



Government of the
Republic of Serbia

June 2013

16th

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 PAUNOVIĆ, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE FOR HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS

Advancing Human Rights with a View to Social Inclusion in Serbia

In the next stage of Serbia's accession to the European Union, i.e. after opening accession negotiations, focus will be on areas in which our country is expected to make further progress, in particular the enforcement of laws in the spheres of fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as the rule of law (chapters 23 and 24).

Serbia has recently made considerable progress with respect to advancing human rights, as acknowledged in many international and domestic reports. This process must continue, in particular with respect to advancing the overall status and rights of vulnerable groups and minorities, especially those most disadvantaged – the Roma, LGBT persons and persons with disabilities. The European Commission's 2011 Opinion on Serbia highlights that laws are good, but inadequately enforced, as was the case in most other countries in the accession process.

Advancing human rights is inextricably linked with higher social inclusion of marginalised groups in society and further efforts towards social inclusion and poverty reduction in Serbia are, therefore, essential, not only in the context of European integration, but also in the interest of achieving the desired standards and quality of life for our citizens.

In the coming period, another priority will be more efficient anti-discrimination efforts. The Government's Office for Human and Minority Rights has prepared the Anti-dis-

crimination Strategy, which was the first recommendation by the Equality Commissioner in 2012. The Government of Serbia is expected to adopt the document in June. This will provide the framework required for an efficient anti-discrimination policy in the forthcoming period.

The Strategy focuses on nine areas, i.e. nine groups and minorities most commonly facing discrimination: women, children, the elderly, LGBT persons, persons with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons and other migrant groups, and persons whose health status may be grounds for discrimination, national minorities and small religious communities.

The document defines sets of anti-discrimination measures to be elaborated in an action plan, which will be developed following the adoption of the Strategy. The involvement of numerous stakeholders, state institutions and the civil sector in its development and the fact that a broad consultation process was carried out at the local and national levels give this document a special quality; all this will contribute to efficient implementation of the proposed solutions. It is crucial to continue the efforts aimed at education in and raising awareness of the importance of equality in society, as well as promoting tolerance, appreciation of diversity and culture of respect for human rights.

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SOCIAL INCLUSION BLOG – KSENIJA GRAOVAC

Philanthropy Starts with Our Own Individual Effort

I can tell you with certainty that philanthropy starts with our own individual effort. If you are engaged in philanthropy development, reconsider your own feelings and views once in a while. Your work includes motivation speeches, philanthropy success stories, persuasion. It is essential that you test yourself once in a while, to check whether you still believe, how good your examples are, how your audience responds. Philanthropy is too sensitive a topic to allow yourself to come across as a fake. The more credible real-life examples you offer, the better the response and the change in your target audience's views.

It is with secondary school students that I have had the best discussions on philanthropy. Secondary school students are like fine modelling clay – they are malleable, receptive... In a school in Vojvodina, a boy once told me, "I play basketball, so with school and practice, I have no time for anything else. I have no money. I want to become a professional basketball player. Basketball is my life. I have no time for philanthropy." I asked, "So you are on the basketball court all the time? Shooting a ball through the hoop is what you live for? Would you coach kids in wheelchairs who would like to play? Can I put you in touch with them? It won't be hard work, few of them would really throw them-

selves into it heart and soul." "Sure," he smiled. And added, "I didn't know they existed."

He didn't know they existed. Seemingly different from those who surround us every day, sometimes shown on the screen until you switch to another channel, starving in the street, just around the corner. And it is not only about people, there are also spaces – waste dumps in our neighbourhoods, ruins wherever you turn.

...All this can be changed, unless your first thought is "Why doesn't the state do it?" Well, because we count for something too, right? We don't have to build something big or eradicate poverty at the state level, but we need to have initiative and to reflect on our lives, on our power to bring change.

Therefore, I heartily recommend frankness when you tell somebody how important it is to give for the common good. Be familiar with the topic, be an active volunteer or donor yourself. Make sure that your examples are fresh and each character in your story has a name...

... I recommend the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund's survey on philanthropy, especially to "dummies": <http://goo.gl/GCcMl>

...And be persistent...

The full text, as well as the author's several other publications, are available at www.inkluzija.gov.rs/blog/

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION
AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT**Study on Options for the Establishment of
the Social Inclusion Fund**

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit prepared the Study on Options for the Establishment of the Social Inclusion Fund. The goal is to contribute to a more efficient and successful utilization of available national funds, as well as future EU funds for social inclusion. The Fund should improve the implementation of social inclusion measures foreseen by many laws and strategic documents.

The establishment of the Fund would enable a more effective and efficient support for social inclusion of vulnerable population in Serbia. To establish the Fund, no additional funding or staff is required; instead, more effective results could be achieved through normative changes and better allocation of the existing resources.

The Fund could be an example of doing more with less. To achieve this, it is necessary to make a decision to merge specific budget funds and administrative resources.

More information on <http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs/?p=18298&lang=en>

**Boosting Social Entrepreneurship and Social
Enterprise Creation in the Republic of Serbia**

Within the Second Cycle of Policy Impact Assessment, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has prepared a report as part of the OECD LEED Programme Boosting Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise Creation.

The report is based on the preliminary report prepared by local experts, the available statistics and the material gathered during a study visit of a team comprising members of the OECD LEED Secretariat and external experts. The team visited Serbia in February/March 2012 to examine the role of social entrepreneurship.

Mapping Local Social Services

In collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy and UNICEF Serbia, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has developed an analysis of social services delivered at the local level, thus providing a clear map of the existing services by municipalities and funding modalities.

The primary goal of the exercise has been to collect data on the existing non-residential social services within the mandate of local governments, in conformity with the Social Welfare Law.

The mapping exercise should provide a more comprehensive overview of social services from the aspects of availability, efficiency and quality; give a better insight into their sophistication level, coverage and sustainability; facilitate the enhancement of local services on the basis of future analyses of the data collected; contribute to the establishment of an ongoing data collection and monitoring system, as well as indicate the challenges of future improvement.

Survey on Long-Term Care

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has carried out a qualitative survey on long-term elderly care in Serbia.

The survey aimed to identify the perception of the elderly population and its needs with a view to further developing the long-term care system.

