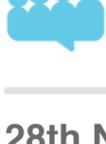


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SMANJENJE SIROMAŠTVA
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT



28th NEWSLETTER

ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I Am a Person First, Only Then a Person with a Handicap

The transcript of the presentation by Milanka Lana Nikolić at the 31st Belgrade Ignite "My Society Loves Differences" (27 April 2015, Mixer House, Belgrade)

I wish to explain to you that young people with handicaps are simply – young, that there is nothing to be afraid of, that handicaps are something to be accepted in the most "laid-back" way possible. There are frequent clashes over whether the term "handicap" or "disability" should be used, so I would like to refer you to the website of the Association of Students with Handicaps, [where you can read why the term "handicap" is correct](#).

You should not admire, applaud, or wonder over young people with handicaps. Young people with handicaps are doing the same thing you are – you give your best every day, right? – and there is nothing unusual about that.

"Wow, you're great!" – this is a sentence I hear regularly when someone gets to know me. If they dare approach me, since I have crutches, they wonder a bit, then say "Wow, you're great!" That is usually a sign they did not expect me to be great, because I have a handicap. This is a bad sign, don't say that. (...)

"You are so young, yet you have crutches!" – the usual sad statement when someone sees me. "You are 23, and have crutches, oh, poor child, what happened to you?" Nothing happened to me. My crutches are something I love and is part of my body, something I count as part of my "I". If you were to take my crutch, it would be the same as if you've cut off my hand. There is nothing bad or sad about it. If someone wants to try my crutches, they can do so any time, but they must ask me, because this is elementary manners: never take someone's aid, never lean on someone's wheelchair just because it's fun for you. (...)

Someone is, first of all, a person, only then a person with a handicap. This is very important to understand, because handicaps are often linked with the fact that due to it you've achieved some kind of success, which is not right. Handicaps, in most cases, can be a drive, or you can understand them as an obstacle. Basically, they are not obstacles, you should instead, ultimately, look at them as something beautiful.

"We don't have a lot of persons with handicaps, I haven't seen them anywhere!" – I hope there aren't many among you who think like this. It is incorrect that we do not have persons with handicaps – we have plenty of them, but we do not have an accessible Belgrade, we do not have adapted buildings and public spaces. There are many persons with handicaps, make an effort to see them and not wonder at them, but be happy to see them. (...)

"You have a boyfriend?! Does he have a handicap, too?" – handicaps do not determine love. Many persons with a handicap have a boyfriend or girlfriend, but people do not assume this. If you have a partner, then it is presumed that they also have a handicap. With my own example I can ensure you that handicaps do not stand in the way of love, that love sees no limits, that a handicap cannot be an excuse and never is.

"Would you like it if you didn't have a handicap?" – of course I would, just like any other person with a handicap, I presume. The point is that I would not want it if it meant I would be changed as a person. If I did not stay the same me – no, thank you.

NEWS

Economic Development and Employment

- ▶ Public Call for Awarding Grants for Project of Support to Women's Entrepreneurship in 2015
- ▶ Public Call for Grants for Project of Competitiveness of MSME in 2015
- ▶ Instability in Balkans, Serbia Risky for Business
- ▶ Winners of Competition "Ideas for Better Tomorrow" for Development of Social Business and Existing Business
- ▶ Grants Awarded to Initiatives Selected through "Plantation for Future" Competition

Social Welfare and Healthcare

- ▶ Contract on Continued Improvement of Roma Health Signed
- ▶ City of Belgrade and UNICEF Sign Memorandum of Cooperation in Strengthening Child Rights
- ▶ New Deadline for Submitting Project Proposals in September Round of Active Communities Programme

Education

- ▶ Public Discussion on Draft Law on Amendments to Law on Fundamentals of Education System Completed
- ▶ Conference "National Qualifications Framework in Serbia – Establishing Communication between Education and Labour Market" Held
- ▶ Reconstruction of 51 Schools with 7.6 Million Euros
- ▶ Course for Certification for "Teacher of Roma Language" Started
- ▶ Zero Project 2016 – Call to Nominate Innovative Practices and Policies in Field of Inclusive Education and/or ICT

Vulnerable Groups and Human Rights

- ▶ Results of Public Call to Finance Programmes and Projects for Implementing Goals of National Youth Strategy
- ▶ AWC Submits Signatures of Support by Citizens for Adopting Urgent Measures of Protection to Members of Parliament
- ▶ Containers for Migrant Housing in Subotica and Kanjiza
- ▶ Working Group for Roma Settlement Eviction Formed

