



Government of the  
Republic of Serbia

March 2013

15<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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SUZANA GRUBJEŠIĆ, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

## Social Inclusion – an Ever More Important Priority in the Process of EU Accession

The fact that the negotiations on Serbia's EU accession will start from the topics related to the fundamental human rights, freedoms and security speaks about the priorities in the next phase of the EU integration of Serbia. What we as a society must do for our own sake, is to show that the laws of our country are harmonized with the European legislation. However, we need to go further – to show that the laws are also fully implemented.

The European Union provided a stronghold for development of European policies in the areas of employment, social inclusion and fight against poverty in its founding acts. These policies evolved over time and created a basis for development of a so called European Social Model defined by the European Commission in 1994 as „common values including democracy and individual rights, free collective bargaining, market economy, equal opportunities for all and social protection and solidarity”.

In this respect, the process of EU integration is extremely relevant to poverty reduction and strengthening of social inclusion in the accession countries such as the Republic of Serbia. The assessment of the European Commission given in the 2012 Serbia Progress Report represents an objective overview of the relevant results and challenges on the road of reforms. For instance, certain progress was found in the areas of social inclusion, improvement of social services and continuation of active measures towards greater social inclusion of Roma.

All the reforms that we conduct within the framework of EU integration call for substantial human and financial resources. An additional challenge for the Government and all the stakeholders in the society is a severe impact of the

global financial crisis that the Republic of Serbia is exposed to. In order to absorb the effects of the crisis, the Government has undertaken a series of interventions in line with the current development of policies at the EU level seeking to increase investments and social benefits for vulnerable groups, protection of vulnerable groups from discrimination, support to education and employment of population at risk of unemployment or drop out from education.

In order to be proactive in fulfilling the EU agenda of Serbia, we have recently prepared and adopted a National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis, with a clear plan of interventions to be implemented with a view to fulfilling the political and economic criteria and assuming the membership responsibilities, including numerous priorities in the areas of poverty reduction and social inclusion. The fact that the European Commission is to invite Serbia to begin developing the Employment and Social Reform Programmes for Enlargement Countries speaks that social inclusion is becoming an ever more important priority in the process of EU accession.

Because of all the reforms that started in the past as well as those ahead of us, we need a wide front working on EU integration in the society. There are no jobs of greater and lesser importance. As much as passing of regulation is important, so is also their successful implementation or supervision of implementation thereof. The Government cannot do it alone. In order to ensure comprehensive support to the vulnerable groups and continue the reforms, we need an even stronger partnership between the Government, local governments, civil society organisations, trade unions and other relevant stakeholders.

### News from the EU

- Wide Coalition for Digital Affairs in the EU
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BLOG ON SOCIAL INCLUSION – DRAŽEN ZACERO:

## Support to Self-sufficiency of Children in Disadvantaged Situations

I am a beneficiary of the new social protection service of the City of Belgrade – support to self-sufficiency of young people who grew up without parental care. This support includes the right to free housing (payment of utilities) and temporary financial assistance up to two years, with the assistance of advisors for self-reliance.

This programme does not exist in all the cities in Serbia, although the number of young people exiting the system of social protection per year is not big and notwithstanding the fact that the service is economically viable. Namely, it is much easier on the state budget for the young people to exit, the vicious circle of social assistance beneficiaries and become tax payers with some support.

Life in subsidised conditions for support to self-sufficiency must go hand in hand with appropriate psycho-social support of advisors for self-reliance and professional services. The best practice example of psycho-social support to self-reliance is the multiannual project of the organization Familia. Approximately 150 children and young people who

attended psychological, educational and creative workshops were assisted to develop skills in demand at the labour market. The programme takes the form of a youth club, thus overcoming the resistance of adolescents to adults.

Money is important indeed, but makes no difference – what does make the difference is teaching a young person to face the challenges. Therefore, there must be a person who is always available for the young person in the course of his/her becoming self-reliant, who cares how the young man/woman feels, who will take an urgent call if a pipe bursts or if they need advice.

A person who will instruct them and teach them how to handle money, which is a challenge even for an average citizen of Serbia let alone persons who have lived to be 20 with the notion that the state takes care of everything, only to find themselves all of a sudden with 30,000 dinars to pay the bills, buy the cheapest food and save instead of buying the latest video game and the most expensive tennis shoes.

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For the integral text and other stories, please see the website of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit [www.inkluzija.gov.rs/blog](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs/blog)

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION  
AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT**Review of Potential Funding Opportunities**

The Civic Initiatives, with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, the Serbian European Office and the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, have prepared the 10th edition of the Review of Potential Domestic and Foreign Funding Opportunities, targeting civil society organizations, local governments, small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs in Serbia.

The Review is a useful source of information on funding opportunities from national and international donors and/or public institutions. The Review is published annually.

The Review may be downloaded at  
[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs), [www.gradjanske.org](http://www.gradjanske.org)

**POLICY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:****Study "From inactivity to Employment"**

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration published a second analysis of impact of public policies in a study entitled "From Inactivity to Employment", developed in cooperation with the Foundation for Advancement of Economics (FREN).

The study analyses the effect of public policies and the factors affecting inactivity, and offers recommendations for growth of activity and employment in the Republic of Serbia.

Increasing employment represents the key to reduction of poverty and social exclusion. The problems faced by Serbia in this area are: an insufficient creation of new jobs during the previous decade (employment dropped by some 500,000 since the outbreak of the crisis), aging of population that would, in case of failure of the concept of active ageing, increase the demand for pensions and social protection and lastly, unemployed or inactive youth and a chance missed to achieve long-term economic growth.

The study was based in the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The study is available at [www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs)

**Network of Support to Youth for Self-reliance**

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration organised an international meeting on the occasion of the project "Adult Life Entry Network ALEN – Empowerment and Activation of Young People in Disadvantaged Situations".

The participants of the meeting, including the young beneficiaries, agreed that psycho-social assistance and work practice were the most important.

The project was initiated by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of Serbia in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Croatia and the Hungarian Anti-Poverty Network and Austrian Anti-Poverty Network and approved within the framework of EU PROGRESS.

The project is implemented in partnership of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, Institute for Psychology – Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, NGO Sunce – Kragujevac and the Association for Alternative Family Care Familia – Belgrade.