The survey will provide the basis for further national discussion on The Future of the Long-Term Care Sector in Serbia, currently led by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit
tel. +381 11 311 46 05, www.inkluzija.gov.rs

Rulebooks on Social Service Standards

The provisions of the Rulebook on Detailed Requirements and Standards for the Provision of Social Services entered into force on 22 May. The Rulebook stipulates minimum standards to be met by all service providers. Conformity with service quality standards is one of the licensing requirements.

The provisions of three new bylaws – the Rulebook on Licensing Social Protection Professionals, Rulebook on Licensing Social Protection Organisations and Rulebook Amending the Rulebook on Social Welfare Tasks – entered into force on the same day.

Information: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy,
tel. +381 11 36 14 621, www.minrzs.gov.rs

SUZANA PAUNOVIĆ, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE FOR HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS

**Advancing Human Rights with
a View to Social Inclusion in Serbia**

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It is essential that the principle of respect for diversity, tolerance and non-violence be brought closer to citizens, and it is particularly important that it become an integrated model for young generations' behaviour and actions, since this is the only way for us to become a developed, modern, truly democratic society. All public officials, public figures and the media, as well as independent state institutions, in particular the Equality Commissioner and the Ombudsman, have the pivotal role in this process. These institutions must be strengthened and their recommendations – addressed to authorities, institutions and individuals – must be followed. Important work awaits our judicial system, which plays one of the key roles in both combating and preventing discrimination; it is, therefore, encouraging that the first judgments in discrimination cases have been delivered.

To achieve the desired results, it is important that different stakeholders recognise the importance of joint action, i.e. that the state and the civil sector can and must be partners. Developing and strengthening the solidarity principle – one of the fundamental values of the European Union – constitutes another social priority, in order to realise the desired economic and social development and ensure a decent standard of living for all our citizens.

Serbia's Employment Rate 37.4 Percent

The economically active population totals 2,971,220, or 41.34 percent, while 4,215,642 people, or 58.66 percent, are inactive, according to the 2011 Population Census results.

The employment rate in Serbia is 37.4 percent (2,304,628 people) and is higher for men (44.9 percent) than for women (30.5 percent). The highest employment rate is recorded in the Belgrade region (41.6 percent), and the lowest – in the Southern and Eastern Serbia region (34.0 percent).

The unemployment rate is 22.4 percent. By sex, men's unemployment rate is 21.6 percent, and women's – 23.6 percent. The lowest unemployment rate is recorded in the Belgrade region – 17.9 percent, and the highest in the Southern and Eastern Serbia region – 27.3 percent.

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, www.stat.gov.rs

Higher Transparency of Regulations

On 28 March, the Government of Serbia accepted the amendments to the Government Rules of Procedure pertaining to detailed rules on public review in the process of law making. In addition to the old provision, according to which the public review process is required in the development of a law that introduces material changes to the provisions governing a specific matter or regulates a matter of particular interest to the public, now the public review process can also be carried out in the process of preparing a development strategy, regulation or decision.

The requirement for public review is set as a rule (unless otherwise decided by the competent committee) in the drafting of structural laws, amendments to laws (if the existing provisions are to be changed materially), laws ratifying international treaties (if the competent committee decides that public review should be conducted).

Amendments to the Rules of Procedure regulate the procedure, programme and contents of public review, time limits for submitting proposals, comments, initiatives and suggestions (at least 15 days of announcing the call for submissions), minimum duration (20 days), requirement for the proposing entity to report on the public review process carried out (on its web page, within 15 days of the closure of public review).

Contact: Government of Serbia, www.srbija.gov.rs

Anti-discrimination Strategy

The Anti-discrimination Strategy, which covers a period of five years and contains measures and concrete deadlines for their implementation, should be adopted by the Government of Serbia in June 2013.

More information: Office for Human and Minority Rights
tel. +381 11 311 45 28, www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs

No Reforms in the First Quarter

The first quarter of 2013 was marked by a lack of results of reforms promised by the Government of Serbia in the last two quarters of last year, NALED reported in this year's first quarterly report. The reforms were expected to simplify procedures, decrease operational costs and improve legal security.

The report is available on the NALED website.
More information: National Alliance for Local Economic Development – NALED, tel. +381 11 337 30 63, www.naled-serbia.org

Implementation of Charter on Fundamental Rights of the European Union Progressing

The EC annual report on implementation of the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights assessed that three years after becoming binding on all the EU Member States, the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights has led to changes becoming a reference point for the EU institutions in drafting their legislation but also for European and national courts.

In the letters referring to fundamental rights sent to the Commission, the EU citizens posed questions related to freedom of movement and stay, functioning of domestic judicial systems, access to judiciary, right to free choice of profession and right to work, integration of persons with disabilities and protection of personal data.

The EC proposed reform of regulations related to personal data protection, work on achieving gender balance in the boards of European companies and measures to protect the rights of victims and rights of suspects and arrested citizens.

Contact: European Commission, <http://ec.europa.eu>

European Citizens' Initiative Difficult to Implement

The European Citizens' Initiative Instrument (ECI) did not gain momentum in a year since its launch due to technical and bureaucratic obstacles preventing for petitions to fulfill all the requirements.

Of almost 30 civic initiatives, 13 were successful and only one managed to gather the requested one million signatures of EU citizens. Initiatives are not successful because they lack technical support necessary to fulfill all the requirements. IECI allows the citizens to submit requests for passing laws in the EU.

The condition is that an initiative should gather one million signatures in no less than seven EU Member States over the 12-month period. The right to propose initiatives has been accorded to the EU citizens on 01 April 2012.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

Eight EU Member States Fulfill Education Objectives Before Deadline

Denmark, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Holland, Finland and Sweden have reached and surpassed national 2020 objectives in the area of improvement of education.

EU wishes to attain the level of 40% of persons aged 30-34 with university or a college diploma.

Eurostat has stated that the EU average has risen to 36% - two percentage points more compared to 2010.

According to the data of 2011 Census, 10.59% of citizens in Serbia are highly educated.

Source: www.euroactiv.rs

Facilitated Studies to Foreigners in EU as of 2016

European Commission proposes that entry and studies of foreign students in the Member States be facilitated. Therefore, two directives on students and researchers have been amended and replaced a single new one.

