

Dear IWC members,

You are cordially invited to join us on two upcoming diplomatic visits to the **Etno Mreža colonies:**
on **Tuesday 15 October** from **11am -3pm in Paraćin, central Serbia**; and
on **Sunday 17 November** from **11am-4pm in Loznica, western Serbia**.

Etno Mreža (Ethno Network), in partnership with the British Embassy, organises colonies as part of a masterclass programme for sustaining traditional crafts across Serbia, aiming to support the economic empowerment of women by preserving the country's cultural heritage and promoting its touristic potential. Etno Mreža, together with NALED and the diplomatic and donor community in Serbia, has organized artisans' events in more than 25 colonies in 8 cities across Serbia since 2016.

The colonies offer a unique opportunity for women crafters to network with their fellow artisans and to develop their skills in old handicrafts by taking part in a specialised four-day programme. Each colony organises a diplomatic day for national and international officials and media to visit and support the crafters and to explore some of the unique historical and cultural sights and gastronomy of the area.

The colony in the Serbian city of glass, Paraćin, is specifically devoted to preserving the traditional crafts of gold embroidery and felting (hand rolling of wool). Nestled within the Morava valley, the town is widely celebrated as a centre of the meat industry and of agriculture. Tourism is on the rise due to its proximity to Belgrade and to pearls of nature like Sisevac and Grza.



The colony in Loznica, the heart of Western Serbia, treasures the ancient art of felting. Loznica is known as the alphabet city and home of the Serbian language scholar Vuk Karadžić, whose birthplace of Tršić provides a home to artisans in the colony. The area is known for the former royal spa at Koviljača and for Tronoša monastery.



We hope that you will be able to join us with your members of the diplomatic corps, Serbian government officials and other special guests in helping to reinforce the importance and value of these skills and techniques. They should both be wonderful days out!

The agenda and further details of this event will follow shortly.

To RSVP, and for more details, please contact: v.jovanovic@naled.rs and philomena@belgradefvc.com, 063 120 8624