**Activation of Beneficiaries  
of Social Welfare Assistance**

One of the recommendations made by the participants of the meeting on labour engagement of beneficiaries of social welfare assistance, cash grants and financial social assistance held mid-February 2013 was to urgently adopt the by-laws related to activation of beneficiaries of financial social assistance in order to fully regulate this area and thus facilitate the implementation of the programme of labour engagement at the local level.

The event organised by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit in cooperation with the Centre for Liberal-Democratic Studies, gathered representatives of local governments who exchanged their experiences about labour engagement of social welfare beneficiaries.

The participants also recommended that a protocol be developed defining the key procedures related to labour engagement of the social welfare assistance beneficiaries by the local governments, as well as development of an activation model and the forms of supporting legal documents for local governments wishing to introduce activation of beneficiaries.

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

**National Reindustrialization Plan**

The board of the Ministry of Finance and Economy decided to expedite development of the National Plan for Reindustrialization of Serbia that will define concrete measures for promotion of economy, exports and employment. The action plan will focus in particular on the sectors prioritized by the 2010 Strategy of Industrial Development – automotive industry, IT industry, food processing and defence industries.

The incentives to assist companies showing market prospects to overcome the challenges emerging from disturbances caused by the global financial crisis will form an integral part of the action plan. Modernisation of the education system towards adapting it to the practical demands of the labour market will be proposed. The Plan is also to adopt a set of incentives for improvement of the business climate and simplification of the procedure of issuance of building permits.

Contact: Ministry of Finance and Economy, tel: 011 36 13 245  
[www.mfp.gov.rs](http://www.mfp.gov.rs)

**Law on Incentives in Agriculture  
and Rural Development Adopted**

The Serbian Parliament adopted on 30 January the Law on Incentives in Agriculture and Rural Development. The Law allows for predictability of the climate for agricultural production, facilitated investment planning, enhancement of competitiveness, introduction of unified registry of incentives and harmonisation with the EU regulations.

The Law guarantees minimum annual sums of incentives for agricultural production that the Government will not be able to reduce.

Contact: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management  
tel: 011 26 07 960, [www.mpt.gov](http://www.mpt.gov)

**Documents Related to Combatting Human  
Trafficking Presented to the Public**

The Ministry of Interior published a call to the citizens and experts to provide their comments on the Draft Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Trafficking by 13 March 2013.

The Ministry also published the statistics related to trafficking in human beings for the period 2000 – 2012 on their website.

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

**Draft Strategy for Consumer Protection**

The Ministry of External and Internal Trade and Telecommunications launched a public debate on the Draft Strategy for Consumer Protection 2013-2018. The Draft Strategy, adopted by the National Council for Consumer Protection at the session held on February 20, was published on the ministry's website and is at public debate until March 20.

Contact: Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications,  
tel: 011 31 13 432, [www.mtt.gov.rs](http://www.mtt.gov.rs)

**Social Profile of Municipalities**

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy allowed, again, access to the database "Municipality Social Profiles" including a selected dataset on the population, the beneficiaries of social and child assistance, the unemployed, the beneficiaries of the minimum pensions, the budget funds of the Republic of Serbia earmarked for financial support to families and alleviating the consequences of the financial crisis and poverty and projects for development of services in underdeveloped municipalities.

Overview and search of data per level (municipality, administrative district and RS), statistical processing (tables and graphs) and printing have been made available.

Contact: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy  
tel: 011 3614 621, [www.minrzs.gov](http://www.minrzs.gov)

**BILL ON THE PUBLICATION OF LAWS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS****Electronic Official Gazette to Become  
the Official Edition on 1 January 2014**

A bill introduced before the National Assembly foresees that the official format of the Official Gazette should be electronic, in PDF and HTML formats.

Further, a Legal Information System is to be established, in which all Internet users shall have access, free of charge, to: unofficially consolidated legal texts, original official journals in which the original legal texts were published, in the PDF format, and official journals in which amendments thereto were published.

Contact: Official Gazette, tel: 011 30 60 300, [www.sglasnik.com](http://www.sglasnik.com)



## The Number of People Without a Job in the EU Continues to Grow

According to the data presented in the EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, the number of jobless persons in the EU continued to rise over recent months – increasing by 3.5 million (15.7%) since March 2011 and reaching a new high of close to 26.1 million (10.7% of the active population) in November 2012, affecting youth in particular (23.7%). Long-term unemployment in the EU has been on the increase for the past three years. No significant improvement is expected before 2014.

The number of EU citizens at risk of poverty and social exclusion has increased by six million between 2008 and 2011, now affecting 24.2% of the EU population.

According to the December issue of the European Overview of Vacant Posts (portal EURES), the drop in demand for labour affected most the craftsmen, machinery and plants operators and simple professions, while the demand for a more qualified profiles continued to increase.

A interannual drop of labour demand was recorded in the first quarter of 2012 as measured by the number of vacant posts (by 7%) and the number of persons who contracted employment (by 4%).

Only 6% of all the persons who contracted employment are 55 to 64 years old, which means that the elderly unemployed have fewer chances to find jobs.

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

## New EU Programme for Youth Employment

The project "Youth Guarantee" will guarantee offer of employment, trainings and further education to young people without a job in the EU, as decided on 28 February at the meeting of the Council of Ministers of EU for social protection. The aim is to find jobs for two million unemployed persons by 2014. According to the estimates, 7.5 million young persons aged 15 to 24 across Europe are not employed, in study or training. They represent 12.9% of the entire European youth.

Unemployment of youth is twice that of the other able-bodied population in Europe on the average. The average rate of unemployment among young persons with disability or a chronic illness aged 16 to 29 in the EU is 16.2%.

The percentage of employed persons among the persons with disabilities is 44%, and a mere 19% with persons with severe disability.

## Government Endorses the National Programme for Adoption of EU Acquis

The Government of Serbia adopted the National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis 2013 - 2016.

The Programme represents a detailed, multi-annual plan of harmonisation of domestic regulations with the EU legislation. The key elements of the document follow the structure of all the three Copenhagen criteria for membership – political, economic and for the capacity of the state to assume the membership responsibilities. The plan for this year is to adopt 337 regulations, 65 of which are laws.

This Programme represents a continuation of the National Programme for Integration (NPI) implemented in the period 2008 - 2012. The rate of implementation of NPI is 88 %, meaning that 1030 of the 1,172 planned laws and bylaws have been endorsed.