The proposal of the more efficient system to reduce bureaucratic obstacles and allow for mobility of students and work in the EU represents an attempt of EU to attract the most gifted students and researchers from the non-EU countries.

The Commission expects the new rules to come into force as of 2016.

According to the EC data, approximately 220,000 non-EU citizens stayed in EU for studies, student exchange programmes, unpaid internship or volunteering in 2011.

Source: www.euroactiv.rs

Action Plan Implemented 77 % in the First Quarter

According to the first Report on the Action Plan for Fulfilment of the European Commission Recommendations under the Serbia 2012 Progress Report, adopted at the government session yesterday, 77 percent of the recommendations to be fulfilled by 1 April 2013 were realised, when both fully and partially fulfilled recommendations are taken into account. Out of 61 recommendations to be fulfilled in the first quarter of the year, 12 were fully realised, 35 were partially fulfilled, and 14 recommendations were not fulfilled.

The Action Plan includes measures within the mandate of the Government of Serbia by

giving an overview of the key activities related to concrete recommendations of the European Commission. It also names the institution in charge and the deadline for its implementation.

The Action Plan contains 231 recommendations, some of which should be implemented by 01 September 2013, with a long list of the long-term recommendations. The recommendations from the domain of legislation and judiciary, independent and regulatory bodies were emphasized.

Information: Government of Serbia,
www.srbija.gov.rs

Team of Experts Informing Serbian Citizens About EU

The citizens of Serbia will be able to learn more about the EU, European integration and EU policies from an expert network called Europe-Serbia Team.

The Team was presented on 11 May and its task will be to inform the citizens about the practical issues related to EU accession and membership.

The Team is a network of 19 independent experts for different sectors and policies which are an integral part of EU and integration. The network was established in May 2013, following the discussion of the Office for EU Integration of the Government of Serbia, EU Delegation in Serbia and civil society organisations.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm

Call for Exchange 4 Programme Published

The EU Delegation in Serbia published a call for project proposals under the umbrella of Exchange 4 grant scheme.

The projects should contribute to fulfillment of strategic national priorities in the area of environmental protection, local economic development and social protection at the local level with the financial support of the National IPA 2012.

Exchange 4 grant scheme will promote inter-municipal cooperation, transfer of know-how and best practices with a view to implementation of national policies at the local level in the targeted sectors.

Exchange 4 is a bi-annual EU funded programme managed by the EU Delegation in Serbia and implemented by the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities- Alliance of Towns and Municipalities of Serbia.

The deadline for submission of project proposals is 04 July 2013.

Contact: Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, tel. 011 32 23 446

www.skgo.org

Serbia in the Group of Moderate Innovators

Serbia is in the group of moderate innovators with below EU performance, but has recorded a significantly higher rise in innovations compared to the EU average, states the EC report „2013 Innovation Scoreboard“. Serbia recorded a 6.8% growth in innovations from 2010 to 2012 which is higher than the EU average.

Among the EU Member States, Sweden continues to lead, followed by Germany, Denmark and Finland. Latvia and Lithuania progressed most during the last year.

Source: www.euroactiv.rs

EU Progress Continues until March 2014

European Partnership with Municipalities Programme- EU Progres implemented in 25 municipalities in South and Southwest Serbia with the support of the EU and the Government of Switzerland will continue until March 2014.

The short-term, 9-month extension of the Programme was approved due to the low quality of technical and planning documents, the rights related to land ownership, provision of municipal cofunding and delayed public procurement processes.

By end 2012, EU Progres contracted implementation of 187 projects: 85 were completed; the implementation of 47 projects is ongoing according to the plan, while 39 are delayed with minor risks; the implementation of six projects is in the critical phase, and 10 projects were suspended. To date a total of EUR 9,343 million or 57% of the entire Programme budget were disbursed.

Contact: European Partnership with Municipalities Programme- EU Progres,
www.euprogres.org

Number of Computers on EU Schools Doubled Since 2006

The pupils and teachers in the EU are ready for the digital era, the number of computers has doubled since 2006, and the majority of schools is connected thanks to ICT, states the report published by the European Commission.

At the level of the EU, the Commission recommended more efforts to be invested in reducing disparities in use of ICT in teaching in the Member States, supporting projects of digital technologies assisted learning, and high quality training of teachers.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

New Generation of Information Centres

European Commission launched a new generation of information centres in EU „Europe – directly“ where the citizens may obtain direct answers to all questions related to the EU, and advice on exercise of their rights in each of the Member States. There are 500 centres that cater to the needs of the Europeans.

Source: www.euroactiv.rs

Almost 600,000 People with Disabilities Live in Serbia According to the 2011 Census

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) has published the 2011 Census results on the population with disabilities in Book 8: Disability.

According to these results, out of the 7,186,862 people covered by the Census, 571,780 people (7.96%) declared that they had great difficulties in or were fully incapable of attending to daily activities, i.e. that they considered themselves disabled.

By type of disability, those with walking problems account for the highest proportion (4.7% of the Serbian population), and those with communication problems – the lowest (0.8%).

The share of persons with disability in the overall population is the lowest in the Belgrade region – 98,424 people (5.93%), and the highest in the Southern and Eastern Serbia region – 147,649 people (9.44%).

By municipalities, the highest proportion of persons with disabilities was recorded in Gadžin Han (17.3%), Rekovac (15.4%), Plandište (15.3%), Crna Trava (14.8%) and Svrlijig (14%), and the lowest – in Novi Pazar (4.3%), Tutin (4.5%), New Belgrade (5.1%), Čukarica (5.5%) and Zvezdara (5.5%).

The average age of persons with disabilities is 67 years and women account for more than one half of them – 58.2%.

Census data on disability in Serbia were last published back in 1890. According to that census, out of Serbia's total population at the time (2,161,961), there were 9,645 persons with disabilities, of whom 5,932 were men and 3,713 were women.

