



Government of the  
Republic of Serbia

January 2013

14<sup>th</sup>

NEWS ON SOCIAL INCLUSION  
LETTER AND POVERTY REDUCTION



*Solidarity is one of the fundamental EU principles and represents an overall goal of all European societies. A more inclusive Europe is vital for the realization of EU objectives: sustainable economic growth, new and better jobs and higher social cohesion. EU leaders established the social inclusion process in order to contribute more efficiently to poverty eradication. The Government of Serbia takes active part in the social inclusion process to improve the quality of life its citizens. The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has been established to assist the Government and line ministries to develop and implement social inclusion and poverty reduction policies in a coordinated and effective manner.*

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## BRANKICA JANKOVIĆ, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy Long-term Care in Serbia

Ageing as a process, old age as a period of life and quality of life of the elderly have been in focus of many scientists, researchers, experts from different branches, but also of politicians and the public in general over the past years. In the context of the Republic of Serbia, the problems of protection of the elderly should be on top of the agenda of scientific research and everyday political, sociological and other deliberations.

The reasons are numerous, but the most evident ones are found in the demographic data, which show that it is more than obvious that we are living in the land of the elderly, wherein – as according to the unofficial data from the last Census of Population – there are 1,250,316 citizens older than 65. In percentage points, this means 17.40% of the total population. At the same time, the number of children aged 0 - 14 is 1,025,278 or 14.27% of the total population.

The other reasons logically follow this demographic structure and relate to the financial status of the elderly, their functional dependency on different types and forms of other persons' care, issues of sustainability of the system of pension and disability insurance, problems of long-term care, etc. These several data call for an active and different approach to development of new policies to meet the challenges related to long-term care, which is bound to become the most topical aspect of ageing in Serbia in times before

us. Not sufficient care has been paid to this issue to date. However, this does not mean that there has been no long-term care. Quite the contrary, long-term care service providers functioned quite steadily in the given circumstances, and the individuals and families in need of this kind of assistance managed to the best of their abilities, needs and knowledge.

Currently, long-term care services are offered by 45 state owned, and 109 privately owned gerontology centres and homes for the elderly, of which 96 in Serbia and 13 in Vojvodina). The capacity of private elderly homes is 2,843 (Serbia proper 2,554 and AP Vojvodina 289), and the capacity in state elderly homes is 8,894 beds.

In addition, 82 Serbian municipalities have a functioning "Assistance at Home" service, funded by local governments. This service is project funded in 40 municipalities; meaning it is not fully sustainable. However, in the majority of cases, this service does not function as home or formal care provided by the formal nurses, but only as help at home including assistance in performing of everyday activities. In the system of protection, home care is organised in some health care centres, but not as a permanent service required by citizens who will need this type of care for many years, even decades.

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**DUBRAVKA ŠARANOVIĆ RACIĆ, PH.D., ASSISTANT MINISTER OF HEALTH**

## Long-term Care – A Step Forward by Healthcare System

The population of the Republic of Serbia decreased from 7,576,837 (1991) to 7,180,307 (2011), with a registered birth rate decline from 9.6 per 1000 persons in 2006 to 9.4 in 2010. Moreover, the population growth rate continued its negative trend, dropping from -4.3 in 2006 to -4.8 in 2010. On the other hand, life expectancy again showed a slight tendency of growth in 2010, at 74.01 years.

Demographic trends have also indicated a further increase of elderly people's share in the overall population, as well as a longer life expectancy, which will result in a considerably higher share of elderly persons above 80 years of age. As the population ages, the share of the elderly, chronically ill and functionally dependent persons also rises; the number of elderly persons living alone increases, whereas the number of children is on the decline.

In line with the national healthcare policy, which stipulates integration of palliative care in the healthcare system and implementation of palliative care as a regular component of home treatment and nursing, the Serbian Government endorsed, in 2009, the Palliative Care Strategy and the associated Action Plan. The reasons for adoption of the Strategy included the increasing need for this type of healthcare, as a consequence of Serbia's ageing population and the increasing number of persons with progressive diseases. Palliative care is provided in 88 primary health care

centres by home treatment and nursing units, teams comprising a doctor/nurse, a social worker, a psychologist, volunteers, a physiotherapist and priests, whereas in 70 primary health care centres it is provided by chosen physicians. The focus of all teams is on providing support to patients and their families, with a view to improving their quality of life. A patient may be referred to a hospice care unit within an extended care ward.

The Palliative Care Strategy in Serbia relies on patients' families; accordingly, the plan of the Ministry of Health, which involves cooperation with local self-governments, is to take "another step forward" in long-term care, i.e. to:

- hire visiting nurses in home treatment and nursing wards to monitor the health of ill elderly persons. The aim of this type of health care is to allow the ill elderly to remain at home, in their familiar environment;
- establish "nursing homes" in five cities in Serbia, where nurses provide health care (wound dressing, medication, pain relief therapy, tube feeding, vital signs measurement and recording, supervision of informal care);
- organise clubs and day care centres for elderly persons;
- establish gerontology and palliative care institutes in Kragujevac, Niš and Novi Sad;
- launch a preventive programme for early detection of dementia.

## POLICY IMPACT ANALYSIS

**Study on the Future  
of Serbian Villages Published**

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, is finalizing the second cycle of policy impact analyses, with a view to promoting and encouraging the creation and implementation of evidence-based policies, which will contribute to poverty reduction, increase of social inclusion and enhanced life quality of Serbian citizens. This initiative allows for the introduction of active inclusion policies, in compliance with the EU policies, and aims to enable achievement of the inclusive growth objective in Serbia, as defined in the Europe 2020 Strategy, as well as to develop a sustainable post-crisis model of economic growth.

The first study titled *The Future of Serbian Villages* was published in cooperation with SEEDEV.

The aim of the study was to analyse the current situation through a multidisciplinary approach, illustrate the heterogeneity of rural areas and outline different positions of various population groups. The study contains plenty of recommendations and is a valuable source of data and guidelines, used as the basis for the highlighted potentials and suggested strategic courses of action towards increasing the rural population's quality of life.

The findings and recommendations of this and other analyses are the basis for a reformed social inclusion agenda, which will be advocated and implemented by the Government of Serbia, while the very process of conducting these analyses will influence the capacity building of government institutions for regular impact analysis of public policies and establishment of a continual process, which attests the commitment to creation of a democratic and responsible government.

**Long-term Care for the Elderly in Serbia**

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, supported by the Centre for Liberal-Democratic Studies, is finalising its analysis of long-term care for elderly persons in Serbia, aiming to provide support to the development of the Serbian long-term care sector. In addition to the comparative analysis of this sector in the developed EU countries and an in-depth description of the current state of affairs in Serbia, the analysis will also raise significant questions with regard to changes and enhancements to the provision of long-term care in Serbia, as well as indicate the possible directions for development of this system.