Information: Office for European Integration of the Republic of Serbia, tel: 011 30 61 100, [www.seio.gov.rs](http://www.seio.gov.rs)

## EBRD Improves Serbia's 2013 Economic Growth Forecast

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) improved the forecast of economic growth of Serbia in 2013 by one percentage point i.e. to 2.1%. Therefore, Serbia will rank second in South East Europe, the average growth of which is forecasted at 1.5% after only 0.1% in 2012. In the January report "Regional Economic Perspectives", the EBRD economists expect moderate acceleration of growth of gross domestic product (GDP) in the whole region covered by the Bank, from 2.6% in 2012 to the average 3.1% in 2013.

The main challenges before the Government of Serbia are decreasing fiscal deficit and decreasing of the public debt which reached 60% GDP – considerably above the legally allowed limit of 45%.

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

## EU cuts budget down

The EU will reduce its budget for the first time in history. The final agreement on the financial framework 2014-2020 has not been reached as yet, but the members advocating for reduction of costs such as the UK, managed to impose their opinion.

According to the new, middle ground proposal, the budget should total EUR 960 billion over the next seven years, while the current one amounts to some EUR 1000 billion. The main burden of the reduction is to be borne by infrastructure, with the funds for the two main EU policies – agriculture and the cohesion fund – remain at almost the same level.

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

## More women in EU management boards

The EC stated that the share of women in management boards of companies at the EU stock exchange has increased to 15.8% (by 2.1%) in the past year.

The share of women without an executive function jumped from 15% in January 2012 to 17% in January 2013, while the number of women occupying executive functions increased by 1.1% thus reaching 10 percentage points.

The increase of women in company bodies was not recorded only in Bulgaria, Poland and Ireland.

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

## Women in EU Work 59 Days for Free

The women in EU should work 59 days more than men if their average wages were to be the same, the European Commission announced on the occasion of 28 February – Equal Pay Day, marked this year for the third time.

The wage gap between men and women in EU is 16.2% to the advantage of men, while the difference in wages between women and men in Serbia – based on average wage is 3.3% to the advantage of men. This difference jumps to 11% when other parameters are also included in the calculation.

In practice, the difference of 3.3% in the average wages means that women earn 96.7 Dinars to each 100 Dinars/work hour earned by men. The project „Equality Pays Off ” represents an effort of the European Commission to support the employers seeking to close the gap in salaries between men and women.

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

## Map of EU Supported Projects

The EU Delegation created a map of Serbia which presents the projects by sector implemented per region, municipality and town.

The map is available at <http://mapa.euinfo.rs>

## Internship of Graduates at the EU Delegation

The EU Delegation in Serbia published a call for graduate students to apply for internship in this European institution. The internship is voluntary, five days a week in the course of six months giving the students direct experience in the process of EU integration. The deadline for internship in the period 1 January – 30 June expired. The deadline for internship in the period 1 July – 31 December will be open until 31 May.

Contact: EU Delegation in the Republic of Serbia, tel: 011 30 83 200, [www.europa.rs](http://www.europa.rs)

## Best Stories on the EU Integration Process Awarded

The Office for European Integration of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Erste Bank awarded the best media stories in 2012 about the process of European integration in Serbia. The prize is a study visit to the EU headquarters in Brussels.

Contact: Office for European Integration, tel: 011 30 61 100 [www.seio.gov.rs](http://www.seio.gov.rs)

## Wide Coalition for Digital Affairs

In March, the European Commission will launch an initiative that should contribute to decreasing unqualified labour and increasing qualified labour in the sector of information and communication technologies (ICT) so as to respond to the increased demand in that sector.

Europe has almost 700,000 vacant posts in ICT sector. The number of vacancies has been rising by some 3% per annum also during the crisis. At the same time, the number of new ICT graduates and other qualified professionals in this sector is decreasing.

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

## 25% of Children in EU at Risk of Poverty

In 2011 as in 2010, 27% of children in the EU are at risk of poverty or social exclusion – states the Eurostat report. The children in EU are at a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion than the adults (aged 18-64) and the elderly (65 +).

The threat is the greatest for children disposing of less than two thirds of the average income of the country, who have no basic living conditions or whose parents do not work full time. The level of risk depends also on education of parents and whether they are migrants.

Relative to 27 % of children, 24% of adults and 21% of the elderly respectively are at risk of poverty.

Decreasing the number of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion in EU is one of the flagship initiatives of the Strategy Europe 2020.

Information: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

### Call for proposals for the projects of improvement of the position of persons with disabilities

The Sector for Protection of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy invited the associations of citizens to submit project proposals for the programmes related to protection and improvement of the position of persons with disabilities.

Priority will be given to the projects related to prevention of institutionalisation and de-institutionalisation, improvement of accessibility of physical environment and providing support to self-reliance of persons with disabilities. The deadline for submission of projects expired on 15 March

Contact: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, tel: 011 36 14 960, [www.minrzs.gov.rs](http://www.minrzs.gov.rs)

### Right to Work of Persons with Intellectual Problems

The Creative Educational Centre for People with Development Disabilities from Belgrade (KEC MNRO) is implementing the project „Promotion of the right and creation of opportunities for work of persons with intellectual problems“. In the course of the first half of the project, work and social capacities of 28 persons were developed, 24 persons were employed

The main objective of the project is exercise of the right to work and social integration of persons with intellectual problems through work and employment. The EU Delegation supported project will be implemented until June 2013.

Contact: KEC MNRO, phone: 064 196 58 06  
[www.kecmnro.org.rs](http://www.kecmnro.org.rs)

### BLOG ON SOCIAL INCLUSION DRAŽEN ZACERO:

### Support to Self-sufficiency of Children in Disadvantaged Situations

*Continued from page 1*

A little bit of support makes enormous change: the state is to get a taxpayer from the former beneficiary of social welfare assistance; an individual should exercise the right to an opportunity to live a dignified life.

It is not easy for the general population of youth in Serbia to attain self-sufficiency. Just try and imagine how difficult it is for the young people leaving the system. It is a stress. It makes you remember your 20s not as years when you were young and enjoyed life, but as years of utter deprivation, disappointment and crisis.

There are not many young people in Serbia and the figure is decreasing by day relative to the number of the elderly. This is all the more reason to support youth. Young persons without parental care who do not even know who fathered them often, are in search of identity and need to feel they belong somewhere. That is why many of them have felt the sense of belonging to the football supporters' gangs manipulated by local bullies and drug dealers.