More details are available on the website of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. Contact: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, www.stat.gov.rs

Public Review of the Draft Law on the Use of Sign Language

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy has launched the public review of the Draft Law on the Use of Sign Language. The public review will take place between 17 June and 5 July 2013 and is open to representatives of public authorities responsible for health care, education, social affairs and other areas, civic associations, in particular those gathering deaf and hearing-impaired persons, professionals and other interested stakeholders.

Stakeholders are invited to send proposals, suggestions, initiatives and comments to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy, Belgrade, Nemanjina 22–26.

Presentations and hearings will be organised at the Palace of Serbia, Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2, Belgrade, on 17, 21 and 25 June and 5 July 2013. More information at www.euprava.gov.rs

Persons with Disabilities among the Most Vulnerable Groups

Persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable social groups in Serbia and are subject to discrimination in all spheres of social life, according to a special report of the Equality Commissioner, presented on 13 May. The number of complaints alleging discrimination against persons with disabilities increased tenfold last year.

The Equality Commissioner has also prepared a report on the accessibility of public authorities' premises,

which indicates that the Government of Serbia headquarters and most ministries' buildings are inaccessible to persons with disabilities, as they are not fitted with wheelchair ramps.

According to the World Bank, 13% of the persons with disabilities in Serbia work, and only 1% of these are employed in state institutions and the private sector.

Contact: Equality Commissioner, tel. +381 11 243 80 20 www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs

Rulebook on Technical Standards of Accessibility Adopted

The Ministry of Construction and Urban Planning has adopted the Rulebook on Technical Standards of Accessibility, developed with a view to creating a sustainable built environment accessible to all. The Rulebook introduces the concept of "universal design (design for all)", which entails designing products, environment, programmes and services in such a way as to ensure their maximum accessibility for all people, without additional modification.

This initiative was launched by the National Organisation of Persons with Disabilities, the Living Upright Centre, the Centre for Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities and the Accessibility Audit Association.

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit supported the initiative, as well as the development of the implementation monitoring mechanisms. More information: Ministry of Construction and Urban Planning tel. +381 11 36 14 652, www.mgu.gov.rs

Only 38 Students with Disabilities

A very small number of students with disabilities – about 300 – study at Belgrade University, according to the Belgrade University Centre for Students with Disabilities. A total of 38 students with disabilities enrolled in the academic year 2012/13, and their number has been on the rise in the past few years.

The enrolment of these students in the academic year 2012/13 and the funding of their studies are covered by an affirmative action carried out by the Ministry of Education for the first time. The measure foresees that, out of the total number of places offered to students whose tuition fees are paid from the state budget, 2% are reserved for students with disabilities and the Roma.

More information: Centre for Students with Disabilities, tel. +381 11 33 70 686, www.bg.ac.rs

Telekom Offers Services in Sign Language

The company Telekom Srbija has launched courses in Serbian sign language for its staff in order to accommodate the needs of its hearing-impaired customers.

In collaboration with the Serbian Association of Interpreters for the Hearing-Impaired, two groups of Telekom Srbija's Belgrade front-end staff will be trained. The course, tailored to the company's business activities, covers about 800 selected signs grouped in 16 themes.

More information: Telekom Srbija www.telekom.rs

Calls for Applications for Youth Project Funding

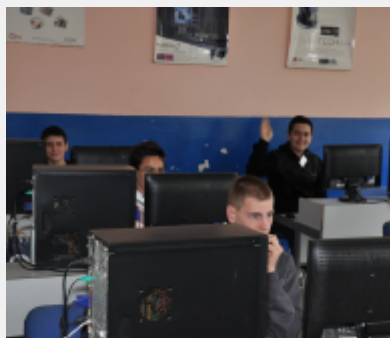
As part of the Young People Rule! programme, the Ministry of Youth and Sport has launched calls for applications for youth project funding in 26 Serbian districts in 2013.

For four consecutive years, the Ministry of Youth and Sport, in partnership with 26 resource centres, has supported youth associations and informal youth groups in promoting community activism and voluntary work through training and youth project implementation.

The application deadline was 15 June. Contact: Ministry of Youth and Sport tel. +381 11 311 70 99, www.mos.gov.rs

PHOTO NEWS

STUDENT COOPERATIVE: Students, Teachers and Parents Pursuing the Common Goal



Classrooms are equipped with computers to keep pace with new technologies

The Niš-based Nikola Tesla High School of Electrical Engineering has established a student cooperative to offer students an opportunity to learn, attend unhindered multi-period blocks of classes and practical training and also offer commercial services, such as repairing car air conditioning systems or personal computers, depending on their occupational profiles.

The cooperative has 35 members; students, teachers and parents from the Parents' Council are equally represented in its governance bodies.

The cooperative's profit will be invested in materials and study tours, as decided by the cooperative's governance bodies, in which all members have equal voting rights, irrespective of their status in the school.



The school organises Tesla Info Cup, an annual competition for primary school pupils that takes place online or via text messaging

Council for Improving the Status of the Roma Reestablished

The Council for Improving the Status of the Roma and the Implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, with a four-year term, has been established.

The Council is responsible for preparing proposals for a comprehensive and consistent policy of improving the status of the Roma population and implementing the Decade of Roma Inclusion, as well as proposals for implementing Government policies; issuing opinions on the planned budget appropriations for the implementation of Government policies, providing expertise on the progress against major social indicators in the sphere of Roma support policies and analysing effects of measures taken by competent authorities; participating in international events within the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion; monitoring the exercise and protection of Roma rights and the implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in the Republic of Serbia.

Source: Government of Serbia, www.srbija.gov.rs

Action Plan Implementing the Strategy for Improving the Status of Roma Adopted

In conformity with the Strategy for Improving the Status of Roma, adopted at the Government session held on 9 April 2009, the Government of Serbia has adopted the Action Plan Implementing the Strategy for Improving the Status of Roma until 2015.

The Action Plan sets the measures and activities towards Strategy implementation, responsible institutions, time frames, overall costs of implementing measures and activities and funding sources and covers the period until 1 January 2015.

Contact: Office for Human and Minority Rights of the Government of Serbia
www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs

Call for Applications for Roma CSOs

The Open Society Foundations' initiative Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma invited Roma CSOs to submit project proposals for organisational development closely related to EU accession processes.

The initiative aims to support stakeholders in addressing the difficulties in linking the objectives of the Decade of Roma Inclusion to EU funding opportunities.