Long-term care in Serbia is provided in the form of financial support (assistance and care benefit), as well as through services intended for this population group. Assistance and care benefit is either provided from the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund (for insured persons, according to the Pension and Disability Insurance Law), or from the national budget (for uninsured persons, according to the Social Welfare Law). In total, there are 107,000 beneficiaries of this type of support, among whom there are more than 62,000 persons above 65 years of age and 28,000 above 80 years of age. The system of services includes institutional and foster care (funded from the national budget), palliative care and home care (funded from the health insurance fund) and community services (from the budgets of local governments).

Population ageing in Serbia raises a number of socio-economic issues. According to forecasts of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the share of the population above 65 years of age will increase from 17.1% in 2009 to 23.2% by 2050, while that of the population above 80 years of age will increase from 3.3% (244,600 persons) to 6.2% (405,500 persons). Demographic trends, combined with ever increasing individualisation of the society, abandonment of the traditional family model and pronounced migrations, emphasise the significance of upgrading the long-term care system while, at the same time, ensuring its financial sustainability.

In late November, a two-day workshop on the reform of the national long-term care system was organised with the support of the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) Instrument of the European Commission and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, tel. +381 11 311 46 05  
[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs)

**NALED: Employment Booklets and Health  
Insurance Cards Should Be Abolished**

In the latest issue of its Grey Book, the National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED) argues that employment booklets and health insurance cards are personal documents which no longer have any practical value and, therefore, should be abolished. The rationale for abolishing employment booklets is that it would lead to overall annual savings of EUR 3.6 million.

The position of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, however, is that employment booklets should not be abolished, since the system lacks adequate records that would be able to replace these booklets.

Contact: NALED, tel. +381 11 33 73 063, [www.naled-serbia.org](http://www.naled-serbia.org)

**Population of Serbia: 7,186,862**

According to the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings, conducted in 2011, the number of people living in Serbia was 7,186,862, or 311,139 persons (4.15%) fewer than in the 2002 Census. The 2011 data revealed that Serbia was home to 21 ethnic communities.

There were 5,988,150 Serbs (83.32%), and this ethnic community decreased by 224,688 persons between the two censuses.

There were also 253,899 Hungarians, 147,604 Roma persons, 145,278 Bosniaks, 23,303 Yugoslavs and 22,301 Muslims.

The number of men and women was 3,499,176 and 3,687,686 respectively, while their respective average ages were 40.9 and 43.5 years. The share of persons above 65 years of age in the overall population was 17.4%, while that of youth under 15 years of age was 14.3%, which suggests that Serbia is in an advanced stage of demographic ageing.

Information: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia  
tel. +381 11 24 01 284, [www.stat.gov.rs](http://www.stat.gov.rs)

**Results of the Labour Force Survey**

The Labour Force Survey was conducted in the Republic of Serbia in October 2012 on the sample of some 8000 households. A total of 22,705 persons were interviewed, with data about the labour activity collected for 20,072 persons aged 15+.

At the level of the country, the unemployment rate, representing the share of the unemployed in the total labour active population, stood at 22.4% (21.5% male and 23.7% female population). The unemployment rate in the region of Belgrade was 20.1%, in Autonomous Province of Vojvodina 25.7%, in the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia 20.3%, and in South and Eastern Serbia 23.8%.

The employment rate is a percentage of employed persons in the total population aged 15+. In October 2012, it amounted to 36.7%. Of these, the employment rate among men was 44.0%, and among women 29.8%. The highest employment rate was recorded in the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia – 40.3%. In the region of Belgrade, the employment rate stood at 35.8%, in South and Eastern Serbia 35.1% and in the region of Vojvodina 34.9%.

The unemployment rate in October 2012 fell by 3.1% relative to April 2012, and by 1.3% relative to October 2011. The employment rate increased by 2.4% and 1.4% relative to April 2012 and October 2011 respectively.

Source: RSO, [www.stat.gov.rs](http://www.stat.gov.rs)

**Licensing Social Service Providers**

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy has announced an invitation for the professional public to take part in the creation of the system for licensing social service organisations and professionals. The licensing system will guarantee expertise, credibility and reliability of all social service organisations and professionals.

Licences will be issued from January until the end of 2013 to about 2,200 professionals and to all national, local and privately-owned social service institutions, as well as to non-governmental organisations providing this type of services.

In Serbia, there are approximately 500,000 beneficiaries of social services, more than 400 different types of services are provided, there are 45 public gerontology centres and 90 privately-owned institutions of this kind.

Licensing will be conducted as part of the project titled Licensing systems for social service providers in Serbia, with the support of the Norwegian Government.

Contact: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy  
[www.minrzs.gov.rs](http://www.minrzs.gov.rs)

**Retirement Age Increased**

Thus far, men with 40 years of pensionable service were able to retire at the age of 53 years and eight months at the earliest, whereas in 2013, this age threshold will be raised by four months. As of next year, women will be able to retire at the age of 53 years and four months provided they have accrued 34 years and four months of pensionable service.

The principal requirement for old age pension remains unchanged – men will retire at 65 years of age and at least 15 years of pensionable service, whereas women will fulfil this requirement at 60 years of age and 15 years of pensionable service.

The total number of pensioners in Serbia is 1,690,000.

Contact: Republic of Serbia, Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, [www.pio.rs](http://www.pio.rs)



## EC Proposes New Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

The European Commission has proposed to set up a fund to help the most deprived, so as to ensure continued EU assistance once the Food for the Most Deprived scheme is discontinued by the end of 2013.

The Commission has proposed an allocation of EUR 2.5 billion in the EU budget for the new fund during the period of 2014–2020.

There are currently 40 million people in Europe suffering from food deprivation and at least 4 million homeless.

The EC proposal envisages the provision of food to the most deprived persons, as well as other essential goods to homeless people and materially-deprived children. The proposed fund would be complementary to the European Social Fund and its practical implementation would be managed by the EU Member States.

Source: [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu)

## Poverty on the Rise in the EU

According to figures released by the EU's statistical office, Eurostat, more than 24 percent of the EU population in 2011 was either struggling with low income or living in extremely poor conditions.

"More than 27 percent of children are now at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, which is much more than the overall population", said EU Employment Commissioner Laszlo Andor.

Source: <http://euobserver.com>

## EU Modernises the Job Search Network

The European Commission has decided to modernise and improve EURES, the EU job search network in order to increase mobility of workers across member states, create a single European labour market and facilitate the contact between jobseekers and employers. The reform will be focusing on youth, as well as on sectors and occupations with skills shortages.

According to EURES forecasts for the next decade, the number of jobs requiring lower levels of education will decrease by 20% by the year 2020, while doctors, nurses and nursing assistants, IT specialists and engineers will continue to be in high demand.