Many young people who grew up in homes for children without parental care do not complete secondary education because the teachers care too much or too little. Many, who grow up in foster families, are also neglected because they are neither motivated to educate themselves nor given a chance to discover their talents in early adolescence.

### Free Meals to Disadvantaged Students in Subotica

As of the second term, the primary schools on the territory of the City of Subotica provide free snacks for 1,300 most disadvantaged children attending grades one to eight. The decision on this assistance was passed by the City Assembly at its last meeting last year. A total of RSD 20 million were earmarked for this purpose in the city budget.

Contact: Assembly of the City of Subotica  
tel: 024 626 969, [www.subotica.rs](http://www.subotica.rs)

### One year into implementation of the new Law on Social Protection

The report on the results of 12-month implementation of the Law on Social Protection focusing on children, refugees and internally displaced persons in 15 towns and municipalities was presented at a public hearing at the National Parliament on 24 January 2013. The report is part of the project "Initiative for Monitoring Social Policy" implemented by the Coalition of Civil Society Contact Organisations (CCSO).

The Autonomous Women Centre, member of CCSO, organised a round table "Implementation of the Law on Social Protection – Services for Women

Victims of Domestic Violence". It presented the results of one year of monitoring of social protection measures and services for the target group – women victims of violence, and discussed enhancement of dialogue on development and improvement of quality of services for women victims of violence.

The project is implemented by Civic Initiatives and supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway.

Contact: Civic Initiatives, tel: 011 26 23 980,  
[www.gradjanske.org](http://www.gradjanske.org); Autonomous Women Centre  
tel: 011 26 45 328, [www.womenngo.org.rs](http://www.womenngo.org.rs)

### Regional Refugee Housing Programme

Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia, Republic of Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia launched an information campaign about the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) in Belgrade on 6 March. RHP is a joint multiannual programme aimed to provide durable housing solutions for some 27,000 most vulnerable refugee families from 1991-1995 conflict in the region: 5,400 families in BiH, 1,177 families in Montenegro, 3,541 families in Croatia and 16,780 families in Serbia.

The Donor Conference held in Sarajevo in April 2012, raised EUR 264 million for RHP implementa-

tion. The major part – EUR 234 million – was provided by the EU. US Government donated USD 10 million with continuation of funding in future. The remaining funds were ensured by bilateral donors.

The RHP will be implemented by the Republican Commissioner for Refugees and Migration and the local governments. UNHCR and OSCE will monitor the process of beneficiary selection and programme implementation in partner countries. The RHP Fund will be managed by the CEB.

Information: Commissioner for Refugees and Migration, tel: 011 31 17 272 [www.kirs.gov.rs](http://www.kirs.gov.rs)

### BIH Calls on the Refugees from Serbia and the Region to Return

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BIH announced a Public Call for refugees who wish to repatriate to that country to apply for housing reconstruction assistance.

The Public Call defines, inter alia, the general and specific criteria and eligibility for assistance, the necessary documents, and the application procedure. The deadline for applications is 7 May 2013.

The Applications are to be submitted on the completed and verified forms with a statement available at the web page of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BIH and in diplomatic and consular offices of BIH in the countries in the region: for BIH refugees in Serbia – Krunska no.9, Belgrade  
Contact: Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, BIH, [www.mhrr.gov.ba](http://www.mhrr.gov.ba)

### PHOTO NEWS

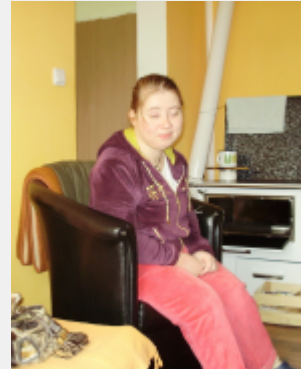


Djurdjevic family left Croatia in 1992. After 17 years of life in a room in the collective centre, Radoslava Djurdjevic can now arrange her furniture

### New Furniture for a Serene Home

With its project "For Life in an Ideal Community" the company "Forma Ideale" from Kragujevac promotes solidarity, social activism and environmental awareness. One of their actions is donation of furniture to the socially vulnerable categories of population and institutions for care of vulnerable groups. In all, 35 families, 20 of them in Belgrade received new furniture. "Forma Ideale" also employs many people belonging to the vulnerable groups – Roma and persons with disabilities.

The company is a laureate of the Virtus Award 2012 in the category "Contribution to Social Inclusion". "Forma Ideale" furnished the premises of the Small Home Community in the Home for Children without Parental Care "Vera Blagojević" in Banja Koviljača, a day-care centre for children with special needs from the Home in Kulina, near Aleksinac, and the centres with similar missions in Bela Crkva, near Vršac and Sombor.



Suzana in her favourite armchair



## AP for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Advancement of the Status of Roma

The Office for Human and Minority Rights is coordinating the preparation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Advancement of the Status of Roma 2012-2014, based on the existing documents relevant for each of the 13 areas tackled by the Strategy and the Action Plan.

The Office has undertaken the revision of the Draft Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Advancement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia 2012-2014, primarily from the aspect of competencies of individual ministries and public administration bodies, planned activities and respective monitoring indicators, as well as the aspect of planned financial resources for the implementation of individual activities envisaged in the Action Plan.

The OSCE Mission in RS has provided expertise in the revision of the AP as of November 2012. The AP is in public discussion until March 27.

Contact: Office for Human and Minority Rights, tel: 011 214 2974, [www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs](http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs)

## Decade of Roma Inclusion After 2015

The coalition of non-governmental organisations League for Roma Decade, aimed at improvement of position of Roma population in the entire Europe, will launch a debate on the occasion of the second Decade of Roma Inclusion.

Aiming to include as many citizens' associations as possible and with a view to quality definition of priorities for the second Decade of Roma Inclusion, the League launched an online survey.

League for Roma Decade involves 60 Roma and non-Roma Organisation dealing with Roma issues.

Contact: League for Roma Decade  
tel: 018 42 46 940, [www.ligazadekaduroma.org](http://www.ligazadekaduroma.org)

## Call for Proposals for the Projects to Improve Health of Roma

The Ministry of Health published a call for proposals for the project "Implementation of the Plan on Health Care of Roma". The aim of the call is to improve the health of Roma in Serbia building on the objectives set out in the Action Plan/health of Roma adopted by the Government of Serbia within the framework of the Roma Decade.

