



Government of the  
Republic of Serbia

DECEMBER 2010

# 5<sup>th</sup> NEWS LETTER

## ON SOCIAL INCLUSION 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 has launched active participation in the social inclusion process to improve the quality of life its citizens. The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has been established in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, assisting the Government and line ministries to develop and implement social inclusion and poverty reduction policies in a coordinated and effective manner.*

### NEVENA PETRUŠIĆ PHD, EQUALITY COMMISSIONER

## Protection from Discrimination with a View to Social Inclusion

Observing the principle of equality among people is an ethical imperative of any democratic society and any state based on the rule of law.

The antidiscrimination principle is contained in all international human rights instruments and in constitutions of almost all countries worldwide.

In modern society, antidiscrimination is viewed as a key step towards ensuring equal opportunities for all.

The principle of equality among people is one of the crucial values of the constitutional and legal order of the Republic of Serbia, which has built unified and comprehensive antidiscrimination legislation in recent years.

The Anti-discrimination Law was adopted in 2009; it prohibits any form of discrimination on any grounds, regulates judicial protection from discrimination and foresees the introduction of the Equality Commissioner as an autonomous and independent public authority competent to act in discrimination cases and to promote the safeguarding of equality.

Specific antidiscrimination laws – the Law on Gender Equality (2009) and the Law on the Prevention of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (2006) – foresee specific measures towards achieving gender equality, improving the status of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion.

Despite positive developments in recent years, Serbian society is still one in which discrimination is still widespread.

Research indicates that discrimination most often affects the Roma, the poor, persons with physical or mental disabilities, the elderly, women and persons belonging to sexual minorities.

Discrimination is manifested in almost all domains of social relations, in particular in the sphere of labor and employment.

Building an inclusive society requires, amongst other things, persistent combat against all forms of direct and indirect discrimination, which entails strict enforcement of antidiscrimination legislation and efficient operation of the judiciary and the Equality Commissioner.

In parallel, it is necessary to work in a systematic manner towards overcoming prejudice and stereotypes, provide adequate assistance and support to discrimination victims and take specific measures to strengthen particularly vulnerable, marginalized and discriminated groups in society.

This is the path towards inclusive and truly equal society, in which all its citizens will be given equal opportunities to develop their potentials and to participate equally, actively and productively in all spheres of social life.

News  
from the  
EU

- **Serbia's Application for EU Membership Forwarded**
- **EU Disability Strategy Adopted**
- **EC Evaluation in the Annual Progress Report for Serbia**

page  
3

**The Primary  
Homeless  
to be Covered  
by the Census  
for the First Time**

Page 2

**More Funding for  
Local Governments  
in 2011**

Page 5

**Municipalities' Role  
in Rural  
Development**

Page 5

**Discussion on Draft  
Law on Cooperatives**

Page 7

### MUHAMMAD YUNUS, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE AND FATHER OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Social Enterprise – a Means of Solving Problems

Social entrepreneurship is a concept of doing business to solve a problem, rather than to make money. Making money has completely blinded us – we are not really blind, but we see the world through a pair of glasses that allow us to see enlarging profit as the only imperative. The whole world is looking for opportunities to make money. I said, "If I could remove those glasses for just a short while and put on social entrepreneurship glasses, glasses that show us how to solve real problems, the world would be so beautiful and I would have the energy and strength to solve any problem." When I looked at this problem, I realized for the first time that I had the power to solve it. Any individual can do that – you do not need a large company for it. We have the power, in each of us lies creativity for solving problems. We solve them by creating social enterprises.

When I started lending money to others, I did not have a clear idea of what it would be like. I was highly critical of the banking society. I started saying that banks completely refused women. And I realized that, if I was to have women in our bank, I had to work dif-

ferently. A bank should reach out to people – it should come to a woman's door, rather than the other way round.

Another commitment I made was to ensure one half of our bank's borrowers would be women. At first, we thought that women would be very happy to take the money offered to them, but they were not.

When a woman says, "I do not need that money, because I have never even touched money," it is not her true voice. It is the voice of history. It is her fear speaking, not her personality. It is our job to go back to those women over and over, so that, one day, one of them would say, "Maybe I should try, maybe I should get a loan and find out..." It was the beginning we waited for.

It took six years to achieve the 50:50 ratio. I never gave up, and I finally made it – half of all borrowers in my program were women. Then something new came as a result of that experience: the money that the woman brought to the family had a much more positive impact on the circumstances of the family than the money that the man brought.