The reform also envisages redesigning the EURES portal, which currently has 725,795 registered vacancies, 999,715 CVs and 29,312 employers registered. The portal is a part of the Commission's Rethinking Education strategy.

Despite more than 25 million unemployed persons in the EU, there are still vacancies. The EU unemployment rate in September was 10.6%. Out of 25.75 million unemployed persons in the EU, 5.52 million were young people.

Source: [ec.europa.eu/eures](http://ec.europa.eu/eures)

## Erasmus Mundus in Funding Crisis

One of the most famous programmes for students' exchange and scholarships at EU universities, Erasmus Mundus, could run out of funding, which has prompted Members of the European Parliament to ask the EU member states to increase their contributions for the scholarship programme.

Source: [www.euractiv.rs](http://www.euractiv.rs)

## Montenegro Closes First Chapter of Negotiations with EU

On 18 December, the EU has provisionally closed the Science and Research chapter in the accession negotiations with Montenegro, since the European Commission was satisfied with the work of the Montenegrin authorities in this sector. The negotiations will continue in the areas of rule of law, freedoms, judiciary reform, human and minority rights.

As pre-accession assistance, the EC has allocated EUR 21.3 million for the reforms in the process of EU accession.

## Serbian Government Adopts Action Plan to Fulfil EC Recommendations

At the session held on 17 December, the Serbian Government adopted the Action Plan for Fulfilling Recommendations of the European Commission's Annual Report on the Progress Made in the European Integration Process in 2012.

The Action Plan envisages activities towards fulfilment of the recommendations given by the European Commission in its Annual Progress Report, published in October 2012.

The plan gives an overview of the most important recommendations and shortcomings identified by the Commission, as well as the list of the competent institutions, measures and deadlines for the fulfilment of those recommendations and activities provided for by the plan. It covers a period of about 10 months, until September 2013. Reports on the fulfilment of the Action Plan will be prepared by the Serbian European Integration Office in April, July and September 2013.

Source: Serbian European Integration Office, tel. +381 11 30 61 100; [www.seio.gov.rs](http://www.seio.gov.rs)

## EU Donates EUR 172 Million to Serbia

On 21 December, the Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia Vincent Deger and the Director of the Serbian European Integration Office Milan Pajević signed a EUR 172 million agreement on the National Program, as a part of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

Out of the total amount granted, EUR 32.5 million will be allocated for support to the judiciary, prosecution and the police and EUR 16 million for financing public administration reform. The grant will also support training of judges and prosecutors, as well as projects related to efficiency in enforcing court decisions. The Public Prosecutor's Office received EUR 2.3 million worth of equipment.

A sum of EUR 17.5 million is earmarked for closing down the remaining collective centres and construction of prefabricated

homes for internally displaced persons, while EUR 28 million is set aside for employment efforts. Environmental protection and renewable energy sources will be funded with EUR 57.4 million.

In 2013, Serbia will allocate EUR 27 million for 13 projects, which, combined with the IPA funds, totals EUR 199 million.

In addition to this grant, the EU will invest EUR 11.5 million in cross-border cooperation projects, EUR 10 million in accommodation for refugees in the region, EUR 7 million in the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes and EUR 2 million in civil society projects, totalling EUR 202 million in 2012.

The EU is Serbia's biggest donor, having invested more than EUR 2.4 billion since 2000.

## Serbia Spends 24.6% of GDP on Social Welfare, Whereas EU 27 Average is 29.4%

Serbia's social welfare expenditures in 2010 amounted to 24.6% of the gross domestic product (GDP), whereas 27 EU Member States spent 29.4% of GDP on average.

According to Eurostat, the ratio of social welfare expenditure to GDP among the EU member states was the highest in France, Denmark and the Netherlands.

Social welfare expenditures in the EU increased from 26.1% in 2007 to 29.6% of GDP in 2009. Old-age and survivors' pensions accounted for 45% of the total social expenditures in the EU, whereas in Serbia these benefits accounted for 53.7% of all social benefits.

The share of expenditures on healthcare and disability benefits in the total social expenditures in 2010 was 37% in the EU, compared to 35.2% in Serbia.

Family benefits on average accounted for 8% of overall social expenditures in the EU, whereas family/childcare benefits in Serbia had a share of 5.4%, and for housing and social exclusion benefits – 4% on average in the EU, compared to 2.1% in Serbia.

Unemployment benefits on average account for 6% of the total social expenditures in the EU, whilst their share in Serbia is 3.6%.

Source: [www.euractiv.rs](http://www.euractiv.rs)

## Local Governments in the EU Accession Process

The role of local governments and the impact of EU accession process on Serbian local governments and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM), as the national association of local authorities, comprised the main topic of the 40th General Assembly of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, under the title Impact of the EU Accession Process on Serbian Local Governments.

The participants of the General Assembly were discussing the future steps that local self-governments need to undertake in order to prepare for, equally participate in and advocate their interests in a timely manner in the process of Serbia's accession to the EU.

Source: [www.skgo.org](http://www.skgo.org)

## Call for Project Proposals for Danube Region Development

A public call for project proposals has been announced under the Grant Scheme of the project Socio-Economic Development of the Danube Serbia Region.

This EU IPA-funded project is essentially an effort to exploit the opportunities for socio-economic development of the Danube Serbia Region and of Serbia as a whole.

The scheme will finance projects supporting the development and promotion of businesses in the sectors of tourism, environment, food processing and handicrafts and those supporting a more effective use of cultural and tourism assets.

The EU contribution to the Grant Scheme is EUR 2.5 million. The Austrian Development Agency will contribute an additional EUR 1 million.

The applications deadline is 28 February 2013. Contact: Serbian European Integration Office [www.evropa.gov.rs](http://www.evropa.gov.rs)

## Investments in Primary Health Care Centres

The Ministry of Health has allocated funds amounting to RSD 55 million to support maintenance and procurement investments. The funds are provided within the Delivery of Improved Local Services – DILS project, implemented by the Ministry of Health and funded through a World Bank loan.

Each of the covered primary health care centres will receive the amount of RSD 1,277,000, which they will be able to use for construction maintenance, procurement of medical equipment etc., as well as for capacity strengthening in the period of transition towards the establishment of a decentralised healthcare system.

Furthermore, financial support has been provided for the accreditation process in 76 primary health care centres and procurement of certified software for 162 primary health care institutions. Funds have also been provided to 42 primary health care centres for the implementation of the project aimed at increasing access to health care for vulnerable population groups.

## Patients' Ombudsmen Move Out of Health Care Institutions

The Draft Law on Patients' Rights envisages the detachment of patients' ombudsmen from health care institutions, including a most likely change of their title.

During the public discussion on the said Draft Law, as well as on the Draft Law on the Protection of Persons with Mental Disabilities, it was suggested that patients' ombudsmen should not share premises with healthcare institutions or be on the payroll of the National Health Insurance Fund, since those circumstances hinder them from impartially protecting patients' rights.

