



The Fund for Aid to
Refugees, Expelled and
Displaced Persons

FUND

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA



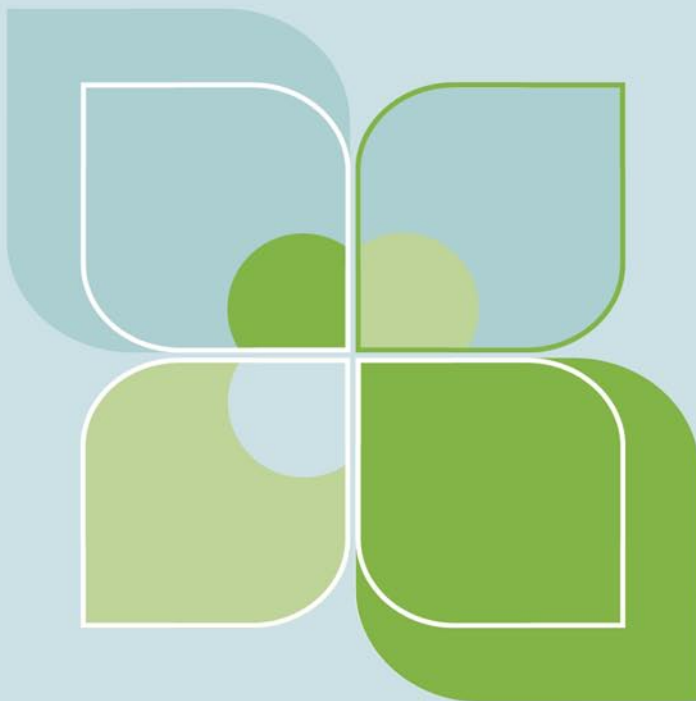
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We have never segregated people according to where they had come from, since we have all come to Vojvodina from different parts of the world. We in Vojvodina only recognize good and bad people. Thank you for choosing to stay in Vojvodina and joining our efforts to develop our community, - Bojan Pajtić, MSc, Chair of the Executive Council of Vojvodina, addressing refugees and guests at a celebration marking the first year of operation of the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons, held at the Executive Council on 5th March 2008.

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The Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons was established pursuant to the decision of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina of 21st December 2006, with an aim to provide aid and permanent solution to the problems of refugees, expelled and displaced persons, currently residing on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

The beneficiaries selected by the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons reply to Public Invitations announced in public media. When inviting public invitations, the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons starts from its core belief that refugees, expelled and displaced persons have the right to choose between remaining in places of their current residence or returning to their original places of residence.

PERMANENT INTEGRATION

The PROVINCIAL FUND FOR AID TO REFUGEES, EXPELLED AND DISPLACED PERSONS, pursuant to its Establishment Act and other documents, is dedicated to providing aid with the aim to ensure permanent solution to problems of the beneficiaries currently residing on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, who have decided to remain in Vojvodina and integrate in respective local communities. The Fund organises activities which lead to the provision of the most important conditions for permanent integration.

In accordance with the decision of the Managing Board of the Fund, the ranking lists established upon the end of public invitations for the provision of dwelling facilities in 2007, shall be used for providing aid in 2008, and new public invitations shall also be announced.

In 2007, within the scope of the Public Invitation for solving dwelling problems of refugees, expelled and displaced persons by purchasing village houses in certain local communities in 18 municipalities on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, 75 families were provided with village houses with a garden in the following municipalities: Apatin-4, Bačka Palanka-10, Bačka Topola-1, Zrenjanin-10, Indija-5, Irig-1, Kovin-1, Kula-4, Novi Sad-5, Odžaci-5, Ruma-9, Sombor-8, Srbobran-2, Sremska Mitrovica-6 and Šid-4. It is planned that 110 additional families will solve their dwelling problems in 2008. The funds used for this purpose shall be allocated in the budget of the AP Vojvodina in the aforementioned municipalities, with an addition of the municipalities of Stara Pazova, Temerin and Vršac. The eligible candidates are those who are involved in agricultural production, wishing to remain in their respective local communities and currently living in collective centres or renting their dwelling places. The maximal amount that can be allocated for purchase of village houses is EUR 6,000 (in dinars) per

