demanding formal frameworks have only worsened the existing conditions, especially for small agricultural holdings. Thus, they face challenges to ensure quantity, as well as to meet the food quality standards and food safety requirements, making their products less competitive on the national and international market.

The rich and highly diverse natural and cultural heritage of the rural areas offers a big potential for diversification of the rural economy, as local resources for economic diversification have so far been insufficiently used for regional value creation.

With the EU Green Deal as a new growth strategy towards an environmental and digital transformation, the six countries face multiple strategic reorientations and transformative challenges which have been adopted with the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. This can be an opportunity to create a setting for sustainable and inclusive rural economies.

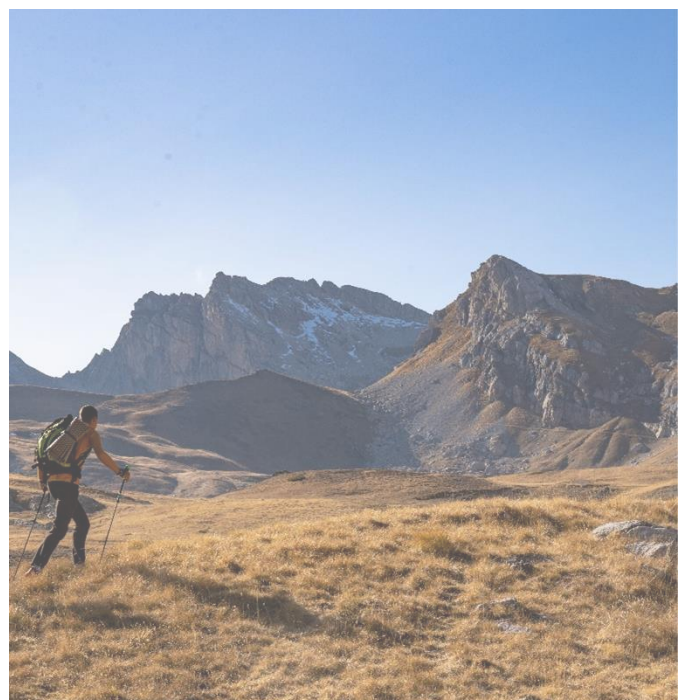


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| Project name | Support to Economic Diversification of Rural areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA II) |
| Commissioned by | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) |
| Project region | Southeast Europe (SEE): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia |
| Lead executing agency | Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development in South Eastern Europe (SWG RRD) |
| Duration | 01.09.2021 – 31.12.2025 |

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Our objective

The overall objective of the SEDRA II is strengthening the potentials for increasing employment and incomes in the rural areas in the Southeast European countries in line with the EU approximation process and the Sofia Declaration.



Our approach

SEDRA II builds on achieved results of predecessor projects and has a holistic approach at three complementary levels:

Regional cooperation and policy advice

SEDRA II supports regional and national capacities through facilitating theme-specific policy dialogues and providing technical expertise on issues related to rural economic diversification in SEE countries in their EU approximation process. Support is provided for: further strengthening of the regional platforms for political and policy dialogue and mechanisms for more intensive and broader cooperation; strengthening the regional stakeholders' competencies and expertise related to the EU CAP and Green Agenda, as well as further alignment of the national agriculture and rural development policies of SEE countries to the EU CAP.

Community Led Local Development

The project strengthens the capacities of existing regional and national cooperation structures for rural development support, to promote sustainable access to funding opportunities for cross-sectoral initiatives of local development partnerships. Support is provided for joint learning and exchange capacity-building of key actors in policy advocacy strengthening of the key actor's capacities to build functioning bottom-up model for participatory rural development and implementation of community-led local development (CLLD) approaches and LEADER in SEE.

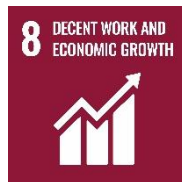
Employment promotion in rural cross-border areas

The project aims to implement an integrated approach to rural employment promotion in the seven rural cross-border areas. The integrated approach strengthens the potential for economic diversification through sustainable tourism promotion and the valorisation of short value chains in the field of tourism, agriculture, and related sectors for an inclusive growth and regional value creation. In this process, a special emphasis is placed on sustainable and inclusive qualification and training measures for MSME and rural population.

Our partners

SWG RRD

Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe and is an international intergovernmental organisation, consisting of governmental institutions responsible for rural development in respective countries and territories. SWG RRD acts as an independent agency for coordination and implementation of joint projects and conducting project activities. It is a facilitator in the process of strengthening regional institutions necessary to support long-term agricultural and rural development.



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Support to Economic Diversification of Rural Areas in
Southeast Europe
GIZ Office in North Macedonia
Antonie Grubishik 5
Phone +389 2 3103 560
Fax +389 2 3103 587
sedra@giz.de

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