The primary objective is to help Roma CSOs to identify and make a choice on strategic organizational development related to the absorption of EU funds.

The application deadline was 8 June.
Contact: Open Society Foundations,
<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/small-grants-scheme-organizational-development-eu-accession-issues>

EU Provides EUR 3.6 Million for Roma Housing

Through UNOPS, the EU has provided EUR 3.6 million from the IPA funds for the provision of permanent housing to families from five container settlements, while the City of Belgrade will provide the sites and organise the relocation. On 8 April, the International Romani Day, the EU and the City of Belgrade signed the Protocol on the provision of housing for 202 Roma families from the former insubstantial settlements of Belville and Gazela.

The families will be provided with permanent housing in buildings to be built in the next two years.

In the past four years, Belgrade has provided housing for 303 Roma families, 1389 people obtained identity documents and health insurance cards and gained access to social welfare, 411 children enrolled in school and 27 Roma people from Belville and Gazela got jobs in Belgrade public utility enterprises. Out of the 650 social housing units built in Belgrade and let to tenants.

Contact: City of Belgrade, www.beograd.rs

Roma Social Inclusion Seminar

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration and the European Commission are organising a seminar titled Social Inclusion Seminar: Roma Issues in Serbia, to be held on 18 June 2013. The seminar will build on the implementation of the operational conclusions of the joint Serbia-EC seminar held in 2011; it will also provide an opportunity to review the results and present the priorities and plans for further improving the Roma status in the Republic of Serbia through social inclusion.

The seminar will be attended by representatives of the National Assembly, the Government, the Roma National Minority Council, local governments, civil society organisations, international organisations and the European Commission.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit,
www.inkluzija.gov.rs, European Commission, ec.europa.eu

Declaration on Roma Inclusion

At the first meeting of the Roma Inter-Parliamentary Organization, the Declaration defining the goals of the organisation in terms of Roma inclusion was signed. The Declaration was signed in the Serbian parliament by Roma parliamentarians from Serbia, Macedonia, Slovakia, Croatia and Bulgaria, while Roma parliamentarians from Romania were also involved in drafting the document.

The principal goals stated in the Declaration are to raise awareness of the situation of the Roma and obstacles to solving their problems, to promote good national policies, solutions and actions regarding Roma rights and to cooperate with UN, CoE, EU and OSCE institutions in the sphere of human and minority rights.

Source: www.parliament.gov.rs

REPORT: Roma Right to Housing

The NGO Praxis has published the report Analysis of the Main Obstacles and Problems in Access of Roma to the Right to Adequate Housing, dealing with the main issues in the exercise of the right to adequate housing in Serbia from 2009 to the end of 2012.

In this period, the number of forced evictions from Roma settlements rose (18 large-scale eviction exercises affecting more than 2,800 Roma), as did the number of individual eviction cases (at least 1,000 in two years), and discrimination against Roma in the exercise of the right to adequate housing was established for the first time.

The report has been published as part of the project Contribution to Social Inclusion and Combat against Discrimination of Marginalized Population in Serbia, funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Contact: Praxis, tel. +381 11 34 44 482,
www.praxis.org.rs

Stop Trafficking in Women

In December 2012 and January 2013, the Pirot-based organisation Women of the South carried out the project titled Stop Trafficking in Women, whose beneficiaries were Roma women from Bela Palanka and Pirot.

One of the project objectives was to set up a human trafficking peer education team, which consists of 10 Roma women aged between 13 and 19 from these two towns who were trained by the trainer team from the anti-trafficking NGO Astra.

The project was carried out with the support of the Office for Human and Minority Rights.

More information: Astra,
www.astra.rs

Hate Crimes to be Criminalised

The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM) and Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) have launched a project aimed at promoting the importance of criminalising hate crimes.

In late December 2012, the National Assembly passed the Law Amending the Criminal Code, which introduced hate as an aggravating circumstance that must be considered in imposing sentences for crimes committed out of hate based on race, religion, national or ethnic affiliation, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. The amendments were initiated by YUCOM and GSA.

Contact: Gay Straight Alliance
www.gsa.org.rs

Rainbow Award

The Department for Organisation, Prevention and Community Policing within the Police Directorate of the Ministry of Interior is the winner of the first annual Rainbow Award, presented by Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) for contribution to combating homophobia and transphobia and protecting and advancing LGBT human rights.

Contact: Gay Straight Alliance
www.gsa.org.rs

Men's Crisis Centre

Men's Crisis Centre, a civil society organisation engaged in preventing and eradicating violent behaviour patterns and anger management, has been established in Belgrade to assist violent men in overcoming crisis situations in intimate relationships. The founders of Centre are psychotherapists with specialist training in social protection.

Contact: Men's Crisis Centre
www.kriznicentrazamuskarce.org

Gender Barometer 2012 Results

In Serbia, family is valued highest and regarded as more important than work by both men and women, according to the survey Gender Barometer 2012. Among the male respondents, 83% are of the view that domestic violence should be punished severely, while 71% of the men and 58% of the

women believe that it must be clear who the head of the family is.

Women are more affected by unemployment – they are almost three times as likely to be dependent and 20 times as likely to be homemakers as men.

Contact: Gender Barometer
www.gb.rs

Jobs for Some 8,000 Persons

The National Employment Service concluded co-funding agreements for 2013 Local Action Plans/Employment totalling RSD 1.3 billion with 119 local governments.

These agreements will allow employment for 8,000 unemployed persons in all the regions.

Various programmes will be funded from LAP/E in 2013: subsidies to employers for new employment, professional internship programme, acquisition of practical knowledge programme, and subsidies for self-employment – RSD 252,8 million.

The agreements were concluded on the basis of the decision of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy on approval of co-funding. Information: National Employment Service www.nzs.gov.rs

Public Discussion on Draft Law on Cooperatives Ends

The Ministry of Finance and Economy closed the public discussion on the Draft Law on Cooperatives. At the initiative of cooperatives and cooperative alliances, the Ministry developed the Draft Law on Cooperative that will regulate this area in a modern way.