Continued on page 5

## SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT

**Invitation to Provide Comment on the Draft First National Report of the Republic of Serbia on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2008–2010**

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU) has invited interested institutions and organizations to provide comments on the Draft First National Report of the Republic of Serbia on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2008–2010, with a view to reaching a national consensus on the main findings and priority streams of action in the forthcoming period, presented in the Report. The consultation process will involve representatives of Government institutions, local governments, civil society, social partners, independent experts, scientific and international institutions and the general public.

The text of the Draft First National Report of the Republic of Serbia on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction covers an overview of the legal, strategic and institutional frameworks relevant to social inclusion and poverty reduction processes, an analysis of the current situation in relevant fields, an overview of implemented measures, conclusions, and challenges and main development streams for the forthcoming period. The final version of the Report will be forwarded to the Government for adoption.

The development of the Report is a joint activity of line ministries and other executive authorities, the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, local governments, civil society organizations, international partners, science and research institutions, social partners and the expert community.

The Draft Report and the Comments Form are available for download at [www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs).

Comments should be sent by January 15, 2011.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit

Phone: 011 311 4605, [www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs)

## GOVERNMENT OF SERBIA

**The Government of Serbia Adopted the Draft Law on Social Welfare**

The draft law provides for mechanisms for extending assistance for the poor through higher transfer amounts and a higher number of beneficiaries, in particular among multi-member households and those with disabled members.

The Law regulates the rights, types of services, institutions and service providers, beneficiary groups, quality control mechanisms, establishment and financing competencies.

The Law envisages the introduction of the social protection chamber, license of professionals and service providers, institutions of public procurement, reformulation of control functions, supervision and inspection.

New solutions should provide for a system which shall recognize the minimum standards in service provision, equal treatment of state and other service providers and a shift of focus from residential to alternative, out-of-institution care.

Earmarked transfers from the budget of the Republic of Serbia are envisaged for financing services in the domain of local governments, namely in underdeveloped municipalities, in municipalities owning institutions for residential care and financing innovative services.

Contact: Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, tel: 011 361 6263

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

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE: Parliaments of the Region Discussed Combating Poverty**

A regional conference entitled "Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Context of European Integration: the Role of National Parliaments" was held in Belgrade, at the House of the National Assembly, on October 12, 2010.

The conference topic was the role of national parliaments in combating poverty and social exclusion in the context of European integration.

At the conference, representatives of parliaments of South-East Europe agreed to strengthen regional cooperation in combating poverty and social exclusion, with a view to contributing to the harmonization of national laws with the laws of the European Union (EU) in the sphere of social inclusion and fighting poverty.

The conference was a forum for exchanging good practices and discussion on possible joint initiatives aimed at accelerating EU integration and meeting the relevant Copenhagen and Madrid criteria.

The regional conference on the role of national parliaments in combating poverty and social exclusion was organized by the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Contact: National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, [www.parlament.gov.rs](http://www.parlament.gov.rs)  
Regional Cooperation Council, [www.rcc.int](http://www.rcc.int)

**Assistance to Kraljevo Earthquake Victims**

The Ministry of Finance has created a designated account for donations for Kraljevo earthquake victims, and all three mobile operators have enabled donations via text messages, to help remedy the consequences of the Kraljevo earthquake. The designated humanitarian aid number 1003 applies to all mobile networks, and a text message is worth 50 dinars (plus VAT).

The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society has supported the project of [www.jazakraljevo.rs](http://www.jazakraljevo.rs), a site launched by local internet enthusiasts aiming to facilitate fast and simple reporting of problems and lodging requests for assistance. The site also aims to enable easier recording, checking and searching of data on damaged structures and critical areas in need of help.

UNHCR, the first humanitarian agency that responded to requests for assistance to earthquake victims, has so far provided 1,420 blankets, 900 mattresses, 159 tents, 80 tent heaters, 500 tarpaulin sheets, sleeping bags and other items to the people of Kraljevo.

**MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL POLICY: Call for Proposals for the Poorest Municipalities**

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy announced a call for proposals for designing or developing social welfare programs and assistance programs in local governments.

The program includes 400 million dinars of assistance to the poorest municipalities intended for the development of social services and assistance, 220 million dinars for soup kitchens, 130 million dinars for the procurement of food packets and hygiene kits and 100 million dinars for families and individuals struggling to survive.

The deadline for applications was December 1, 2010.