The project is part of the programme "Improvement of the Health of Special Categories of Population", and the awarded projects will be receiving up to RSD 300,000. The call expired on 28 February.

Contact: Ministry of Health, tel: 011 361 37 34, [www.zdravlje.gov.rs](http://www.zdravlje.gov.rs)

## HOUSING CENTER: Programme for Roma Inclusion

In late 2012, Housing Center began implementing a two-year regional project PAIRS – Effective Programmes for Active Integration/Inclusion of Roma in South East Europe, funded by the EU from the South-East Europe funds.

The objective of PAIRS is to develop recommendations for programming European and national funds through identification and analysis of concrete initiatives and projects targeting social inclusion of Roma and thus allow for increasing efficiency of the programmes and ensuring long-term integration of the Roma population.

Housing Center is the only PAIRS participant from Serbia along with 18 partners from eight countries in the region of South East Europe.

Contact: Housing Center, tel: 011 27 67 258  
[www.pairs-see.org](http://www.pairs-see.org), [www.housingcenter.org.rs](http://www.housingcenter.org.rs)

## Legal Changes Related to Protection of Pregnant Women

The changes and amendments of the Labour Law provide for strengthened protection of pregnant women and new mothers from dismissal. The changes would guarantee better protection from dismissal to pregnant women and new mothers, irrespective of whether they are employed or not.

This change would be based on the provision of the Law on Financial Support to Parents, on the basis of which employers would be exempted from paying wages. The changes and amendments of the Labour Law should be presented to the members of Parliament in the second half of the year.

Information: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,  
tel: 011 36 14 621, [www.minrzs.gov.rs](http://www.minrzs.gov.rs)

## Campaign to Equalise the Status of Employees with Indefinite and Definite Contracts

The campaign of the Association "Parent" will be launched mid-March at the latest. The aim is to equalise the rights of employees with indefinite contracts and those working on the basis of definite contracts. One of the reasons for the campaign is the status of pregnant women and new mothers employed on definite contracts. The representative of the Association "Parent" Bojana Selaković said that the laws do not protect pregnant women and new mothers with definite contracts so that the employee have all the rights to dismiss them once their contracts expire.

The Association does not have data about the number of women who work but are not employed on indefinite contracts. According to the 2012 assessments of the Alliance of Independent Trade Unions, the number of persons working without contracts in Serbia ranges from 300,000 to 1 million.

Information: Association "Parent", tel: 011 31 65 375, [www.roditelj.org](http://www.roditelj.org)

## Liaising of Single Parents and Elderly Persons

The Association "Parent" launched the project "Support, Lead and Win" that aims to link to vulnerable social groups: single parents and elderly persons on 1 September 2012.

One of the main objectives of the project is to create conditions for an efficient support and cooperation between different age groups – single parents and elderly persons.

The primary aim of the project is to enhance capacities of organisations dealing with the problems of parents and single parents at the local level and also organisations supporting the elderly.

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

## Certificates on Accreditation of Health Centres

The ceremony of awarding certificates on accreditation for 2012, organised by the Ministry of Health and the Agency for Accreditation of Health Care Institutions in Serbia (AZUS) was held in Belgrade.

The certificates were presented to the representatives of 17 accredited health institutions – health centres. Additional eight health centres received agreements on funding amounting to RSD 3,800,000 in support of the accreditation process in 2013.

Aiming to improve the quality of health services, the Ministry of Health funded accreditation of these health institutions within the framework of the project "Provision of Improved Local Services" – DILS funded by the World Bank loan.

Contact: Agency for Accreditation of Health Care Institutions of Serbia  
tel: 011 71 51 722, [www.azus.gov.rs](http://www.azus.gov.rs)

## Bribe in the Health Sector – Blow to Household Poverty

A survey "Whether the patients in Central and East Europe may put up with the increasing charges of the health sector services" is part of the project ASSPRO CEE 2007 involving Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Ukraine, Russia, Albania and Serbia.

In Serbia, the patients pay formally and informally, but mostly indirectly, states the survey. Indirect payments are medical aids that should be provided by hospitals but instead, the patients are asked to bring them.

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

## Capacity Building of Local Communities to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings

NGO "Atina" in partnership with the Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre and the Social Inclusion and Poverty reduction Unit of the Government of Serbia launched a project "Local Communities in Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings".

The project aims to enhance capacities of local communities to efficiently respond to the causes and not only to the consequences of trafficking. It offers a framework for capacity building of all national stakeholders to adequately respond to the problems faced by the victims and the potential victims of trafficking.

The projects is supported by the EU and the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society.

Contact: NGO Atina, tel: 011 32 20 030  
[www.atina.org.rs](http://www.atina.org.rs)

## Grants for Young Feminists

The Young Feminist Fund launched a second call for proposals aimed to support 16 groups of young feminists headed by young women and transgender persons under 30.

The priority will be given to organisations, networks or groups who have or do not have access to big donors and work in underdeveloped areas and with marginalised young women.

Deadline for applications is 26 March.

Information at: <http://youngfeministfund.org/grants-program/apply-for-a-grant>

## The First European CSR Partnership Award

Small and medium-sized enterprises that have effected positive social or business change in partnership with the public or civil sector were eligible to compete for the first European Partnership Award.

The European CSR Partnership Award competition could be entered with projects regarding any of the four key CSR areas: workplace, market, environment and local community.

The official launch of the first ever European CSR Partnership Award Scheme was on 3 December 2012 throughout Europe. The competition was organised in 28 countries, with the support of the European Commission.

In Serbia, the European SCR Partnership Award was presented in two categories – Award for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Award for Large Companies.

The competition was open for entries until 14 February. It was implemented by Smart Kolektiv – the national partner of CSR Europe, and the Business Leaders Forum – the coalition of socially responsible companies in Serbia.

Contact: Business Leaders Forum, tel: 011 26 59 700

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

## NES Supports the Start Up for Business

The National Employment Service has decided to support Philip Morris' Start Up for Business donor program.

Through the scheme, Philip Morris will provide grants up to RSD 200,000 for starting up at least 100 small and family businesses.

The National Employment Service presented the opportunities offered by the scheme to all its clients across the country and invited them to enter the scheme, which was open for applications until 28 February. Contracts with grant beneficiaries will be concluded in June 2013.

Through the programme, implemented by the NGO ENECA based in Niš, Philip Morris will support the purchase of requisite equipment and provide business-related and vocational training, as well as ongoing consulting support from economic experts.