According to the 2009 data, 2,124 cooperatives were registered. The public discussion was held in the period 28 March 11 April in Belgrade and Novi Sad. The integral version of the Draft Law is available on the website of the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

Information: Ministry of Finance and Economy tel. 011 36 13 245, www.mfp.gov.rs

Guide for Starting a Social Enterprise Published

The organisation Smart kolektiv and Erste Bank have presented the first Guide for Starting Social Enterprises.

The Guide was developed by experts and professionals from different companies and institutions, as well as from nine social enterprises in Serbia.

The Guide can be downloaded for free on the Facebook page of Smart kolektiv (facebook.com/smart.kolektiv) by all who present their business ideas.

Development of the Guide was supported by the US Agency for International Development and Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC).

Contact: Smart kolektiv www.smartkolektiv.org

Projects from BMS Competition Selected

Following the Call of the Business of Youth Serbia (BMS) in Kraljevo, Subotica, Nis and Novi Sad organised in March, Erste bank will fund nine best business plans.

BMS is a programme of support of young entrepreneurs in starting and development their own businesses. It was launched by Smart kolektiv, Erste bank, Forum of Business Leaders, the National Employment Service and USAID.

Information: Erste bank, http://www.erstebank.rs/rs/Mala_preduzeca_i_preduzetnici/Superstep

First German-Serbian Career Fair

The delegation of German economy in Serbia and the German-Serbian Economic Association organised the first German – Serbian career fair 16 – 17 May.

The idea was to offer an opportunity to the young, educated people interested in internship, advancement of their careers and business skills to make a direct contact with the renowned German and domestic employers and institutions.

Information: Career Fair, www.careerfair.rs

MFP Support to Entrepreneurs and Cooperatives

The Ministry of Finance and Economy published a Public Call for Grants within the Programme of support to innovative, fast-growing SMEs, implemented in cooperation with the National Regional Development Agency and the network of licenced regional development agencies. RSD 40 million have been allocated for implementation of this Programme. The deadline for applications expired on 07 May.

Within the framework of the Programme of support to the activities of associations for promotion of development of entrepreneurship in 2013, a Call for grants for promotion of positive attitudes to entrepreneurship of youth, women and vulnerable groups was published. The deadline for applications expired on 07 June.

Information: Ministry of Finance and Economy tel. 011 36 13 245, www.mfp.gov.rs

Internet Portal Entrepreneurial Service for Business Start-ups Launched

The National Agency for Regional Development launched an information web portal Entrepreneurial Service for all citizens interested in starting their own business or developing and advancing their operations.

The Entrepreneurial Service contains basic information, support and services related to business operations, numerous useful online tools, publications and brochures, the data base of business services providers.

The web portal creation was supported by the EU funded Project of Improvement of Innovativity and Competitiveness of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

Information: National Agency for Regional Development, www.narr.gov.rs www.preduzetnickiservis.rs

Competition in Social Entrepreneurship Finishes

The team of the Kursumlija Grammar School is the winner of the national competition in social entrepreneurship.

Eleven teams competed from secondary schools in Leskovac, Futog, Aleksinac, Trstenik, Kursumlija, Belgrade, Kraljevo and Nis.

All the participants are part of the EU Social Entrepreneurship Programme involving Serbia and 10 other countries and supported by the companies InPhone and Ferd. The Programme is implemented in cooperation with the Junior Achievement Office – Young Enterprise Europe.

The competition was supported by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction UNit, Hemofarm Foundation and Banka Intesa.

Information: Junior Achievement in Serbia tel. 011 21 83 581, www.ja-serbia.org

Grants for SMEs

The National Agency for Regional Development announced a public call for grants within the framework of the Programme of Support to Competitiveness of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Entrepreneurs and Cooperatives in 2013.

The key objective of the programme is enhancing competitiveness through alignment of their operations with international business standards.

The deadline for applications expired on 10 June.

Contact: National Agency for Regional Development tel. 019 44 53 11, 011 20 60 856 www.narr.gov.rs

Mentoring for 100 Companies

The National Agency for Regional Development invited entrepreneurs and companies to apply for the free mentoring programme.

Mentoring is a process of support to companies and entrepreneurs who find themselves at decisive moments for future development or survival.

Mentoring is offered to 100 newly – established and existing SMEs and the call is open until 17 June.

The National Agency for Regional Development standardised mentoring as a service under the umbrella of the project „Institutionalisation of mentoring as a service for SMEs“ funded by the Government of Japan through Japanese Agency for International Cooperation – JICA. Contact: National Agency for Regional Development tel. 011 20 60 815, www.narr.gov.rs

Crediting of Business Start-ups

The National Agency for Regional Development and the Ministry of Finance and Economy are participating in implementation of the Programme of Loans to Business Start-Ups in the part related to non-pecuniary support, enabling provision of a unified package of non-pecuniary and pecuniary support to future entrepreneurs.

The Agency developed a standardised model of professional support, collection and registration of loan applications, implemented within the network of regional development agencies.

Information: National Agency for Regional Development www.narr.gov.rs

Call for Proposals for Support to Business Start Ups Who Are Going to Return to Their Birth Place

The National Agency for Regional Development and the Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas invited young entrepreneurs to apply for support for business start-ups in their birth place within the framework of the „Programme of Support to Business Start-Ups who are Going to Return to their Birth Place“.

The support includes free training for business start-ups, grants and free mentoring.

The deadline for applications expired on 14 June.

Contact: National Agency for Regional Development www.narr.gov.rs Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas www.kornrp.gov.rs

Information on Opening a Separate Subaccount for CSOs

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society of the Government of Serbia published replies of the Treasury related to interpretation of regulations of the Law on the Budget System – obligation to register into the Treasury Registry and to open a separate account for CSOs.

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society forwarded numerous questions posed by CSOs about the changes of the Law on Amendments of the Law on the Budget System that related to the obligation to register in the Register of Public Proceeds at the Treasury.

Contact: Office for Cooperation with Civil Society
tel. 011 311 38 95, www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs

USAID: Call for Assistance to CSOs

USAID project „Judiciary Reform and Responsible Government” published the fourth call for grants.

The funds are disbursed to the civil society organisations for the projects related to the rule of law, judiciary reform, lines of accountability /observance of rights, promotion of good governance and official integrity, reducing corruption, supervision of political party funding and promotion of alignment with the EU standards.

