

DECISION
No 21, dated 12/01/2018

ON SOME ADDITIONS TO DECISION
No 709, DATED 29.10.2014 OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS “ON APPROVING
THE CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY ON AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT 2014-2020”

Pursuant to Article 100 of the Constitution and Article 4 of Law No 9817, dated 22/10/2007 “On agriculture and rural development”, upon the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Minister of Tourism and Environment, the Minister of Infrastructure and Energy and the Minister of Culture, the Council of Ministers

DECIDED:

1. The Cross-cutting Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2020, attached to Decision No 709, dated 29.10.2014 of the Council of Ministers, the following shall be added:
a) Following subsection 3.5.2 of paragraph 3, subparagraphs 3.6 and 3.7 are added, with the following content:

“3.6. The Integrated Rural Development Program - the 100 Villages Program

i) Scope of the program

The Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) - the 100 Villages Program aims to coordinate the development interventions in rural areas of 100 villages, defined under Annex B of this strategy, according to

the cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholders approach, by putting an end to fragmented interventions with a strictly sectoral approach, which are currently occurring or expected to occur in the country.

The Integrated Rural Development Approach will target measurable objectives for the development of rural space, through a centralized focus (integrated and coordinated programming) of public investments, donors and private investments, in the well-defined space of 100 villages, with high potential for economic and social development, agrotourism, rural tourism, nature and environment, as well as cultural heritage.

ii) Program Goals

IRDP will program interventions with integrated investments in the designated areas (100 villages), through 3 goals, as follows:

a) Improvement of public infrastructure (road infrastructure support, public/urban space revitalization, community infrastructure, public services, environmental and tourism infrastructure, cultural heritage monuments, community multifunctional centres, environmental landscape, etc.);

b) Economic development through diversification of economic activities (improving the tourism potential of rural spaces, agrotourism and rural tourism, investments to improve commercial services, investments for the production of traditional products and other economic-financial services, etc. Support for incubators of traditional rural products, promotion and marketing of rural areas, transportation services, fairs and local festivals etc.);

c) Development of social and human capital (support for the creation of rural networks, local action groups, civil society in rural areas, vocational training for young people and women, cultural heritage support, support for the promotion of traditions and living in the village, etc.).

3.6.1. Program Duration

The Integrated Rural Development Program - the 100 Villages Program, shall be implemented during 2018 - 2020

3.6.2. Impact (indicators)

The general impact that the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) aims to achieve shall be measured through the following measurable indicators. In the designated space of 100 villages, IRDP aims to achieve:

Indicators	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL 2018–2020
Number of new jobs	100	200	300	600
Number of women/girls employed	30	50	100	180
Number of young people employed (22 - 35 years old)	50	50	100	200

Number of supported start ups for young people	50	50	50	150
Number of supported guest houses	50	50	50	150
Number of established incubators of traditional products	5	10	20	25
Number of new agrotourism enterprises supported	7	10	10	27
Number of traditional products production enterprises	10	15	25	50
Number of projects realised to improve the public infrastructure and services	30	70	100	200

3.6.3. Management of Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) - 100 Villages Program - For the implementation of this program, based on cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach, special structures that will enable administration, management, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the 100 villages Program, according to the clear division of roles and the respective authority, shall be established. Throughout the implementation of the program, the coordinating authorities shall make sure to involve the donors and civil society, in particular in the National Network for Rural Development and Local Action Groups (LAGs).

3.6.4. Implementation

Projects funded under the 100 Villages Programs will be implemented mainly by municipalities, as well as other public agencies (Regional Development Agencies 1, 2, 3 and 4, Agency for Regional Economic Development, National Tourism Agency, ADF, MADA etc.).

The program will also support projects proposed by civil society organizations (NGOs), individuals, farmers, legal entities, etc., in accordance with the legislation in force.

3.6.5. Funding the Program

The 100 Villages Program may be funded from the budgets of the ministries participating in the program. In the allocation of investment funds, allocated from the respective budgets of the ministries or their subordinate institutions, the ministries participating in the program will aim to give priority to the projects identified and implemented in the designated area of 100 villages.

Projects identified within the 100 Villages Program may be funded by the Regional Development Fund, according to the criteria and rules established by the Committee for Regional Development.

Participating ministries can sign co-operation agreements for grants, so that this program is financed by donors or through foreign funding.

The program may be funded from any other legitimate source or through mechanisms of public-private partnership.

3.6.6. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the 100 Villages Program are rural population, farmers and farmers groups, individuals, in particular women and young people, legal persons, municipalities, non-profit organizations, agricultural cooperation associations, etc.