Contact: Start Up for Business Project, [www.pokrenisezaposao.rs](http://www.pokrenisezaposao.rs)

## Vocational Training for the Unemployed

Free vocational training in 20 different skilled trades will be organised in Niš for 200 socially disadvantaged persons. They will be able to choose among courses for men's or women's hairdressers, tailors, glaziers, courses in goldwork embroidery, dry cleaning, textile dyeing and others.

The training will be organised by the Association of Independent Businessmen and Artisans and the City of Niš. Upon completion of the training, trainees will receive trade certificates, which should facilitate their job seeking or applying for start-up loans.

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

## Social Entrepreneurship Fair

On 20 February, the Social Entrepreneurship Fair was organised in Belgrade by the Youth with Disabilities Forum. The fair gathered 41 organisations, including those engaging in some aspect of social entrepreneurship, as well as those supporting such efforts. The goal of the fair was to promote the future and existing social enterprises, together with partners and sponsors.

The event was an activity within the Social Entrepreneurship Platform – a project developed by the Youth with Disabilities Forum.

Contact: Youth with Disabilities Forum, tel: 011 32 20 632

[www.forum-osi.org](http://www.forum-osi.org)

## Career Info Corner for Youth

The New Belgrade Youth Office has launched the Career Info Corner within the Vocational Guidance project. The purpose of the Career Info Corner is to offer a continual service to young people, which will help them in career planning, taking responsibility and entering the labour market by enabling them to make prudent, sound and independent decisions.

The Info Corner has been launched in cooperation with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), with support from the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

Contact: New Belgrade Youth Office, tel: 011 31 33 022

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

## Virtus Corporate Philanthropy Awards

The Virtus corporate philanthropy awards were presented for the sixth time, where the Main Award for Contribution at the National Level in 2012 was presented to B92 Broadcasting Company. Six more award winners were announced at the official ceremony organised at the House of the National Assembly.

The Award for contribution to the local community was presented to the company LaFarge BFC Srbija. The Award for small and medium-sized enterprises was given to the company Božić i sinovi d.o.o. The Award for long-term partnership between the business and civil sectors was presented to Societe Generale Banka Srbija, which also won the Award for volunteering. Banca Intesa won the Award for support for the most innovative project, Forma Ideale received the Award for contribution to social inclusion, while the Special Award for media contribution was presented to eKapija.

As of this year, a new category of award has been introduced, which is presented to a company that has contributed significantly to social inclusion.

The Virtus competition is organised by the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF), with the financial support of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and in partnership with the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) and the Government of Serbia Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU).

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund, tel: 011 32 88 723, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## The First Brand of Serbia's Social Entrepreneurship

Smart Kolektiv hosted the presentation of Dobra torba (Good Bag), the first product and brand of Serbia's fledgling social entrepreneurship, which gathers unemployed women throughout the country, as well as commerce and marketing experts to market the product. Dobra torba is sewn by unemployed women, teamed up in several women's associations throughout the country, who also retain the entire proceeds from sales.

Dobra torba has resulted from a project initiated by Smart Kolektiv, committed to economic empowerment of women. The project is implemented with financial support of the USAID, the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) and Erste Bank.

Contact: Smart Kolektiv, tel: 011 26 59 700, [www.smartkolektiv.org](http://www.smartkolektiv.org)

## Two Students' Enterprises from Novi Pazar Earn RSD 800,000

Two enterprises founded by students from the Novi Pazar Technical School – Ne uzimajte osmeh deci (Do Not Take Children's Smiles Away) and Ovo za ono (This for That) – generated a profit in excess of RSD 800,000 in two months, by selling products they manufactured and marketed by themselves.

One enterprise produced metal chairs, which were sold to other schools, whereas the other made sand play structures.

Both enterprises were founded as part of the Junior Achievement Serbia programme and, since school enterprises in Serbia do not operate as fully fledged companies, the profit remained in the school, instead of going to the students'.

Contact: Technical School, Novi Pazar, tel: 011 20 31 19 45

## The First Centre for Social Entrepreneurship

The first Centre for Social Entrepreneurship will be established in Belgrade, with the purpose of helping socially disadvantaged people to become employed more easily through professional and appropriate support.

According to an estimate, there are 17,000 potential beneficiaries of this Centre in Belgrade alone.

In addition to space for exhibition and sales, where products of already existing social enterprises will be displayed, the Centre will also include training facilities, offering concrete occupational courses to interested persons.

The City of Belgrade has supported the establishment of the Centre by allocating a total of RSD 50,692,000 in this year's budget.

Contact: Assembly of the City of Belgrade, tel: 011 32 29 678 [www.beograd.rs](http://www.beograd.rs)

## NALED: Regulatory Index of Serbia

The efforts of both governments in 2012 towards enforcing the existing and adopting new laws, removing unnecessary bureaucratic procedures and reducing the expenses and charges levied on businesses was rated poorly – 31.7 out of 100 – according to the Regulatory Index of Serbia (RIS).

The Regulatory Index of Serbia is a new instrument for monitoring the Government's performance in creating a more favourable business environ-

ment, developed by the NALED in cooperation with the USAID Business Enabling Project.

Through this instrument, the public will also be able to monitor which ministries attend to their tasks responsibly, analysing their performance in six key components.

Contact: National Alliance for Local Economic Development – NALED  
tel: 011 33 73 063

[www.naled-serbia.org](http://www.naled-serbia.org)



## Annual Calendar of Calls

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society has published the Annual Calendar of Calls, listing calls for applications to be launched during 2013 by line ministries and other institutions of the Republic of Serbia for the award of funding for projects implemented by associations and other CSOs. The Annual Calendar of Calls has resulted from the Office's cooperation with public authorities and aims to contribute to better project proposals, better planning of call schedules and priority areas, as well as increasing the number of prospective beneficiaries of the Republic of Serbia budget funding. Contact: Office for Cooperation with Civil Society tel: 011 31 13 859, [www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs](http://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs)

## BCIF Active Communities Call

The Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) has launched the Active Communities call for applications, seeking project proposals aimed at advancing and developing local communities through stimulation of active citizen involvement.

The Active Communities programme is open to local associations and informal groups submitting project proposals with budgets not exceeding RSD 400,000. The initiatives should pertain to the local community, the programme is not thematically restricted and projects may address diverse areas.