The overarching message of the Draft Law on Patients' Rights and the Draft Law on the Protection of Persons with Mental Disabilities is that patients are not merely insurance holders, they are also partners when their health is concerned; accordingly, they must have all the information about their rights.

Contact: Ministry of Health

[www.zdravlje.gov.rs](http://www.zdravlje.gov.rs)

## BRANKICA JANKOVIĆ: Long-term Care in Serbia

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Only Belgrade has a specialised Institute for Gerontology and Home Treatment.

The number of so called "informal nurses" ("non-professionals" providing care) cannot be established accurately, as the share of the gray labour market zone in this area is relatively high. In this respect, lack of expertise does not always mean "ignorance" or lack of skills for certain jobs, as many nurses "waiting for a job" or retired perform these tasks in the homes of beneficiaries. This means that one of the future policies could be to "legalise" of this type of long-term care, creating at the same time opportunities for employment of a number of unemployed persons. A system of licencing these tasks – following the currently introduced model of licencing service providers and professionals in the social protection system – should be introduced. Safety of environment and qualified nurses, both at home and in the institutions for accommodation represent key elements of the high quality care.

The centres for occasional care – the so called day care centres, may be one of the good solutions and alternatives to the institutions for permanent care. No

doubt, more effort should be invested in developing these services in the future also. In addition, centres for training of informal nurses could be established, where the members of families who care for their elderly could learn and obtain the necessary expert assistance but also psychological support for execution of this job, also needed to face the new life situation.

The functioning of long-term care is also one of the very important questions of social policy, as there is no universally applicable model and solutions are entirely dependent on the context. The price of long-term care depends on a number of factors, inter alia the number of persons having access to services, level of participation in funding of services, quality of services, relationship between institutional care and home services, reliance on informal service providers, etc. One of the possible future models of financing is the internationally recognised model of mandatory insurance in case of care.

No doubt, the challenges we are facing are complex and require a serious approach. The experiences of others must be heard and the organisation of conferences, workshops, forums with this topic, could play a significant role in that.

## Community Care for the Elderly

The Serbian Red Cross, partnered with the Dutch non-governmental organisation Yanos Public Health, finalised the project Community Care for the Elderly, which was financially supported by the Social Transformation Programme for Central and Eastern Europe (Matra) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The training was completed by 200 professionals from local governments, social work centres, private sector representatives of, Red Cross volunteers, as well as elderly members of the community.

Source: [www.redcross.org.rs](http://www.redcross.org.rs)

## Joblessness among the Elderly

On 14 November, at the presentation of the report on the status of elderly persons worldwide – Ageing in the 21st Century, prepared by UNFPA and HelpAge International, Serbia was ranked among the countries with the oldest populations in Europe and, more unflatteringly, at the very bottom of the list when labour market inclusion of the elderly was considered.

The research showed that at least one third of the elderly population in Serbia and around the world had experienced some form of discrimination. Nowadays, one in nine persons is above 60 years old and this ratio is projected to increase to one in five by 2050.

## Support to Re-socialisation of Children with Behaviour Problems

In October, the International Aid Network (IAN) launched the project Leave a Different Fingerprint on the World, designed to support children and youth with behavioural problems in adopting a system of values that includes a positive attitude towards education and work. The goal of the project is to offer an adequate programme aimed at social integration of juvenile offenders, youth and children with asocial behaviour and youth in risk of conflict with the law.

IAN is implementing the project with the support of the German Schüler Helfen Leben Foundation.

Source: International Aid Network (IAN), [www.ian.org.rs](http://www.ian.org.rs)

## UNICEF Awards for Best Media Reporting on Children

Marking the Universal Children's Day and the anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF presented annual awards for professional and ethical reporting on children and their rights in the context of violence against and among children, with particular focus on violence at school. The award recipients were journalists from the daily newspaper Press, TV Piroć and Radio Zrenjanin.

Source: UNICEF Serbia

[www.unicef.org/serbia](http://www.unicef.org/serbia)

## BLOG

## Nikoleta Kosovac: MY ROOFLESS NEIGHBOUR

Ignoring the fact that homelessness exists also in our country and that it is ever more present, additionally contributes to the exclusion of homeless persons. Over the past 12 months, the needs of this socially vulnerable group were in focus of Housing Center (Housing Development Center for Socially Vulnerable Groups) from Belgrade and the Red Cross activists from the municipality of Palilula. The results of the surveys conducted showed that individuals who find themselves homeless represent, socially and legally, one of the most vulnerable and "lonely" categories of population.

This is further supported by the data on beneficiaries of the Reception Centre: 1 in 3 benefi-

ciaries comes to the Centre from the hospital for having nowhere else to go; there is twice as many of those expecting assistance from the state than from the family/friends, more than a half of them do not know whom they can/may expect help from, 60% beneficiaries of the Reception Centre live alone, 65% do not receive any assistance from anyone, and 44% beneficiaries of the Reception Centre have mental problems.

As many as 76% of homeless persons believe they can do nothing to change their current situation, 62% of the homeless living in the street state they have problems in finding a place to bathe, 46% of them were never offered a chance of accommodation, they have been homeless for

10 years and 6 months on the average, and only 11% of the homeless have a spouse. Just over 50% of them do not have health insurance, 58% of them never received any form of assistance, 6.7% of homeless persons are legally invisible, 25% lead a solitary life, and 87% of homeless persons living in the street are men...

In order to ensure direct assistance to our compatriots who do not have a roof over their head, we have started an informal online community together with our friends from the Red Cross Palilula and the agency D Kit.

How can you join the initiative? Find us at: [www.facebook.com/mojkomsijabekzrova](https://www.facebook.com/mojkomsijabekzrova) and Twitter – @mojkomsijabekzrova.



## Serbia 50th in Global Gender Equality Ranking

Serbia is ranked 50th of 135 countries on the World Economic Forum list, topped by Nordic countries, while Chad, Pakistan and Yemen are ranked lowest.

The annual Global Gender Gap Report 2012, the first to include Serbia, has shown that the highest-ranked countries have decreased the gap between women and men by more than 80%, while those at the bottom of the list still have almost 50% to fill.

Source: [www.weforum.org](http://www.weforum.org)

## Poverty Risks for Women Who Have Experienced Violence

Key initiatives for improving social inclusion policies targeting women who have experienced violence and other marginalised groups of women in Western Balkan and EU countries were presented at the international conference Poverty Risks for Women Who Have Experienced Violence and for Multiply Marginalised Groups of Women, organised on 8 November by the Autonomous Women's Centre.

The conference was the closing activity of the EU-funded project Toward Social Cohesion – Influencing social inclusion policy for multiply vulnerable groups of women who are affected by violence.