Contact: USAID, tel. 011 30 64 675
<http://serbia.usaid.gov/pocetna.88.html>

TACSO Publishes a Call for Csos

TACSO published a call to the interested organisations to provide their comments on the latest version of Guidelines for Support to CSOs in the EU Candidate States.

The document was uploaded to the webpage of TACSO, and the civil society organisations may send their comments by 14 June.

Contact: TACSO, www.tasco.org, <http://www.tasco.org/news/>

Call for Grants in the Field of Culture

Erste Bank a.d. Novi Sad and the Balkan Civic Initiatives Fund (BCIF) opened the new call „Centrifuga” for grants in the field of culture. The goal is a decentralization of cultural and creative content and the activation of youth. Youth organizations and non-profit groups of youth from 40 towns were able to apply until May 25 for grants totaling 400,000 RSD, provided by Erste Bank.

As of this year, „Centrifuga” will have an additional program, called „Centrifuga+”. The grant totaling 500,000 RSD targets projects from at least two towns tackling urban planning of local communities, use of public space and networking with groups from other towns.

Erste Bank has supported 42 projects from 25 towns over the past 6 years, with more than 200,000 EUR.

Information: Erste Bank, tel. 2015010, www.superste.net

B92 and „Sunce Marinkovic” Awarded European Award for CSR

European awards for corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Serbia were presented to B92 for the campaign „Battle for Babies”, in the category of big companies. In the category of SMEs, the award was presented to the company „Sunce Marinkovic” for the project „Sun for a Brighter Future”.

The best partnership initiatives implemented in cooperation with the public or civil sector over the last 5 years were awarded.

The idea of the European Award for CSR Partnership is to promote the best national examples of partnership initiatives throughout Europe and to improve visibility of best CSR practices. The call is implemented by international organisations CSR Europe and Business in Community; partners in Serbia being Smart kolektiv and Forum of Business Leaders.

Contact: Forum of Business Leaders of Serbia
tel. 011 2 659 700, www.fpl.rs

The Embassy of Canada: call for small project proposals

The Embassy of Canada to Serbia has launched a call for small project proposals enhancing democratic, economic, cultural and social life.

This year, preference will be given to projects promoting human rights, with a focus on improving the position of marginalised groups, sustained democratic development at all levels of society, good governance in local institutions, as well as projects on citizen engagement and women's self-employment.

Gender equality is an objective of the programme.

The maximum grant per project is CAD 30,000, and the application deadline is 1 July 2013.

Contact: Canada Fund for Serbia, www.crnps.org.rs

Immediate Assistance to NGOs

The Swiss Cooperation Office in Serbia launched a call for small-scale projects.

Small-scale projects ensure immediate assistance to non-governmental organisations, citizens' associations and state institutions in implementing projects that require urgent support.

To date, the Swiss Cooperation Office ensured implementation of more than 200 small-scale projects totalling some SF 2.2 million. The call expired on 31 May.

Contact: Swiss Cooperation Office in Serbia, tel. 011 32 87 021

<http://www.swiss-cooperation.admin.ch/serbia/sr/Home>

Funds for Small-Scale NGO Projects Outside Belgrade

The Small Grants Programme of the Democratic Commission of the US Embassy is providing grants for the projects supporting democracy and development of democratic institutions in the Republic of Serbia.

Maximum amount per project is USD 24,000. In order to finance more projects, advantage shall be given to the applicants requesting smaller sums.

The grants target NGOs and other non-profit organisations Serbia wide, except from the territory of Belgrade.

Contact: US Embassy in Serbia

<http://serbia.usembassy.gov/index.html>

Call for Proposals „Places in the Heart”

The Balkan Civic Initiatives Fund, Erste bank and TACSO published a call for award of the „Places in the Heart”, the most positive project of civic initiatives and the best local partnership in 2012. The award „Places in the Heart” are awarded for the seventh time to the civil society organisations that implemented the projects with the most positive impacts in their local communities.

The Call expired on 6 June.

Contact: Balkan Civic Initiatives Fund (BCIF), tel. 011 32 88 723

www.bcif.org

Call for Proposals for Youth Volunteering Actions

NGO Civic Initiatives, being a resource centre for the territory of the City of Belgrade, published a call „Youth Rule” for funding youth volunteering actions from the territory of the city of Belgrade.

The call is implemented with the sup-

port of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the deadline for applications expired on 11 June.

Contact: Civic Initiatives

tel. 011 26 23 980,

www.gradjanske.org

Campaign „One in a Million” Launched

Foundation Ana and Vlade Divac launched a campaign „One in a Million”, aiming to motivate people in Serbia and in the world to help resolve long-standing social problems. The key idea of the campaign is for a million persons to donate one euro per month/12 euros per year throughout the years. All the funds raised in the campaign will be invested into improvement of the conditions of education of children through procurement of equipment and rehabilitation of primary schools.

Contact: Foundation Ana and Vlade Divac, tel. 011 39 11 891 www.divac.org.rs

www.milionsrba.com

BCIF: Best „Green Ideas” Selected

Balkan Civic Initiatives Fund (BCIF), in partnership with Rockefeller Brothers Fund and Erste Bank, organised for the first time in Serbia a National Forum for „Green Ideas”. The aim was to stimulate individuals, associations and small businesses to develop innovative, entrepreneurial ideas based on the principles of sustainable development.

The award winning ideas are: Hostel Republik (Uzice), Zoran Simovic (Raska) and Solar Ice d.o.o. (Subotica). They will be presented at the Regional Forum of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund that the Western Balkans states will also participate in.

Information: Balkan Civic Initiatives Fund (BCIF), tel. 011 32 88 723, www.bcif.org

UNICREDIT BANK: No Commission for Humanitarian Accounts

Joining humanitarian initiatives, Unikredit bank cancelled all commissions on donations from the country and abroad and the costs of accounts maintenance. The procedure for opening donations account was simplified.

Contact: UniCredit Bank, www.unicreditbank.rs

NEC: Advancing the Role of ICT in Education

The National Education Council (NEC) has launched the development of Guidelines on Advancing the Role of Information and Communication Technologies in Education, aimed at integrating ICT in the education system with a view to ensuring high-quality education for all.