Project proposals may be submitted throughout the year, and the Grants Committee takes decisions three times per year. The new applications deadline is 28 March.

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) tel: 011 32 88 723, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## Philanthropy Survey

Most Serbian citizens understand philanthropy as humanitarian aid and support to the poor and the ill, rather than as long-term investment in community well-being, according to the survey on philanthropy carried out by the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF).

Companies have a different idea of the quintessence of philanthropy and attach greater importance to investments in other areas, although humanitarian aid prevails in their philanthropic activities.

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) tel: 011 32 88 723, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## Women, Peace and Security

Good practices from Western Europe and the region and models for involving civil society organisations in the process of implementing and monitoring the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security were the topics of the meeting held on 26 February 2013.

Contact: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP), tel: 011 32 87 226

[www.bezbednost.org](http://www.bezbednost.org)

## CITIZENS' GUIDE: Protection of Rights before the Administrative Court

The Centre for Development of Serbia and the Agency for European Integration and Cooperation with Associations presented the publication Protection of Citizens' Rights before the Administrative Court – Citizens' Guide on 22 February.

The publication provides the basic information on how citizens can gain access to their rights denied to them by unlawful instruments issued by public authorities, local governments, governmental agencies or public enterprises, before the Administrative Court as an independent arbiter.

The project is implemented with support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) through its Judicial Reform and Government Accountability Project.

Contact: Centre for Development of Serbia tel: 011 24 33 587, [www.razvojsrbije.org.rs](http://www.razvojsrbije.org.rs)

## Discussion on the Implementation of Two Laws

In collaboration with UNHCR, Praxis organised a round-table discussion titled Implementation of the Law on Non-Contentious Proceedings and the Law on Permanent and Temporary Residence of Citizens. These legislative solutions are aimed at facilitating registration in the birth registry and establishing residence at the addresses of social work centres, and the implementation of the two laws has already encountered difficulties.

Contact: Praxis, [www.praxis.org.rs](http://www.praxis.org.rs)

## EUR 7.5 Million for the Serbian Civil Sector from the EU

The EU has earmarked EUR 7.5 million for civil sector development in Serbia from 2011 to 2013. By signing the Memorandum of Understanding in November 2012, Serbia has also joined the EU's Europe for Citizens programme, which will enable the Serbian civil sector to participate in many European projects.

The first call for applications as part of this programme was organised in February, and eligible applicants included civic associations, non-governmental organisations, local governments, faculties, trade unions and other organisations promoting citizen participation. Contact: Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, [www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs](http://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs)

## The State Gives EUR 400 Million to NGOs in Four Years

In the past four years, Serbia has given almost EUR 400 million of tax payers' money for civil society development without clear criteria or efficient control of spending, as stated at a meeting on public finance oversight in Belgrade on 6 March.

Organisations funded from the national budget as NGOs include political parties, religious communities, sports clubs and civic associations, which are generally known as non-governmental organisations and frequently equated with the civil sector.

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

## Serbia Has 19,000 Civic Associations

According to the records of the Serbian Business Registers Agency, there are more than 19,000 civic associations in Serbia.

At the annual level, about RSD 5 billion is earmarked for them in the national budget, and more than RSD 600 million in local governments' budgets.

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society prepares the Annual Summary Report on budget expenditures for programme and project activities of civic associations and other civil society organisations.

The Report includes lists of many organisations and funding awarded to them on account of project activities and is available on the Office's web site. Contact: Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, tel: 011 31 13 859 [www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs](http://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs)

## Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development Prepared

The Balkan Civil Society Development Network has formulated and published the Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development.

The Matrix aims to provide an efficient mechanism to monitor and advocate the establishment of a legal framework and implementation of legislation relating to an enabling environment for action of an efficient and developed civil society, and covers three principal areas: basic legal guarantees of freedoms, framework for CSOs' financial viability and sustainability and government to CSO relationship.

As a project partner in Serbia, Civic Initiatives will present the Matrix as part of the two-years project Balkan Civil Society Acquis – Strengthening Advocacy and Monitoring Potential and Capacities of CSOs, supported by the EC.

Contact: [www.gradjanske.org](http://www.gradjanske.org)

## LGBT Activists' Manual: Monitoring, Advocacy and Lobbying

Civil Rights Defenders in collaboration with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) have published the LGBT Activists' Manual on Monitoring, Advocacy and Lobbying. The Manual has been developed with a view to enhancing the LGBT rights defenders' capacities to successfully lobby for and advocate legal changes aimed at combating discrimination against the LGBT population.

Contact: Civil Rights Defenders, tel: 011 33 46 296 [www.civilrightsdefenders.org](http://www.civilrightsdefenders.org)

## First Final Conviction for Sexual Discrimination

The Novi Sad Court of Appeal has delivered the first final conviction for sexual discrimination in the workplace in Serbia.

The court has found several months' discriminatory behaviour and a grave form of discrimination against M. A. (aged 25), committed by his colleague D. K. (aged 26).

Contact: Gay-Straight Alliance, [www.gsa.org.rs](http://www.gsa.org.rs)

## Laws Are Good, but Inadequately Enforced

Laws guaranteeing ethnic minorities' rights in Serbia are good, but are not adequately enforced, as stated in Belgrade on February, on the occasion of presenting the publication The Exercise of Minority Rights – Implementation of the Recommendations of Independent Institutions for the Protection of Human Rights in Serbia.

The publication criticises the reluctance of municipalities with Bosniak population to introduce the Bosniak language in official use and concludes that the Municipality of Priboj, the only one that has not acted upon the recommendations on bilingualism, should follow the good practices of Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Tutin and Prijepolje.

The Belgrade Centre for Human Rights project Increasing Efficiency and Visibility of Independent Institutions for Human Rights Protection in Serbia was funded by the USAID through the Institute for Sustainable Communities and resulted in the publication Implementation of the Recommendations of Independent Institutions for the Protection of Human Rights in Serbia.

Contact: Belgrade Centre for Human Rights tel: 011 30 58 328, [www.bgcentar.org.rs](http://www.bgcentar.org.rs)

## Operators to Provide Universal Service

By RATEL's decision, the operators Telekom Srbija, Telenor, VIP Mobile and Orion Telekom are obliged to provide universal service from 1 April. Universal service, amongst other things, entails special measures facilitating equal access of persons with disabilities and socially disadvantaged users to publicly available telephone services, including calls to emergency services, information services and public telephone directories.