family, with 50% of the amount being a direct grant, while the remaining 50% shall be paid back to the Fund not later than 10 years after the funds have been allocated. Within the scope of the Public Invitation for the provision of aid for purchasing construction materials needed for completion of construction works and the Public Invitation for the provision of aid for improving dwelling conditions in certain municipalities on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, 55 families have been granted financial aid. The maximal amount allocated for this purpose is EUR 5,000 (in dinars) per beneficiary, with 50% of the amount being a direct grant, while the remaining 50% shall be paid back to the Fund not later than 8 years after the funds have been allocated. The funds have been allocated to beneficiaries in the following municipalities: Inđija - 7, Novi Sad - 29, Pećinci - 1, Ruma - 3, Sremska Mitrovica - 2, Stara Pazova - 8, Temerin - 4 and Titel - 1. The plan for 2008 for the provision of this type of aid envisages 80 more families-beneficiaries.

Among those who applied for the funds in order to improve their dwelling conditions, 80 families from the following municipalities have been granted aid: Apatin - 5, Bačka Topola - 3, Beočin - 3, Vrbas - 1, Vršac - 1, Žabalj - 3, Inđija - 7, Irig - 2, Kula - 8, Novi Sad - 15, Odžaci - 4, Ruma - 1, Šid - 3, Sombor - 12, Srbobran - 2, Sremska Mitrovica - 1, Sremski Karlovci - 1, Stara Pazova - 2, Temerin - 3 and Titel - 3. The maximal amount for the provision of aid for dwelling problems by providing construction material which should help to improve dwelling conditions is EUR 1,500 per beneficiary. The payment is executed in dinars and is a direct grant. 120 more families shall be assisted in this way in 2008.

SUSTAINABLE RETURN

The provision of aid for sustainable return of beneficiaries who have decided to return to their places of origin in the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo is the second most important activity of the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons, aiming at finding a permanent solution to their problems. The provision of packages for returnees, aid to returnee communities, scientific, cultural and educational cooperation with such communities, as well as the provision of information to the beneficiaries regarding return, are the means through which the Fund supports sustainable return.

The beneficiaries who have applied and met the conditions stipulated in the Public Invitation for registering of refugees, expelled and displaced persons interested in return to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo have been given packages containing the most necessary agricultural tools and household appliances, with a total value of EUR 1,000 per package, as follows: Package 1 - a fridge, a combined cooker and a washing-machine; Package 2 - a cultivator and a water pump, and Package 3 a chainsaw, a water pump and tools - a drill, a jigsaw and a grinder. During 2007 the

Fund distributed 50 packages to 159 people: 34 in the Republic of Croatia, 12 in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 4 in Kosovo. On 14th February 2008 another Public Invitation was announced for packages for the returnees to the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, which will accept applications until the end of the year. 100 packages are planned to be granted but their value and content have been modified. They are now worth up to EUR 1500, respectively (except Package 2), and they contain the following items: Package 1 – a washing-machine, a cooker or a wood stove, and a fridge/freezer; Package 2 – a cultivator; and Package 3 – a chainsaw, a water pump, a corn grinder, and tools – a drill, a jigsaw and a grinder.

In June 2007, a delegation of the Executive Council of AP Vojvodina and the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons visited six counties in the Republic of Croatia. Having visited the municipalities of Vrhovine, Udbina, Donji Lapac, Plaški, Krnjak and Vojnić in Ličko-senjska, Karlovačka and Primorsko-goranska counties, the delegation focused on meetings tackling the issue of the return of refugees from Vojvodina to the Republic of Croatia and the provision of aid through a joint-programme of economic development, revival of small enterprise – agricultural cooperatives – through development of vegetable and fruit production, since the returnees mainly return to rural areas.