EU Integration

- ▶ For Serbia 189 Million Euros under IPA 2014
- ▶ Third Call under Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Serbia – Montenegro (Deadline: 18/08/2015)
- ▶ Citizen Support for EU Membership Increasing
- ▶ First Meeting of Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) between EU and Serbia
- ▶ Vojvodina Not Included in EU Negotiations

EU News

- ▶ European Commission Report "Aging 2015"
- ▶ Proposed Directive on Maternity Leave Withdrawn
- ▶ Vice-Chairman of EC Demands Recognition of Same-Sex Marriage within EU
- ▶ EU Tightens Conditions for Reception of Migrants
- ▶ More Money from European Youth Funds

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT

Start of Programme "Local Initiatives to Increase Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction"

The start of the one-year programme "Local Initiatives to Increase Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction" was officially marked on Thursday, 16 July 2015. The programme will be implemented in cooperation with 11 partnerships between civil society organizations, local self-governments and other relevant institutions at the local level. The value of the programme is approximately 122,000 euros. The programme is coordinated by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, with the financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The programme partners will be working in the fields of social protection, rural development, employment, education and social housing on implementing the recommendations defined by the Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction and the specific goals of the Programme.

More information on the Programme can be found [here](#).

Cooperation Agreement Signed between SECO for Human Resource Development and Social Development and Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit

On Tuesday, 15 July, Vesna Đukić, general director of the Belgrade Open School and Žarko Šunderić, manager of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, have signed a Cooperation Agreement (HRSD SECO), as part of the support for the SECO for human resource development and social development (HRSD SECO), encompassing a large number of areas and monitoring the process of implementing reforms regarding education, employment, social inclusion, healthcare and youth.

The Cooperation Agreement aims to provide financial support and assistance to HRSD SECO to stimulate increased participation by civil society in the process of programming international development assistance, primarily IPA II funds.

More information can be found [here](#).

Overview of Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia – Role of Local Self-Governments

The Overview of the Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia for 2011-2014 – Role of Local Self-Governments was published. The review shows the key elements of the Second National Report and particularly illuminates the aspect of social inclusion at the local community level.

The brief overview is primarily intended for local self-governments, representatives of sectoral institutions at the local level, non-government organizations/civil society organizations and all other stakeholders actively engaged in their community to improve the status of the most vulnerable groups of the population and improve the process of social inclusion.

The Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia for 2011-2014 was adopted on 30 October 2014. The report, for each of the areas relevant for social inclusion and poverty reduction processes, shows the legal, strategic and institutional framework, current situation, implemented measures and programmes, as well as the basic directions for action for the coming period.

[Click here to download the Overview of the Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia.](#)

READ MORE...

- ▶ [Conference Held on Improving the Work of Municipal Administrations](#)
- ▶ [Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade Awards 1 Million Euro Grants for 18 Non-Government Organizations from Serbia and Montenegro](#)
- ▶ [AIESEC: Project "Start Your Future" for Students](#)
- ▶ [Training for Organizers of Living Libraries \(Deadline: 30/07/2015\)](#)
- ▶ [Online Competition "My Story of e-Participation" \(Deadline: 31/07/2015\)](#)
- ▶ [16 Days of Activism This Year Marked by Education](#)

You may follow the news on social inclusion and poverty reduction regularly at:

<http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/en/>

SOCIAL INCLUSION BLOG

Nataša Todorović: Cities Adapted to Elderly



Population aging and urbanization are the two main trends of the 21st century. On the one hand, cities are growing, while on the other, the number of citizens over 60 is increasing. According to United Nations data, the share of those older than 60 in the population will double between 2006 and 2050 from 11% to 22%, and by then the number of those over 60 will be greater than the number of children under 14. At the same time, cities and municipalities are growing and expanding rapidly. Since 2007,

basically half the population of Earth lives in cities, and according to predictions by 2030 three out of five citizens are expected to live in cities. The same trend exists in our country as well. Most of the population lives in cities, villages are mostly elderly with small populations, and migration towards cities, particularly Belgrade, is marked.

In order to respond to the needs of an aging population it is necessary to, in addition to empowering villages, make sure we develop cities and communities adapted to the elderly, representing a logical response to the increase in the number of elderly on the one hand, and promotion of active aging on the other. Talk of this issue started when the World Health Organization developed a global project in 2006 titled Cities Adapted to the Elderly. The project united cities and communities worldwide interested in supporting healthy aging and becoming age sensitive or friendly towards the elderly. In order to correctly answer the question what would, in fact, the term *cities adapted to the elderly* mean, in these cities information was collected from the elderly, from caretakers and people interested in developing cities adapted to the elderly.