The NEC has invited interested institutions and individuals to take part in the public review of Draft Guidelines and provide their observations, proposals and suggestions in order to encourage dialogue, contribute to understand-

ing the role of ICT and ensure support for Council decisions, as well as prepare documents that would contribute to formulating education policy in this area.

Public review of the proposed Draft Guidelines will take place between 10 and 30 June 2013, a panel discussion will be organised by the National Education Council in Belgrade on 20 June 2013 and, following the conclusion of the review process, the NEC will prepare a report. More information available at: www.nps.gov.rs

Call for Proposals on Information Society Development in 2013

The Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications has launched the first call for proposals for the award of funding to programmes in the sphere of information society development in 2013. Support will be provided for IT and mathematics competitions, children's safety online, digitizing cultural heritage, digital classroom work, advancing the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, through ICT.

The application deadline is 8 July 2013.

More information available at: mtt.gov.rs

Action Plan for Open Government Partnership

At the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign and Domestic Trade and Telecommunications, the Government adopted an Action Plan for Open Administration supported by ICT on 25 April. This is within the framework of Serbia's accession to the 2013 Open Government Partnership.

The Action Plan defines the main objectives and guidelines for improvement of public administration and enhancement of its transparency.

One of the important items in the Action Plan is establishment of mechanisms of cooperation between the civil society and NGOs with the state in the process of development of open government.

Open Government Partnership (OGP) is the initiative aimed at ensuring support and increased engagement of governments.

Contact: Ministry of Foreign and Domestic Trade and Telecommunications
tel. 011 31 13 432, www.mtt.gov.rs

"Digital Lecture 2012/2013"

Competition "Digital Lecture 2012/2013"

The Ministry of Foreign and Domestic Trade and Communications launched a call for proposals „Digital lecture 2012/2013“ targeting teachers in primary schools who use ICT in their teaching.

The call received 233 applications, 51 of which is preselected for awards and 229 for the Electronic Booklet.

The objective of the call is to promote efficient and diversified use of ICT in teaching. The works are divided into three categories depending on the subjects (mathematics, IT, computers and technical education, social sciences and sports, natural sciences). The Ministry shall award 16 best works in each of the categories.

The list of works proposed for awards may be accessed at: <http://mtt.gov.rs/vesti/preliminarna-lista-ran-giranjia-i-bodovanja-digitalni-cas-2013/>

Information: Ministry of Foreign and Domestic Trade and Telecommunications
tel. 011 31 13 432, www.mtt.gov.rs

Government of Serbia Adopts Draft Laws in the Domain of Education

The Government of Serbia adopted draft laws in the sector of education on 4 June. These are to contribute to raising the quality and accessibility of education. The following regulations were endorsed: Draft Law on Primary Education, Draft Law on Secondary Education, Draft Law on Adult Education and the Draft Amendments of the Law on Basics of Education.

The Draft Law on Adult Education governs the area of adult education in the context of life-long learning and, for the first time, defines informal education. The adopted Draft Law will allow acquisition of qualifications throughout one's life and create conditions for recognition of qualifications acquired in informal learning.

Contact: Government of Serbia, www.srbija.gov.rs

One Stop Shop Was Opened in Leskovac

A one stop shop for support to business and issuance of building permits was opened in Leskovac.

The aim of the new municipal office is to accelerate the process of issuance of business permits allowing the investors to obtain all information and documents required for investments, foundation of businesses and construction in one spot, easily and expediently.

Establishment of a one stop shop was funded by the EU and the Government of Switzerland through the Programme of EU Partnership with Municipalities – EU Progress aimed to support social and economic development of 25 municipalities in the South and Southwest Serbia.

Contact: Programme of European Partnership with Municipalities – EU Progress
tel. 027 333125, www.euprogres.org

Students in Professional Internship

A total of 268 students of the final years and graduates started a 4-month internship with support of mentors on 20 May.

The programme of university internship involves 22 city companies, 12 organisational units of the City Administration, 10 Belgrade municipalities and 6 institutions of culture. The University of Belgrade and the City of Belgrade defined implementation of this programme once a year by signing a protocol on cooperation in the area of organizing and implementing university internship.

Contact: Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling, www.razvojkarijere.bg.ac.rs

GIZ: Municipalities Awarded for Results in Tax Collection

Seeking to contribute to motivating municipalities for enhanced tax collection, German International Cooperation (GIZ) is launching a project of support to municipalities in enhanced property tax collection and use of its own resources for development of these communities.

In cooperation with the Government of Switzerland, Swiss Cooperation Agency in Serbia and the republican institutions, GIZ will estab-

lish a stimulation fund amounting to some SF 1 million for municipalities that improve their performances in use of their own resources towards development.

The proceeds awarded are non-refundable and the municipalities may use it for developmental purposes, in line with their needs.

Contact: GIZ Serbia, tel. 011 36 98 128

www.giz.de

Increased Participation of Elderly in Local Communities

„Dialogue of CSOs in the Western Balkans“ is an IPA project implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

The project is focused on motivating the elderly to take part in the activities of local communities and resolution of problems that affect them.

In Serbia, the Red Cross of Serbia and the network HumanaS initiated organizing of 48 self-help groups involving 462 elderly persons. Persons aged 65+ are active in these groups.

The project was supported by the European Commission and AGE UK.

Contact: Red Cross of Serbia
tel. 011 30 32 125, www.redcross.org.rs

Regional Housing Programme

The Assembly of Donors of the Regional Housing Programme Fund approved EUR 1,993,000 for the project „Procurement of 70 prefabricated houses and 125 construction material kits for 195 families“ proposed by Serbia.

The objective of the Programme is to provide durable housing solutions for some 27,000 households – 74,000 most vulnerable refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

The value of the Programme to last more than 5 years should be EUR 584 million. The RHP is supported by the EC, USA, UNHCR, OSCE and the Council of Europe Development Bank.

Source: www.evropa.gov.rs

CALENDAR of Important Dates

JUNE

15	World Food Day
20	World Refugee Day
21	World Peace Day
26	International Day for Support to Victims of Violence and International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

JULY

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