Based on the equal importance of integration and return to original places of residence, in 2007 the Fund announced Public Invitations for Provision of Aid through Purchase of Agricultural Mechanisation for cooperatives whose founders, or at least more than a half of them, are expelled persons or refugees who have returned to the Republic of Croatia from the Republic of Serbia and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The notion of agricultural mechanisation in this particular context encompasses tractors, accessories, cultivators and other agricultural machines, except combines. 21 cooperatives from the Republic of Croatia applied and the list of selected beneficiaries comprises the following: "Mirašnica", Zapužane, "Pakračanka", Pakrac, "Agrounija", Pakrac, "Svarun", Vojnić, "Naša Zemlja", Vojnić, "Kordun", Krnjak, "Zelena dolina", Glina, and "Eko lika", Srb. On 20th December 2007, a delegation of the Executive Council of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, led by the chairman of the council Bojan Pajtić, made a donation worth six million dinars to the selected cooperatives. A decision was made at the 22nd session of the Managing Board of the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons, held on 24th December 2007, to include all received applications for this Public Invitation in the selection process in 2008 and the total value of the aid provided will be several times higher than in 2007.

Apart from the mechanisation for cooperatives, in 2007 the Fund also allocated support to a project organised by the "Serbian Democratic Forum" from Zagreb, "Improvement of Cooperative Production", which encompasses training in project proposal writing and

fundraising with/from state, foreign and international donors. This educational 2-day programme was conducted on two locations, in Knin and Vojnić, gathering 36 trainees from 18 cooperatives, who expressed great interest in follow-up courses and found this type of education of extremely high quality and necessary in their future applications for agricultural programmes of both the Republic of Croatia and the European Union. Furthermore, this project managed to bring closer and create a network of returnees' cooperatives on the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

On the 10th March 2008, the Fund announced Public Invitations for participation in a public tender process for the provision of aid through purchasing agricultural mechanisation for returnees' cooperatives in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, under the same conditions as in case of the cooperatives in the Republic of Croatia.

In 2007 the Fund also provided funds for scientific, cultural and educational cooperation in returnees' communities in the Republic of Croatia. Those funds were used for purchase of 16 traditional Serbian costumes from Lika for the Serbian Cultural Society "Prosvjeta" from Zagreb, office in Udbina, 4 computers for offices in Krnjak, Dvor and Glina and 3,510 books (500 sets of compulsory readings in Cyrillic) for children of Serbian nationality in 26 elementary schools in Dalmatia, Lika, Banija and west Slavonia counties. On 29th November 2007, the chairman of the Executive Council of AP Vojvodina, Bojan Pajtić, MSc, consigned this donation worth one million dinars to the president of SCS "Prosvjeta" from Zagreb, Mr Čedomir Višnjić. The Fund is planning to continue with cooperation and activities in this field in 2008 as well, and the total value of donations will be several times greater than in 2007.

In order to keep the beneficiaries informed, particularly regarding return, integration and exercising their rights, the Fund, apart from its activities in print and the electronic media, has designed a web-presentation at www.fondajnfort.org.yu. Furthermore, in 2007 the Fund announced Public Invitations for participation in a public tender process for free bus transport for refugees and expelled persons from the territory of the Republic of Croatia, currently residing on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and Public Invitations for participation in a public tender process for free bus transport for displaced persons from Kosovo, currently residing on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Eligible candidates for this type of aid are those who cannot afford the transportation costs, but need to visit their respective places of origin in order to obtain personal documentation, documentation for exercising their status rights and for prospective return. Last year saw eight bus tours along the route Ruma – Nova Pazova – Inđija – Novi Sad – Bačka Palanka – Ilok – Vukovar – Vinkovci – Županja – Popovača – Sisak – Petrinja – Glina – Vojnić – Slunj – Korenica – Udbina – Gračac – Obrovac – Benkovac and, according to the expressed interest, one free bus tour on the route Subotica – Novi Sad – Kosovska Mitrovica.