Contact: Autonomous Women's Centre, tel. +381 11 26 45 328

[www.womenngo.org.rs](http://www.womenngo.org.rs)

## SURVEY: Rise in Violence Due to Crisis

According to 74% of citizens, the main cause of rising violence in Serbia in recent years is the poor economic situation, as indicated by the survey carried out by the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, presented on 23 November.

Almost half believe that the state and Government are responsible for violence in society, but that not even peaceful demonstrations were likely to occur soon, and a typical response was that "we are a nation that can tolerate a lot".

Contact: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP), Tel. +381 11 32 87 226 [www.bezbednost.org](http://www.bezbednost.org)

## State Team for Combating Violence against Women

In the first ten months of this year, the police filed 2,555 crime reports for violence against women, and 23 women were killed in domestic violence incidents.

At the public hearing held in the National Assembly to mark 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, it was stated that 54% of women had been subjected to a form of violence.

The formation of a state team for combating violence against women and domestic violence was announced at the event.

Source: [www.srbija.gov.rs](http://www.srbija.gov.rs)

## Improvement of the Alimony System

On 20 November, the Autonomous Women's Centre and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration held a round table on the initiative to improve the alimony system.

The main objective of the initiative is to establish a new model for the collection of mandatory maintenance, which would contribute to the realisation of dependent children and their parents' rights.

The event was attended by 30 representatives of state institutions, independent mechanisms, UNDP Serbia and the media.

A total of 56,000 single parents are officially registered in Serbia, while, according to the estimates of the Single Mothers' Association, there are in fact over 75,000. According to a report by the Autonomous Women's Centre, 85% of the children do not receive maintenance payments.

The round table was organised as part of the EU-funded project Toward Social Cohesion – Influencing social inclusion policy for multiply vulnerable groups of women who are affected by violence.

Contact: Autonomous Women's Centre, tel. +381 11 26 45 328

[www.womenngo.org.rs](http://www.womenngo.org.rs)

## Rural Women Empowerment Competition

The Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality launched a public call for applications for the award of grants aimed at funding projects entailing programmes and activities of rural women's associations in Vojvodina. The goal of the competition was economic empowerment of women in rural areas. The applications deadline expired on 9 November.

Source: [www.vojvodina.gov.rs](http://www.vojvodina.gov.rs)

## Real Man Award Presented

Marko Somborac, a cartoon author in the daily paper Blic, is the 2012 Centre E8 Real Man Award winner.

The Real Man Award is presented to an individual who, through his actions, advocates the fostering of principles of human rights, gender equality, tolerance, humanity, non-violence and democracy.

The presentation of the Real Man Award marked the launching of the eponymous campaign conducted by Centre E8 during November and December.

Contact: Centre E8, tel. +381 11 36 26 302, [www.e8.org.rs](http://www.e8.org.rs)

## Survey on the Status of Women with Disabilities

The Belgrade-based organisation engaged in protecting the rights of and providing support to women with disabilities Out of Circle has launched an online survey in order to gain insight into public views of the status of and challenges faced by women with disabilities in Serbia.

The survey has been launched in order to assess as accurately as possible how to influence the improvement of the status of women with disabilities in Serbia. It lasts until 31 December 2012 and results will be published afterwards. Information: Organisation for protecting the rights of and providing support to women with disabilities Out of Circle, [www.izkruga.org](http://www.izkruga.org)

## Women in the Security Sector Suffer in Silence

Women in the security sector do not report discrimination and the main motto is "don't stir up trouble, because nothing will change anyway", it was stated at a meeting on mechanisms for the protection against gender-based discrimination in the security sector, organised in Belgrade on 30 November by the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy.

The main reasons for non-reporting are fear of reprisal, difficulties in proving discrimination and weakness of mechanisms for protection against discrimination within institutions themselves. Women do not stay in the army as long or progress as fast as men.

Contact: BCSP, tel. +381 11 32 87 226, [www.bezbednost.org](http://www.bezbednost.org)

## Roma the Most Discriminated Against Group in Serbia

The Roma are the most discriminated against group in Serbia, followed by the poor, persons with disabilities, the elderly, women and LGBP persons, according to a CeSID survey presented in Belgrade on the occasion of the International Human Rights Day.

In pursuit of justice, citizens apply to the European Court of Human Rights, which currently has almost 10,000 applications against Serbia, making it the country with the highest ratio of applications to total population. Contact: CeSID – Centre for Free Elections and Democracy [www.cesid.org](http://www.cesid.org)

## Call for Projects Advancing the Status of the Roma

The Office for Human and Minority Rights has announced a competition for projects implemented by associations with a view to advancing the status of the Roma.

The competition is launched for the award of funds to associations which submit project proposals with the following goals: prevention and assistance in implementing policies in the sphere of asylum and readmission, with focus on improving prevention; more efficient implementation of existing strategic documents pertaining to the status of the Roma in Serbia; improving the quality of life of the Roma population through designing and promoting integrated local services/programmes, etc.

Information: Office for Human and Minority Rights, [www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs](http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs)

## Registration of Permanent Residence for Roma

The Law on Permanent and Temporary Residence of Citizens, proposed by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia, entered into force on 29 November 2011, allowing for the possibility for citizens to register at the address of an institution where they permanently reside i.e. the Centre for Social Welfare the territory of which they reside on, in absence of any other legal basis.

As permanent residence is a precondition for issuance of personal documents, this solution opened up a possibility for issuance of personal documents to members of the Roma minority in the Republic of Serbia if they fulfill other conditions provided for by the law.

Contact: Ministry of Interior, [www.mup.gov.rs](http://www.mup.gov.rs)

## Liceulice Celebrates Its Second Anniversary

On the occasion of its second anniversary, Liceulice organised a regional exhibition of posters and infographics on homelessness, titled For Good Reasons. Liceulice, a regional activism platform, in collaboration with SMart kolektiv, has launched this programme to provide space for young designers to work on socially responsible projects in Serbia and the region through an encounter of creative individuals, professionals and teams with institutions, donors, non-governmental sectors and the media. Contact: Liceulice, tel. +381 11 24 40 096, [www.liceulice.org](http://www.liceulice.org)

## Western Balkans Show Progress in SME Sector Reform

Western Balkan countries on the EU accession route and Turkey have considerably improved the business environment in the past three decades, and the leaders in SME sector reform are Serbia, Croatia and Turkey.

Serbia has jumped nine places to 86th of 185 countries as a result of reforms carried out in three areas, states the latest Doing Business 2013 report. The progress has been achieved in resolving insolvency, enforcing contracts and starting a business, which places Serbia among the top ten countries that have made the most progress in regulatory reform globally, as stated in the report by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation.

According to the report, in terms of barriers to obtaining construction permits, Serbia is among the lowest ranked countries globally, 179th of 185.