3.6.7. Strategic Projects

Within the 100 Villages Program, 3 strategic projects are identified which will be implemented with high priority:

i) Establishing the Albanian Agrotourism Network

Agrotourism and rural tourism are activities that represent a high development potential for rural areas in Albania and already in many villages of Albania have started to operate and provide services in agrotourism and have achieved in a very short time, very good economic and social results (Thethi, Voskopoja, Dardha, etc.).

Within the 100 Villages Program financial and fiscal instruments shall be provided to support the establishment of a network of agro-tourism farms that meet the defined criteria and standards, which will constitute the baseline for the Albanian agro-tourism network. Support to create a critical mass of the number of agrotourism enterprises in Albania will serve to increase employment in rural areas, create a unique destination and “brand” of agrotourism in Albania, in addition to other tourism offers, as well as to preserve the cultural heritage and traditional values of the Albanian village.

The program will aim to support around 27 new agrotourism enterprises and 150 guest houses. The support will also aim to improve farms and livestock farms for the purposes of agro-tourism and rural tourism.

ii) Traditional Products Incubators Network

Albania has great and numerous potentials in the production of traditional food products. Traditional Albanian handicrafts products, regardless of their great values and the interest of local and foreign consumers, have shown to have difficulties in penetrating the markets due to low economic growth rates that increase unit production costs, limit production quantities, and high legal requirements for food and sanitary standards. These difficulties, also combined with the little knowledge and small capacities/capitals available to small producers of traditional products, risk that in the medium/long term these products will get scarce and eliminated from the market and the tables of Albanians. In addition to the damage that may be incurred by small producers from rural areas, the biggest damage may be caused to Albanian traditions and cultural heritage.

In this context, the program will aim to create a network of incubators of traditional products, which will be facilities that provide ready-made infrastructure for the whole product value chain, starting from storage/production facilities and equipment, packaging and marketing lines, support for standardization and certification, as well as space for selling the products.

Incubators will provide support to small rural producers, in particular women and young people, who can use the incubator for the production, packaging, marketing, standardization and selling of their products, in exchange for a reduced and affordable fee for the services provided by the incubator.

iii) The network of markets/stores of Albanian and traditional products

Traditional Albanian products have shown that it is difficult for them to penetrate retail markets and stores, for the reasons explained in subparagraph "ii". In support of the last chain of the value chain (selling), the program will aim to create a network of markets/stores that will be specialised in selling Albanian products, in particular traditional products. This network will have its own *brand* distinct from other networks and based on a special marketing and *franchise* strategy, it will be able to create a critical mass of stores that will be able to increase the percentage of sales of Albanian/traditional products. Financial support for the establishment of this network will be provided under the 100 Villages Program.

3.7 Management Authority

For the management of the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) - the 100 Villages Program, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the 100 Village Program shall be established, composed of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Minister of Infrastructure and Energy, and Minister of Culture.

3.7.1. The Inter-Ministerial Committee for the 100 Villages Program

The Inter-Ministerial Committee shall convene regularly to decide on the progress of the program, but not less than once a month. The Committee, as the highest decision-making authority of the program, shall decide on all issues related to the administration, programming, financing, implementation and monitoring of the program. The Committee shall, particularly decide on:

- reviewing and approving village development plans and projects, submitted to the committee for support from the 100 Villages Program;
- proposing the amount of annual funding for the 100 Villages Program, from the budget of ministries participating in the program and/or other ministries, as well as from the RDF;
- signing cooperation agreements with donors and other partners to support the 100 Villages Program;
- approving the progress report on program implementation;
- any other issues related to the program administration.

For a better management and coordination of the program, the committee shall conduct consultative meetings with the municipalities and donors community.

For the implementation of this program, the Committee shall cooperate in particular with the municipalities and regional development agencies, as well as other public or private partners who are interested in supporting the 100 Villages Program.

During the implementation of this program, the committee shall rely on the *LEADER* approach principles, guaranteeing close cooperation with non-profit organizations active in the field of rural development and with the National Network for Rural Development. Under the Cross-cutting Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2020, the committee, through the program will promote the establishment of local action groups (LAG) and funding of the projects proposed by them.

3.7.2. Technical Secretariat

For a better management of this program, the committee shall be supported by the technical secretariat established with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, upon the decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The technical secretariat shall perform auxiliary and administrative duties.

The ministries participating in the program shall designate their focal points (high level officials of the ministry), who shall act as a connecting bridge between the technical secretariat and the respective ministries.

The technical secretariat shall be responsible for:

- Organising and keeping records of committee meetings;
- Preparing written materials and reports on the progress of the program implementation;
- Informing and coordinating work with public institutions, municipalities, implementing agencies, as well as with other partners, pursuant to the tasks assigned by the committee;
- Providing the administration of the website of the 100 Villages Program;
- Providing public information and transparency on the 100 Villages Program;
- This secretariat shall perform any other duty assigned by the committee.”

b) Annex B is added after Annex A, according to the table attached hereto.

2. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy and the Ministry of Culture are delegated the competence to implement this decision.

This decision enters into force after its publication in the Official Journal.

PRIME MINISTER
Edi Rama

ANNEX B

REGION	MUNICIPALITY	VILLAGE	TOTAL
BERAT	Municipality of Berat	Qafë Dardhë	1
		Roshnik	1
	Municipality of Ura-Vajgurore	Malas Breg	1
	Municipality of Kuçovë	Kozare	1
	Municipality of Skrapar	Blezënkë	1
DIBËR	Municipality of Dibër	Kapinovë	1
		Rabdisht	1
		Radomirë	1
	Municipality of Mat	Bushkash	1
	Municipality of Bulqizë	Zerqan	1
DURRËS	Municipality of Durrës	Gur i Bardhë	1
		Shetaj	1
		Shënavlash	1
	Municipality of Shijak	Radë	1
		Gjepalaj/Eminas	1
	Metallaj	1	
ELBASAN	Municipality of Krujë	Halilaj (Zgërdhesh)	1
	Municipality of Elbasan	Gjinar	1
		Shushicë	1
	Municipality of Cërrik	Shtermenj	1
	Municipality of Belsh	Seferan	1
	Municipality of Gramsh	Sotirë	1
	Municipality of Peqin	Pajovë	1
	Municipality of Librazhd	Stëblevë	1
Dardhë		1	
Municipality of Prrerjas	Rrajcë/Skënderbej	1	
FIER	Municipality of Fier	Pojan	1
		Libofshë	1
		Cakran	1
	Municipality of Patos	Siceqë	1
	Municipality of Roskovec	Luar	1
	Municipality of Lushnje	Ardenicë	1
		Krutje	1
	Municipality of Divjakë	Goricaj	1
Municipality of Mallakastër	Hekal	1	
GJIROKASTËR	Municipality of Gjirokastrë	Dhoksat	1
		Zhulat	1
		Antigone	1
		Lazarat	1
	Municipality of Libohovë	Labovë e Sipërme	1
		Nepravishtë	1
	Municipality of Tepelenë	Nivicë	1
		Peshtan	1
	Municipality of Memaliaj	Kalivaç	1
	Municipality of Përmet	Kosinë	1
		Leusa	1
	Municipality of Këlcyrë	Maleshovë	1
	Municipality of Dropull	Sotirë	1

ANNEX B

KORÇË	Municipality of Korçë	Drenovë/Boboshticë	1
		Voskopojë	1
		Dardhë	1
	Municipality of Maliq	Zvirinë	1
	Municipality of Kolonjë	Rehovë	1
		Borovë	1
	Municipality of Pogradec	Lin	1
		Tushemisht	1
		Gurras	1
	Municipality of Devoll	Arrëz	1
		Nikolicë	1
	Municipality of Pustec	Zaroshkë	1
KUKËS	Municipality of Kukës	Shishtavec	1
		Shtiqen	1
	Municipality of Has	Cahan	1
	Municipality of Tropojë	Valbonë	1
LEZHË	Municipality of Lezhë	Ishull-Lezhë	1
		Fishtë	1
	Municipality of Kurbin	Skuraj	1
	Municipality of Mirditë	Katund i Vjetër	1
		Orosh	1
SHKODËR	Municipality of Shkodër	Drisht	1
		Zogaj	1
		Theth	1
	Municipality of Vau Dejës	Mjedë	1
		Kukël	1
	Municipality of Pukë	Qelëz	1
	Municipality of Fushë Arrëz	Kryezi	1
	Municipality of Malësi e Madhe	Razëm/Vrith	1
		Lëpushë	1
TIRANË	Municipality of Tirana	Shëngjergj	1
		Shesh	1
		Pezë	1
		Pëllumbas	1
	Municipality of Kamëz	La knas	1
	Municipality of Vorë	Prezë	1
		Marikaj	1
	Municipality of Kavajë	Karpen	1
	Municipality of Rrogozhinë	Vilë Bashtovë	1
		German	1
VLORË	Municipality of Vlorë	Kaninë	1
		Tragjas	1
		Zvërnec	1
	Municipality of Himarë	Dhërmi/Vuno	1
		Kuç	1
		Lukovë	1
	Municipality of Finiq	Mesopotam	1
	Municipality of Selenicë	Ploçë(Amantia)	1
		Drashovicë	1
	Municipality of Sarandë	Çukë	1
	Municipality of Konispol	Mursi	1
	Municipality of Delvinë	Rusan	1
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