On 22nd January 2008 the Fund announced Public Invitations for the participation in a public tender process for free bus transport to the Republic of Croatia in 2008, under the same conditions as in 2007, but following an altered route: Ruma – Nova Pazova – Indija – Novi Sad – Bačka Palanka – Ilok – Vukovar – Vinkovci – Županja – Popovača – Sisak – Petrinja – Glina – Vojnić – Slunj – Korenica – Udbina – Gračac – Knin – Obrovac. Such tours will be organised once a month until the end of the year and will last 4 days, respectively.

NEW ACTIVITIES IN 2008

Among the new activities in 2008, the Fund for Aid to Refugees, Expelled and Displaced Persons is planning to provide free legal counselling to beneficiaries, education in the field of agriculture – improvement of cooperative farming on the territory of the AP Vojvodina for refugees, expelled and displaced persons, and a scholarship programme for university and secondary school students from the most disadvantaged families/beneficiaries.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF AP VOJVODINA

Apart from through the activities of the Fund, the EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF APVOJVODINA is supporting permanent integration and sustainable return of refugees, expelled and displaced persons both directly and through the provincial secretariats, such as the Provincial Secretariat for Labour and Employment, which stipulated in its strategy for 2008, that special attention be paid to the employment problem of refugees, expelled and displaced persons, who are currently residing on the territory of the AP Vojvodina. This secretariat is planning to announce public invitations for the participation in a public tender process for self-employment of such people by allocating subsidies through the National Employment Service.

Among other provincial bodies and institutions of the AP Vojvodina involved in providing aid to refugees, expelled and displaced persons, the greatest scope of aid has so far been provided by the GUARANTEE FUND OF THE AP VOJVODINA, by issuing guarantees for purchase of agricultural mechanisation in 2007.

In 2008, the Guarantee Fund of the AP Vojvodina will be issuing guarantees to refugees, expelled and displaced persons currently residing on the territory of the AP Vojvodina, thus assisting their sustainable integration. At the beginning of 2008, the Guarantee Fund of the AP Vojvodina invited Tenders for issuing guarantees for long-term loans for the purchase of agricultural land, with the primary aim to create preconditions for easier access to credit lines offered by banks for purchase of agricultural land, so that those who own under 30 hectares of arable land could increase their property. Eligible candidates are individual agricultural producers – owners of agricultural estate, currently residing on the territory of the AP Vojvodina, younger than 40 at the moment

when the loan is granted, and with less than 30 hectares of agricultural land in his/her possession. The Invitation remains open until all guaranty potential has been used, but not later than 1st November 2008. In 2008 the Guarantee Fund of the APV also invited Tenders for issuing guaranties for long-term loans for the purchase of new agricultural mechanisation. The primary aim of issuing guarantees is to create preconditions for easier access to credit lines offered by banks to owners of a registered agricultural estate for purchase, currently residing on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, for renewing agricultural mechanisation. The guarantees issued within the scope of this Invitation shall be used for the purchase of combines, tractors and accessories for agricultural machines. Eligible candidates are individual agricultural producers, owners of registered agricultural estates, currently residing on the territory of the AP Vojvodina. The loans cover a purchase worth between RSD 500,000.00 and 10,000,000.00, indexed in EUR according to the medium exchange rate of the National Bank of Serbia on the day when the loan is released and the Invitation remains open until all guarantee potential has been used, but not later than 30th September 2008.

The AP VOJVODINA DEVELOPMENT FUND has invited Tenders for long-term loan arrangements for development programmes and projects in the field of agriculture on the territory of the AP Vojvodina in 2008, with an aim to provide financial aid for the purpose of development support and improvement in the field of agricultural production though upgrading the level of technical equipment, raising the scope and quality of agricultural production and of the level of competitiveness. Eligible candidates are natural persons – owners of registered agricultural estates on the territory of the AP Vojvodina, who wish to purchase agricultural mechanisation, equipment, a livestock unit and a brood flock, plant orchards and vineyards, build or reconstruct irrigation systems, purchase equipment to increase capacity and modernise processing lines and primary agricultural product warehousing, purchase equipment for enclosed spaces and finance initial deposits for leasing arrangements. Such loans range between RSD 200,000.00 and 2,000,000.00 and the Invitation is open until 8th April 2008.