Universal service should be provided to persons with disabilities and socially disadvantaged users at lower prices.

Contact: RATEL, tel: 011 32 42 673  
[www.ratel.rs](http://www.ratel.rs)

## Technology for Civil Activism

Kolaž kolektiv has launched [www.ostaviojde.com](http://www.ostaviojde.com) – an application collecting information on locations where citizens can donate clothing, footwear and other supplies to charity and an overview of institutions where they can volunteer. Locations and basic information on the institutions are shown on a map of Serbia, and a version for Android smart phones has also been developed.

The application was created at last year's Hackathon, where programmers and designers developed it on the basis of Kolaž kolektiv's idea. The objective of linking Serbian activists and IT professionals is to develop 15 socially useful applications.

Contact: Kolaž kolektiv,  
[www.kolazkolektiv.blogspot.com](http://www.kolazkolektiv.blogspot.com)

## Instructions for Employees in Kindergartens and Schools

The Instructions for Employees in Kindergartens and Schools: Application and Advancement of Inclusive Education in Serbia were developed within the project "Strengthening Capacities of Local Governments and Education Institutions for the Implementation of Inclusive Education Legislation and Policies in Local Communities in Serbia". The Instructions lay out the issues in the process of lobbying and implementing inclusive education, as well as good practices, and target all actors supporting inclusive education.

The project was implemented by the Association of Students with Disabilities in partnership with the Initiative for Inclusion Veliki-Mali and the Initiative for the Rights of Persons with Mental Disabilities, supported by EU.

Contact: [www.inkluzivno-obrazovanje.rs](http://www.inkluzivno-obrazovanje.rs)

## Education Tailored to Local Communities

Minister of Education Žarko Obradović has announced that lists of occupations in demand will be prepared in each municipality, on the basis of which the required occupational profiles will be opened and the needed workforce educated, and students enrolling on them will know whether they are heading towards a job or the unemployment register.

Adult Education Law will be passed this year, as well as laws on primary and secondary schools. Contact: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, [www.mpn.gov.rs](http://www.mpn.gov.rs)

## Government on Information Society Development

At the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications, on 14 March 2013, the Government of Serbia adopted the Action Plan (2013–2014) for the Implementation of the Electronic Communication Development Strategy 2010–2020 and the Decision Amending the Strategy for Switchover from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting. The Action Plan defines activities including broadband access development, introduction of new multimedia services, implementation of the analogue to digital migration and stimulation of pilot projects.

Amendments to the Strategy aim to facilitate improvements to the regulatory framework required for a successful digital migration and to define the necessary steps in informing citizens.

Plans for the third and fourth quarters of 2013

include adopting the Broadband Networks and Services Development Strategy until 2016, developing a proposed model for stimulating broadband access development and carrying out an analysis of the current situation of the built electronic communication network in the Republic of Serbia as the basis for broadband access development. Operators, institutions and organisations responsible for implementing specific activities have been defined.

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit will develop a proposed model for a vulnerable citizens' assistance scheme with the aim of providing support in the digital migration.

Information: Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications  
tel: 011 31 13 432, [www.mtt.gov.rs](http://www.mtt.gov.rs)

## Digital School and Digital Literacy

The Digital School project has contributed considerably to raising the digital literacy level in Serbian primary schools, introduced an innovative teaching approach, reduced the rural-urban digital literacy gap from 39% to 11% and improved students' and teachers' knowledge of online safety, according to the UN and UNESCO Broadband Commission report on education and ICT.

The first case study presented in the report is the Digital School project from Serbia. It is assessed that the Serbian project is the ideal model for e-inclusion in schools at all levels, and Serbia is named as an example of a country that invests in IT education.

Contact: Directorate for Digital Agenda, tel: 011 33 40 361

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

## Get Online Week 2013

The Get Online Week is organised from 18 to 24 March 2013 in about 10,000 different centres throughout Europe, offering access to and knowledge of information and communication technologies. This year too, Serbia will be among the 30 countries that will join forces to bring information technologies to their citizens and help them become digitally literate. The Serbian partner of the campaign, IAN – the International Aid Network, has worked on raising the digital literacy level for more than 10 years through IAN telecentres.

Contact: IAN – International Aid Network

tel: 011 76 17 197, [www.ian.org.rs](http://www.ian.org.rs)

## Call for Education Projects

The Provincial Secretariat for Education, Administration and National Communities has opened the Call for Cofinancing Programs and Projects in the Field of Primary and Secondary Education in AP Vojvodina 2013. A total of 9,752,470 RSD is allocated for cofinancing the projects, and the call targets primary and secondary education institutions and civil society organizations. The application deadline is April 3, 2013.

Contact: Provincial Secretariat for Education, Administration and National Communities  
[www.obrazovanje.vojvodina.gov.rs](http://www.obrazovanje.vojvodina.gov.rs)

## Second Open Conference on Higher Education

The second open conference on higher education and research in the region will be held in Belgrade on 13 May and will gather researchers and policy makers from Serbia and other Western Balkan countries.

The conference will address the current situation with respect to data and knowledge about higher education and research systems in the region, and is organised by the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Belgrade.

Information: Higher Education and Research in the Western Balkans project, [www.herdata.org](http://www.herdata.org)

## ICT PSP Info Day

An info day on the Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) was organised in Belgrade on 28 February by the Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications in collaboration with the European Commission. The ICT PSP programme enables Serbian institutions and companies to apply for funding from the programme budget in consortiums with other European businesses. The available funding totals about EUR 750 million, and EUR 125 million are planned to be distributed this year.

Contact: Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications, [www.mtt.gov.rs](http://www.mtt.gov.rs)

## Online Human Rights Library

An online library, a part of the Human Rights Library, was opened on 15 March at the Human Rights House. The Human Rights Library is a public space available to civil society activists, students and researchers wishing to pursue research into human rights.

The Human Rights Library has been supported by the Institute for Sustainable Communities.

Information: Human Rights House,  
tel: 011 33 41 854

<http://kucaljudskihprava.rs>

## CALENDAR of Important Dates

### MARCH

- 08 International Women's Day
- 21 International Day of the Occupationally Disabled;  
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 24 World Tuberculosis Day

### APRIL

- 01 Day against Alcoholism
- 02 International Children's Book Day
- 07 World Health Day
- 09 International Romani Day
- 22 International Mother Earth Day
- 28 World Day for Safety and Health at Work

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