Source: [www.euractiv.rs](http://www.euractiv.rs)

## EU Facility for Western Balkan Enterprises

The recently established Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF) will provide more than EUR 300 million for innovative small and medium-sized enterprises with high potential in the Western Balkans.

The Facility also aims to create a regional market for venture capital, which will contribute to accelerating the creation and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises. The funds are expected to be available from next year.

Source: [www.euractiv.rs](http://www.euractiv.rs)

## Up to EUR 2 Million to Be Earmarked for Expanding Waste Collectors' Network in 2013

The Belgrade-based packaging waste management operator Ekostar pak plans to invest between 1.5 and 2 million euros in equipping and expanding the waste collectors' network in 2013.

Among the goals of the investment is to make the packaging waste management network more efficient and available to citizens. Investment plans are related to the achievement of the national target for recycling packaging waste, and in 2013, 23% of all discarded packaging waste, i.e. 7% more than last year, will have to be recycled.

Source: [www.zelenasrbija.rs](http://www.zelenasrbija.rs)

## Investments in 2012 reach approximately EUR 1 billion

The conference „Invest in Serbia” organised by Privredni pregleđ noted that foreign investments in 2012 could amount EUR 1 – 1.2 billion. Possible increase of investments was noted in the area of energy, telecommunications and traffic infrastructure.

EUR 1.827 billion were invested in Serbia last year, amounting to 5.5% GDP or EUR 251/citizen.

Source: [www.euroactiv.rs](http://www.euroactiv.rs)

## Municipalities and Employment

The National Employment Service called on the local governments to take part in co-funding the active labour market programmes and policies in 2013. The interested local governments may apply to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy through the NES branch offices. The deadline for applications is 31 January 2013.

The National Action Plan/Employment is to co-fund programmes for youth, persons with difficulties in contracting employment and the socially vulnerable, public works. It is also to grant subsidies for self-employment and for employers for new employment.

Contact: National Employment Service  
Tel: +381 34 50 55 00, [www.nsz.gov.rs](http://www.nsz.gov.rs)

## The Third CSR Forum Held

The third international conference on corporate social responsibility (CSR) – the CSR Forum – was organised by the Business Leaders Forum Serbia. The conference gathered representatives of all sectors and provided insights into the latest trends in this area through experiences from different countries. Participants had an opportunity to learn about the latest tendencies in the field of CSR and to hear the experiences of multinational and domestic company directors and representatives of business associations, the Government, diplomatic missions and international organisations.

The event was supported by USAID and the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC).

Contact: Business Leaders Forum, tel. +381 11 24 40 096, [www.fpl.rs](http://www.fpl.rs)

## Virtus Award 2012 Competition

This year, the Balkans Community Initiatives Fund, with financial support from USAID and in partnership with the Institute for Sustainable Communities and Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of Serbia, will present the Virtus Award for the sixth consecutive year. The competition, which closed in November, was open to domestic and foreign companies, corporations, public and state-owned enterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises, media companies, corporate funds and foundations, with the exception of not-for-profit organisations, public institutions and administrative authorities.

The competition winners will be announced in January 2013.

Information: Balkans Community Initiatives Fund, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## Norwegian Embassy Announces the Best Projects

The best three projects in Serbia funded by the Norwegian Government in 2012 were announced in December.

The Serbian Orthodox Church Charitable Fund Čovekoljublje received an award for improving the quality of life of people living in remote areas, Šumadija press from Kragujevac for civic responsibility, and Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation from Novi Sad for making a difference.

Twelve new contracts were signed for projects to be funded by the Norwegian Government in the fields of environmental protection and recycling, energy efficiency, restoration and reconstruction of significant structures, as well as assistance to the media.

Source: [www.blic.co.rs](http://www.blic.co.rs)

## Competition: Business Reality for Youth

The iSerbia portal has announced a competition for a text on the business reality faced by youth in Serbia. The best ten writers will be rewarded with one month of career counselling and the status of iSerbia Team columnists, and the best one of all will be entitled to complete the entire programme free of charge at the Internet Academy. The first round of receiving entries lasts until 15 February 2013.

Contact: [www.iserbia.rs](http://www.iserbia.rs)

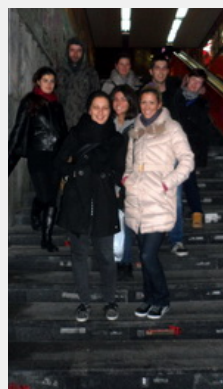
## Freelancers' Status

This year's Q&A Conference 2012 was held in Belgrade on 22 November, and the topic was freelancers and their status, problems they encounter and how they overcome them.

The event, at which questions were asked on design, freelancing, law, IT and doing business in Serbia in general, was organised by the companies GreenDesign.rs and Krojac.com.

Source: [www.qaconference.com](http://www.qaconference.com)

## PHOTO NEWS



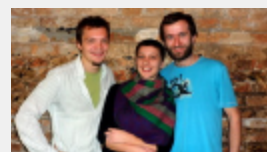
*Three young Belgraders organised in Cultural Centre Grad from 13 – 20 November, without any budget, a series of actions entitled “Good Deed Week” wishing to collect assistance for the homeless and aiming to raise awareness about the ways to help the most vulnerable in times of crisis and poverty.*

The three friends from Belgrade – young enthusiasts and altruists – decided to act and change, to show that everyone may do a lot for the people around him. They invited their friends, created a programme and contacted the media. Borko Veskočić from KC Grad gave them the premises free of charge. They called on the citizens with good will to bring warm clothes, canned food and items for personal hygiene.

They went to the Institute for Blood Transfusion to donate blood, visited the Reception Centre for Adults in Kumodraška street and baked pancakes for the homeless children with the children from Drop In Centre and the activists of the Centre for Youth Integration. In KC Grad they organised airings of

films and panels about homelessness. The speakers were volunteers from the Red Cross Palilula, members of the group „Pojacaj” of the Centre for Integration of Youth.

A Good Deed Week ended with a concert, the proceeds of which were donated to the ill, poor girl, a family to rehabilitate their home and a homeless man. The performers at the concert were Kralj Cacka, Horkestra, Ramomak and DJ „Str8 Mickey & The Boyz”.



Branimir Živković,  
Andrea Petrović  
and Borko Veskočić

## Good Deed Week

For more success stories, visit the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit website [www.inkluzija.gov.rs/primeri](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs/primeri)



## Call for Identification of CSO Support Priorities

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Delegation of the EU in the Republic of Serbia invited the civil society organisations to take an active part in the consultative process aimed at identification of priority themes for the next call within the framework of the Programme of Support to the Civil Society 2011–13 that is to be published in February 2013.