The Invitation of Tenders of the PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND for loans for planting perennial autochthonous types of grapevine in 2008 remains open until 31st December 2008.

When it comes to state bodies and institutions which provide aid to refugees, expelled and displaced persons, apart from the Republic of Serbia Commissariat for Refugees, people belonging to these groups can apply for various programmes, such as:

A Public Invitation for organising public works of interest to the Republic of Serbia in 2008, announced on 26th February 2008 by the MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA. Priority is given to projects which provide

employment opportunities to the most disadvantaged categories of the unemployed, organisation of public works in underdeveloped and developing municipalities, i.e. municipalities where the unemployment rate is higher than the average unemployment rate in Serbia, and to subsidising of public works from other sources. Apart from the application form for organising and conducting public works, available from all National Employment Service offices, eligible candidates should also submit necessary documentation. The whole documentation is submitted to the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development – Department of Employment, Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 15, Belgrade, in four copies, within 30 days after the Public Invitation became valid, i.e. until 23rd March 2008, while the Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality is ready to provide assistance regarding design of a project which should be used for applying for organisation and execution of public works of interest to the Republic of Serbia.

The Public Invitation for registering citizens entitled to free shares and financial compensation announced by the PRIVATIZATION AGENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, with 31st July 2008 as the deadline. Citizens can register in all post offices in the Republic of Serbia. Internally displaced persons are entitled to shares under the same conditions as other citizens, providing they bring an ID card, a current account number, as well as their internally displaced person's ID or the green card and the address where a certificate of confirmation should be sent, stipulating they have been registered and are entitled to shares. Refugees are also entitled to shares, provided they have obtained the citizenship, under the same conditions as other citizens.

The Invitation of Tenders for financing projects regarding preservation and sustainable utilisation of genetic resources of domestic animals in 2008, organised by the MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND WATER MANAGEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, is open until 30th April 2008. The projects encompass purchases of a domestic breed of horse – Nonius, pig breeds Moravka and Resavka, as well as sheep breed Pramenka (subcategories Karakačanska, Pirotaska, Vlashko-Vitoroga Zackel and Bardoka) and projects regarding reconstruction of farms where endangered autochthonous breeds are kept, including roof repair, construction of covers, interior decoration and fence mending. The amount granted for these purposes ranges between RSD 100,000.00 and 200,000.00 per project. The same Ministry has also invited tenders for the utilisation of stimulating resources for development of villages through investments in rural tourism in 2008.

Refugees, expelled and displaced persons residing on the territory of the AP Vojvodina can also seek assistance from the Serbian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, while returnees can contact the Serbian Ministry for Diaspora directly or through organisations of members of Serbian diaspora, NGOs, societies and associations with headquarters in Serbia, thus applying for co-financing of projects/programmes with the following aims:

1) Organisation of mobile cultural programmes suitable for presentation in the centres of diaspora; 2) Improvement of conditions for exercising and enhancement of rights of members of diaspora and autochthonous Serbian communities in the neighbouring countries; 3) Establishment and improvement of economic cooperation with diaspora and autochthonous Serbian communities in the neighbouring countries; 4) Integration of members of diaspora and autochthonous Serbian communities in the neighbouring countries in cultural, scientific and sporting trends in Serbia; and 5) Preservation of the Serbian language among members of diaspora and autochthonous Serbian communities in the neighbouring countries. This Invitation remains open until 5th April 2008.