Contact: Ministry of Labor and Social Policy

Phone: 011 3112 916, [www.minrzs.gov.rs](http://www.minrzs.gov.rs)

**RSO: The Primary Homeless to be Covered by the Census for the First Time**

In the population census to be conducted from April 1-15, 2011, the Republic Statistical Office (RSO) will collect data on persons known as the primary homeless. Unlike the secondary homeless, who live in makeshift accommodation such as huts, basements, railway cars or other improvised structures, the primary homeless are those without permanent or temporary address and live in streets, parks, under bridges and the like.

RSO will conduct the census of the primary homeless in cooperation with national and province social welfare institutes, through which it will obtain addresses of drop-in centers, shelters and other facilities for short-term stay of children and adults; following this, they will develop a detailed plan of census activities together with social welfare institutes.

The secondary homeless will be covered by the regular census.

Following the census, RSO will have data on the numbers of the primary and secondary homeless, their breakdown by age and sex, education attainment, whether they have any long-term health problems, literacy, etc.

Contact: Republic Statistical Office, [www.stat.gov.rs](http://www.stat.gov.rs)

**Eighth Review of National and Foreign Funding Opportunities**

Civic Initiatives, together with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit and Serbian European Integration Office, are preparing the eight amended issue of the Review of Potential Domestic and Foreign Funding Opportunities, intended for NGOs, Local Governments, SME and Entrepreneurs in Serbia.

The Review is a compilation of information on available funding from international and domestic donors and state institutions and thus provides awareness of funds for various project activities available to non-governmental organizations, municipalities, small and medium enterprises, sole traders and individuals. The electronic version of the Review will be available on the websites of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit and Civic Initiatives by the end of December 2010.

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

## EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

### Serbia's Application for EU Membership Forwarded

The Council of Ministers of the European Union has decided by consensus to refer Serbia's application for EU membership to the European Commission for review. A positive opinion of the European Commission is a requirement for launching negotiations on Serbia's accession to the EU.

Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration Božidar Djelić has stated that the European Commission will adopt the opinion on the application in the second half of 2011 and highlighted that Serbia's aim is to be granted not only the candidate status, but also an opportunity to launch accession negotiations immediately after obtaining this status.

Serbia is working intensively on the answers to the European Commission Questionnaire. On the basis of answers received, the European

Commission will draft an opinion on whether the country is ready to be granted the candidate status and set a tentative date for accession negotiations, which will be decided by EU Member States by consensus.

Based on an assessment of Serbia's administrative capacities, the European Commission set February 1st, 2011 as the deadline for receiving the answers.

The work on preparing the answers started with a meeting that the Serbian European Integration Office organized with line ministries. The civil society has also been invited to contribute to drafting the answers to the Questionnaire.

Contact: the Government of the Republic of Serbia, tel.: 011 3617 719, [www.srbija.gov.rs](http://www.srbija.gov.rs)

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION European Platform against Poverty

The European Commission adopted the European Platform against Poverty on December 16, 2010, as one of the seven initiatives of the European Union envisaged in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

One of the main political goals of the Strategy is to reduce the number of poor European citizens by 20 million in the next ten years.

According to the official statistical data, more than 100 million citizens of the European Union is exposed to the risk of poverty or social exclusion.

The document is available at:

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

### Serbia Fulfilled 121% of the Program of Integration into the EU

The performance against the National Programme for Integration of Serbia into the EU (NPI) for the period of July–September amounted to 121%, according to the Amended Report of the Serbian European Integration Office.

The high performance rate resulted from the fact that, in addition to the legislative work planned for this quarter, the Government also fulfilled a number of pending commitments from earlier quarters and a number of commitments planned for the coming quarters.

Among the ministries and institutions, the best performers were the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development and the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

From July 2008 to September 2010, 78% of the National Programme was fulfilled, since 446 pieces of legislation, of the planned 571, were adopted. The Programme foresees passage of 166 laws, of which 136 (84%) were passed, and 405 bylaws, of which 310 (77%) were adopted.

Contact: Serbian European Integration Office  
Phone: 011 30 61 101, [www.seio.gov.rs](http://www.seio.gov.rs)

### EC Evaluation in the Annual Progress Report for Serbia

The European Commission published its Annual Progress Report for Serbia for 2010, in which it acknowledged progress in certain areas and identified backlogs in a number of areas requiring further attention.