The Programme of Support to the Civil Society 2011–13 should contribute to creation of a "dynamic civil society taking an active part in the public debate about democracy, human rights, social inclusion and rule of law, with the capacity to influence policies and decision-making processes in the Republic of Serbia", thus ensuring added value for the civil society, enhanced dialogue with the state institutions, CSO capacity building for involvement of citizens into exerting influence over the process of state administration reform (through analyses, monitoring, advocacy, etc), as well as facilitating access to funds and their intended spending for local organisations and initiatives. The Programme contributes also to advancing expertise of the developed civil society organisations and networks.

## Call for Proposals: Programme "Europe for Citizens"

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society of the Government of Serbia posted on their website an Overview of Call for Proposals with deadlines within the framework of the programme "Europe for Citizens" that Serbia acceded to on 9 November 2012. "Europe for Citizens" is a programme of the European Commission aimed to bring Europe closer to the citizens and allow for active participation in building and realising the European idea.

This programme gives the citizens a possibility

to take part in transnational exchanges and cooperation and to contribute to developing the sense of belonging to the European values and strengthening EU integrations.

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society is the national focal point for the project "Europe for Citizens".

For more information on deadlines and conditions see <http://civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/evropa-za-gradjanee-gradjanke/>.

Contact: Government of Serbia, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, tel: 011 311 38 95, [www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs](http://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs)

## Report on CSO Allocation of Funds

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society presented the "First Annual Summary Report on Spending of the Funds in Support of the Programme Activities Ensured and Paid to the Associations and Other Civil Society Organisations from the 2011 Budget of the Republic of Serbia".

The report includes data showing the balance, sums and ration of planned and allocated support, overview of allocation procedures, programmes, project activities and beneficiaries of funds for their implementation, the areas funded as well as the territorial distribution of the funded programmes and projects.

## CSOs Need not Open a Separate Earmarked Account

Civil society organisations need not open a separate, earmarked account in the system of consolidated account of treasury for the funds transferred to them from the republican budget.

## BCIF Founds the First Financial Endowment

Balkan Community Initiatives Fund founded the first financial endowment in Serbia in 2012. Financial endowment is a permanent fund in which BCIF and those who support it will invest interest-earning money to fund BCIF programmes. This endowment is a simple way to ensure durable investment into local communities supported by BCIF since 2004.

BCIF – a local foundation – helped 237 projects in 78 communities through the Active Communities Programme.

BCIF is inviting individuals and organisations to contribute to short term objective of collecting USD 25,000 by end January 2013 by their donations.

The Charles Mot Foundation will double the sum of the donated funds.

In this way the donors become partners in creating financial endowment and providing a better life for the citizens.

Donations may be paid at the gyro accounts via website [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org), as well as on the FB page of BCIFSrbija.

## Seven Organisations in Centrifuge

Seven organisations were assisted in 2012 through the programme Centrifuge launched by Erste Bank and the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund: association "Svetionik" from Jagodina, the informal group "Trag na drumu" from Požega, informal group "C6H6 Kid" from Pančevo, Interethnic youth alliance from Novi Pazar, Environmental society "Obruč" from Požarevac, organisation for alternative culture "Transform" from Vršac and informal group of architects from Kragujevac.

Centrifuge aims to activate young people aged 15-30 to start creative cultural events by granting donations.

A total of 35 local youth initiatives from 22 municipalities and cities were launched in the period 2007 - 2011. The total investment into implementation and development of programmes for six years amounts to RSD 15,933,475.

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF)  
Tel: +381 11 26 22 511, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## DEBATE: Influence of the State on NGO Operation

Civic Initiatives organised a public debate about the unfavourable position of civil society organisations (CSO) caused by the announced changes of several laws relevant to operation of these organisations.

The existing laws and changes of the Law on the Budget System, the proposed changes of the Law on Accounting and Law on Income Tax directly affect the operation of CSOs, limiting their capacity to implement regular activities.

In addition to the CSO representatives, the debate involved representatives of donors and state institutions.

Contact: Civic Initiatives

Tel: +381 11 32 84 164, [www.gradjanske.org](http://www.gradjanske.org)

## ASTRA:

### Anti-trafficking Activities

Non-governmental organisation Astra – Anti-Trafficking Action organised several initiatives within their domain in the past months.

On the occasion of the European Anti-Trafficking Day, Astra and OSCE launched a campaign "Stop Labour Exploitation" to enhance prevention and combat trafficking in human beings.

In cooperation with the Republican Public Prosecutor's Office, Astra organised a seminar "Role of Prosecutors in Criminal Proceedings related to the Crime of Trafficking in Human Beings", and realised in cooperation with the experts from Holland a training in improving communication with the victims of trafficking for police officers.

Astra completed a three-year project "Protection of Human Rights of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings through Legal Aid" – raising awareness of the problems faced by the victims of trafficking in the course court procedures.

Contact: ASTRA, tel: +381 11 33 47 817  
[www.astra.org.rs](http://www.astra.org.rs)

## "Star of Belgrade" for the "Parent" Association

Roditelj (Parent) association was awarded for the project "Parental Info-Centre – early years are the most important" of an integrated centre for support to parents of young children. The title of the award is "Zvezda Beograda" (Star of Belgrade). The award of the Agency for European Integration and Cooperation with the associations for the third time, funding the best projects from the proceeds of the budget of the City of Belgrade, was presented to 15 CSOs in 2012.

Contact: Udruženje Roditelj

Tel: 011 31 65 375, [www.roditelj.org](http://www.roditelj.org)

## Social Inclusion Towards Prevention of Trafficking

Human trafficking is best preempted through provision of new jobs and employment, poverty reduction and social inclusion of the excluded and discriminated persons, said Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior, opening the exhibition of posters "What Serbia does not See" on the occasion of 18 October, European Anti-Trafficking Day.

Source: [www.srbija.gov.rs](http://www.srbija.gov.rs)

## Anti-trafficking Action

Red Cross Serbia organised a series of information workshops within the framework of the Anti-Human Trafficking Programme.

Informative workshops at the Red Cross stand at the Belgrade Fair on 25 October were realised by the Red Cross trainers and were one of the activities marking October – the month of anti-trafficking.

Red Cross Serbia also conducted peer trainings in more than 100 cities and municipalities, through a network boasting some 500 trained volunteers.

Contact: Red Cross Serbia  
[www.redcross.org.rs](http://www.redcross.org.rs)

## Conference "Regional Cooperation in Educational Statistics"

The conference "Regional Cooperation in Educational Statistics" was held in Belgrade in early December.

The objective of the conference was to contribute to integration of statistical systems of the countries of the Western Balkans into a joint European statistical system through development, processing and distribution of statistics in the area of education on the basis of single standards and harmonised methodology.

The delegations of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Turkey and Serbia participated actively as did the representatives of Eurostat, Centre for Research in Education and Innovation (CERI/OECD), European

Training Forum (ETF), National Educational Council of Finland, International Network of Educational Policy Centres, KulturContacta, UNICEF, Centre for Educational Policy and Belgrade University.