Various types of aid have been provided to refugees, expelled and displaced persons residing on the territory of AP Vojvodina by international and foreign government and non-government organisations, such as UNHCR, IOM, INTERSOS, SOIR, and others, as well as Serbian NSHC, HCIT, SDF and EHO.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Guarantee Fund of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina,

21000 Novi Sad, Hajduk Veljkova 11,
Phone: +381 21 489-3700, E-mail: garfondaapv@neobee.net

Vojvodina Development Fund,

21000 Novi Sad, Hajduk Veljkova 11,
Phone: +381 21 483-0666, E-mail: fzrapv@neobee.net

Provincial Agricultural Development Fund,

21000 Novi Sad, Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 16,
Phone: +381 21 487-4875, E-mail: fondpolj@apv-nauka.ns.ac.yu

Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality,

21000 Novi Sad, Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 16,
Phone: +381 21 487-4610, E-mail: radizene@neobee.net

Ministry of Economy and Regional Development,

11000 Belgrade, Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 15,
Phones: +381 11 3114-227 and +381 11 3014-330

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management,

11000 Belgrade, Nemanjina 22-26,
Phones: +381 11 3616-580 and +381 11 363-1878, E-mail: office@minpolj.sr.gov.yu

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,

11000 Belgrade, Nemanjina 22-24,
Phone: +381 11 303-86-61, E-mail: socijalna_zastita@minrzs.sr.gov.yu

Ministry for Diaspora,

11000 Belgrade, Vase Čarapića 20,
Phones: +381 11 2637-485 and +381 11 2637-624, E-mail: info@mzd.sr.gov.yu

Republic of Serbia Commissariat for Refugees,

11000 Belgrade, Carice Milice 2,
Phones: +381 11 2634 361 and +381 11 2634 586, E-mail: kirs@kirs.sr.gov.yu

UN High Commissioner for Refugees – UNHCR, Belgrade Office,

11000 Belgrade, Krunska 58,
Phone: +381 11 30 82 100, E-mail: srbbe@unhcr.org

International Organization for Migration – IOM, Belgrade Office,

11000 Belgrade, Držićeva 11,
Phones: +381 11 3821 703 and +381 11 2412 739, E-mail: iombeograd@iom.int

Intersos,

21000 Novi Sad, Cara Dušana 1,
Phones: +381 21 66 22 337 and +381 21 425 469, E-mail: novisad.serbia@intersos.org

Swedish Humanitarian Organisation “Individual Relief – SOIR”,

21000 Novi Sad, Vojvode Putnika 1,
Phone: +381 21 474 02 76, E-mail: imns@im.org.yu

Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre – NSHC,

21000 Novi Sad, Trg mladenaca 6,
Phones: +381 21 524 184 and +381 21 524 331, E-mail: nshc@eunet.yu

Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance – HCIT,

21000 Novi Sad, Vojvodanskih brigada 17,
Phone: +381 21 528-132, E-mail: hcit@eunet.yu

Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation – EHO,

21000 Novi Sad, Ćirila and Metodija 21,
Phones: +381 21 466588 and +381 21 469683, E-mail: office@ehons.org

Serbian Democratic Forum – SDF,

11000 Belgrade, Kraljice Marije 47/II,
Phones: +381 11 3820 250 and +381 11 3820 251, E-mail: beograd@sdf.org.yu

Serbian Refugee Council,

11000 Belgrade, Admirala Geprata 8/35,
Phone: +381 11 306 54 35, E-mail: office@ssi.org.yu

Group 484,

11000 Belgrade, Gračanička 10,
Phone: +381 11 2631 445, E-mail: office@grupa484.org.yu



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The Fund for Aid to Refugees,
Expelled and Displaced Persons

Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 25
21000 Novi Sad, Srbija
Tel: 021/475-4-295
Fax: 021/475-4-296
PIB: 104846932
fondimejl@gmail.com
www.fondajnfort.org.yu



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21000 Novi Sad, Srbija

Tel: 021/475-4-295

Fax: 021/475-4-296

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fondimejl@gmail.com

www.fondajnfort.org.yu

design: ArtSettings, 2008.

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