Such cities foster intergenerational solidarity, enable social relations and links between citizens of all ages. This enables, on the one hand, for the elderly to feel socially included, and on the other, for those elderly under risk of social isolation to be provided support and to reduce economic, language or cultural barriers to a minimum.

Cities adapted to the elderly have benefits for all ages, not only the elderly: cities with environments adapted to citizens of all ages and various capacities and abilities. Friendly cities are cities without barriers, with safe roads and infrastructure, designed for diversity, inclusive and cohesive. These are the cities of choice for all generations – excellent places for living, for family, and a place you want to grow old in. They enable people to remain active, connected and positively contribute to the economic, social and cultural life.

Such cities can prevent and delay disease occurring with age through providing support in the community and through preventive healthcare services, enabling the elderly to retain their health and independence as long as possible. (...)

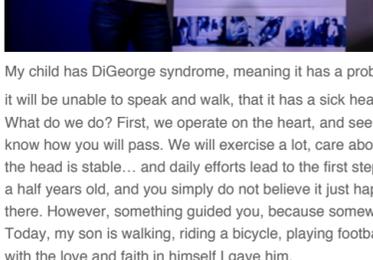
The World Health Organization believes that Cities Adapted to the Elderly represent a place enabling people of all ages to actively participate in the life of the community. It is a place facilitating your staying connected to those around you and those you love. It is a place helping people remain healthy and active, even those of the most advanced age, and it is a place helping those who can no longer care for themselves to live with dignity. Many cities and communities worldwide have already taken active steps: a total of 210 communities worldwide. However, numerous barriers remain. Some of them are physical barriers, but many are the consequence of prejudice and thinking of aging and the way we see and treat the elderly as passive receivers, not active members of the community.

The text in its entirety can be read on the [Social Inclusion Blog](#). The author wrote it in cooperation with dr Milutin Vračević from the Red Cross of Serbia, originally published in [The Voice of Centres – Informational Newsletter of the Social Work Centres of Serbia](#) (iss. 46, March 2015).

Other texts by our bloggers can be found at: <http://www.socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/blog/>

SUCCESS STORY

Behind Every Child Believing in Itself is a Parent Who First Believed in It



Transcript of the presentation by Ana Knežević at the 31st Belgrade Ignite "My Society Loves Differences" (27 April 2015, Mixer House, Belgrade)

Behind every child believing in itself stands a parent who first believed in it. Behind every adult believing in themselves is also a parent who believed in them. Behind every successful person with a disability, in Serbia and in general, there is definitely always a parent. (...)

My child has DiGeorge syndrome, meaning it has a problem on the 22nd chromosomal pair, that perhaps it will be unable to speak and walk, that it has a sick heart, etc. All kinds of predictions kept hitting us... What do we do? First, we operate on the heart, and see what happens. It is a tunnel you literally do not know how you will pass. We will exercise a lot, care about whether pelvic control is established, whether the head is stable... and daily efforts lead to the first step! It happens at once, when your child is three and a half years old, and you simply do not believe it just happened, because you didn't believe you'd get there. However, something guided you, because somewhere in your heart you knew it was possible. (...)

Today, my son is walking, riding a bicycle, playing football, making an effort and fighting in accordance with the love and faith in himself I gave him.

What should the mother of such a child know? She should know she gave birth to a prince, that only she is strong and important and that she can help her child. Everything happens for a good reason and will be well, she just has to be very persistent. When after seven or ten years you manage to raise your child and fight through it, you want to change the world and say: "I will not go to Novi Sad to treat my child, I will not go to Sweden because the conditions there are better. I want to develop a system of support for my child here – in my Serbia, in my Belgrade!" (...)

What should everyone else know? They should be happy they can help someone and hope they will never be in a position where they need help. They should know it is not easy at all for us, regardless of the fact we carry our burden like a million dollars. That our children are happy with us and that we are happy for having them.

Two years ago we started the campaign for the inclusive centre "Meeting Place" in Zemun Polje. It was very hard and it didn't look probable that it would become a reality. But we managed to turn a horrible house, the eyesore of the neighbourhood, into a beautiful centre for our children. Because an inclusive centre, why in Zemun Polje and why is it called "Meeting Place"? It is an inclusive centre because I have another child, too, one that needs to grow and mature and who also needs support and who should make friends with all other children. In Zemun Polje because I am Ana from Zemun Polje, and my child is growing up there. Why "Meeting Place"? Because first we need to somehow meet ourselves, to be the support and feel the power in ourselves, and only then can we meet everyone else. We are there to provide welcome, because our inclusive centre is open for all. (...)

More success stories can be found at socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs

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