The conference was organised by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit at the Cabinet of the DPM for EU Integrations in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and the Republic Statistical Institute, with the support of the EC – TAIEIX.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, tel: +381 11 311 46 05  
[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs)

## ROUND TABLE: Early School Drop out Prevention

Unicef in Belgrade organised a round table "Development of Mechanisms for Prevention of Early Drop out from Education at the Level of School and the Community" to discuss the issues related to early school leaving, reliability of the available data, existence and adequacy of the local mechanisms and procedures, etc.

The participants were representatives of the competent ministries, the Republic Social Protection Institute, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, Unicef, the Institute for Psychology and others.

Contact: Unicef Serbia, tel: +381 11 36 02 104

[www.unicef.rs](http://www.unicef.rs)

## OECD: Criteria for Teacher Employment Should be Set

The competent authorities in Serbia should urgently define criteria for employment of teachers as the public perception is that their employment depends on political links or personal liking and not on the expertise. The assessment of OECD presented in the report on the integrity and corruption in education in Serbia.

Another recommendations are the revision of the system of private tutoring so as for them not to become a precondition for passing tests or achieving better grades, and introducing financial control in schools – sometimes schools earn income violating the law – by renting school rooms.

Source: [www.euractiv.rs](http://www.euractiv.rs)

## Libraries for the New Age

Aiming to turn libraries in Serbia and Croatia into hubs of knowledge, the International Aid Network (IAN) from Belgrade and the City Library from Vinjci launched a project "Libraries for the New Age" to build capacities and support to exchange of experiences between the libraries in Serbia and Croatia. Libraries from Indija, Stara Pazova, Kula, Vukovar, Drenovac, Županja and Ilok are taking part in this project.

The project is funded from the Cross Border Serbia-Croatia Programme and supported by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit.

Contact: IAN, tel: +381 11 76 17 197, [www.ian.org.rs](http://www.ian.org.rs)

## CALENDAR of Important Dates

### JANUARY

- 27 Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 31 Smoke-free Lobby Day

### FEBRUARY

- 04 World Cancer Day
- 15 International Childhood Cancer Day
- 20 International Social Justice Day
- 21 Mother Tongue Day
- 22 World Day of Victims

### MARCH

- 01-08 Anti-Cancer Week
- 08 International Women's Day
- 21 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 24 World Tuberculosis Day

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[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs), [www.srbija.gov.rs](http://www.srbija.gov.rs)

The Newsletter was published with support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation - SDC

## Research into Cost Effectiveness of Preschool Education

Introducing universal capture of children aged 3-5.5 by preschool education through three of four-hour programmes is financially possible and cost effective, show the results of the study "Investment into Education in Early Childhood in Serbia – Models of Financing Universal Capture by Preschool Education".

Enrollment of all the children aged 3-5.5 who are not captured by the preschool education system by three and four-hour programmes would require an investment of EUR 46 million or approximately 60% of the funds earmarked for education in the local budgets, and would have the best chance of reaching the most vulnerable too.

The study and the resume in the form of a brochure may be accessed at [www.unicef.org/serbia](http://www.unicef.org/serbia).

The study is a product of cooperation of Unicef and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

Contact: Unicef Serbia, tel: +381 63 33 62 83  
[www.unicef.org/serbia](http://www.unicef.org/serbia)

## EU Donation to Schools Partaking in the "Second Chance"

EU donated new equipment to 71 primary school taking part in implementation of the functional primary education of adults within the framework of the project "Second Chance".

The total value of the donated equipment is EUR 200,000. The schools were presented with 68 photocopiers, 139 lap tops, 69 personal computers, 91 video projector, 80 projection screens, 83 digital cameras, 116 flip charts and 65 cordless internet routers.

The "Second Chance" program, implemented jointly by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and the EU, started in 2010 and is to end in September 2013. The project is funded by EUR 4 million from EU IPA funds.

Contact: Project "Second Chance", tel: +381 11 26 36 026, [www.drugasansa.rs](http://www.drugasansa.rs)

## Seventh Call for ICT PSP Programme

The Call 7 was launched within the "Programme of Support to Development of Information and Communication Technologies Policy" (ICT PSP) programme, with the total budget of EUR 125,700,000.

The deadline for applications is 15 May 2013. For additional information, please see: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call\\_CIP?callIdentifier=CIP-ICTPSP-2013-7&specificProgram=ICT-PSP](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call_CIP?callIdentifier=CIP-ICTPSP-2013-7&specificProgram=ICT-PSP)

ICT PSP is a roof programme for competitiveness and innovation and aims to advance the development of innovative ICT solutions in the areas of public relevance and new business opportunities, in particular for the small and medium sized enterprises. Instead of direct subsidies, the process ensures creation of conditions for market expansion and service improvement.

The total budget of ICT PSP 2007 – 2013 is EUR 728 million.

More information on [www.digitalnaagenda.gov.rs](http://www.digitalnaagenda.gov.rs)

## Three "Hakaton" Applications

The activists completed three applications within the framework of the project "Hakaton for Changes". The latest, [www.ostaviove.com](http://www.ostaviove.com) ("Leave it Here") allows all of the persons who wish to volunteer or donate food, clothing or equipment to the institutions or homeless persons, to locate facilities and collecting points easily.

"Accessibility Map" gives an information on accessibility of facilities and the "Take Care of the Water" on the environmental friendly ways to save water but also money in doing so.

The objective of "Hakaton for Changes" linking Serbian activists and IT professionals is to develop 15 socially useful applications. The project is organized by SEE ICT from Belgrade with the support of the Institute for Sustainable Communities and USAID-a. Contact: Hakaton, [www.hakaton.rs](http://www.hakaton.rs)

## Platform "My MP"

The web portal [www.mojdobornik.rs](http://www.mojdobornik.rs) and the mobile application with the same name represent a mechanism for direct communication between the citizens and their elected representatives in local parliaments in 20 cities and municipalities. As of January 2013, the citizens will be able to use the web portal as a virtual meeting room – to contact MPs, register irregularities and point to the problems in their local communities.

The organiser of the project is the organisation Proaktiv, with the support of the Institute for Sustainable Communities.

Contact: Proaktiv, [www.proaktiv.org.rs](http://www.proaktiv.org.rs)

## NEW DEVINFO 6.0 FOR MUNICIPALITIES Facilitated Access to Data

The new DevInfo 6.0 database is accessible at the website of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. The database includes data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and other institutions for 142 indicators (more than 95,000 data), for all of the 178 municipalities in Serbia.

The data for each municipality are shown also through municipal profiles, i.e. documents that contain tables and graphs with the information about the population, economy, employment, education, health and social protection, judiciary, traffic and infrastructure.

The database may be accessed at <http://devinfo.stat.gov.rs/diSrbija>.