The report commended the establishment of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, the Government's Working Group on Social Inclusion and the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society; however, it was assessed that the Office was not operational yet and that the cooperation between public authorities and civil society still differed on a case-by-case basis.

The passage of the Law on Gender Equality met with approval, as did the progress in strengthening the system for the protection of children suffering abuse or negligence, inclusive education and improving the status of the Roma national minority.

Amongst other things, the Commission advised the Serbian authorities that it was necessary to ensure protection of women and children from all forms of violence, adopt new measures for combating all forms of discrimination and develop an overarching strategy covering all education levels, including life-long learning.

Contact: Serbian European Integration Office, tel.: 011 30 61 101  
[www.seio.gov.rs](http://www.seio.gov.rs)

### EC: EU Disability Strategy Adopted

The European Commission has adopted the Disability Strategy for the next decade, aimed at strengthening persons with disabilities to realize the full extent of their rights and benefit from participation in Europe's society and economy.

The European Disability Strategy 2010–2020: a Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-free Europe defines activities at the EU level complementing activities taken at the national level and mechanisms required for the implementation of the UN Convention at the EU level.

The Commission has identified eight main areas for action: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health and external action.

These areas were selected on the basis of their potential to contribute to the overall objectives of the Strategy and of the UN Convention, the related policy documents from EU institutions and the Council of Europe, as well as the results of the EU Disability Action Plan 2003–2010, and a consultation of the Member States, stakeholders and the general public.

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

## EU DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA:

### New EU Call for Proposals Supports the Civil Society

Under the Support to Civil Society Project, the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia launched the call for proposals enabling grants to the civil society organizations whose project proposals are aimed at building social cohesion and overcoming discrimination in Serbian society by promoting tolerance and cultural diversity, as well as the active civil society participation in the socio-economic development.

Funding is provided from IPA 2009 and IPA 2010 and grants awarded to selected projects will be between EUR 50,000 and EUR

150,000, while the duration of supported projects is between six and twelve months.

The call for proposals is open for applications of the civil society organizations in broader sense, in partnership with other civil society organizations from of Serbia, EU Member States or countries of the region, cultural and educational institutions or local governments.

The call for proposals is open until March 10, 2011, and the tender documentation is available on the websites of the EU Delegation to Serbia [www.europa.rs](http://www.europa.rs) and the project [www.civilnodrustvo.rs](http://www.civilnodrustvo.rs).

### CSO Guide to European Networks

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, together with the Serbian European Integration Office and the TACSO Serbia office, developed the CSO Guide to European Networks. This is the first publication of the kind prepared in Serbian for the general public with the aim of providing the basic information and an overview of various European networks of civil society organizations and their programs.

The Guide should contribute to raising the various Serbian stakeholders' awareness of potential and relevant partners from the EU and of resources available for future cooperation.

In addition to help in identifying relevant European networks, the Guide should also provide support to local governments, civil society organizations, local small and medium-sized enterprises, the media, institutions and other stakeholders in using EU funds more effectively.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, tel.: 011 311 4605  
[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs)

### EU Ministers Reject Call to Extend Maternity Leave

European Union ministers of labor, employment and social affairs have rejected the proposal by the European Parliament to extend the minimum maternity leave from 14 to 20 weeks on full pay at the EU level. The European Parliament adopted this proposal in October, despite warnings by UK politicians and the European Commission that there was little chance of Member States endorsing it, in view of the current saving measures in force as a result of the financial crisis.

## PISA SURVEY

**Serbian Students Lagging Behind European Peers by One School Year**

Serbian first-year secondary school students lag behind their peers from most European countries by a whole school year, according to PISA 2009 test results. In the Programme for International Student Assessment with 74 participating countries (34 OECD members and 40 partner countries), Serbia was ranked 43rd, and Serbian students' results were 51 points below the OECD countries' average. On the other hand, Serbian students achieved an improvement of about 40 points on average (against PISA 2006), which corresponds to the effect of one year of schooling in OECD countries.

Serbian students scored 442 points in both reading literacy and mathematical literacy, and 443 points in scientific literacy.

In reading, 33% of the students are functionally illiterate, in science – 35.4%, and in mathematics – 41.6%.

Serbia achieved the most progress in reading literacy, where the share of the functionally illiterate was reduced by 19 percentage points (from 67% to 48%), while in mathematical and scientific literacy, the progress amounted to 2–3%.

The reading literacy score of Serbian students was higher by 41 points compared to

2006, which is at the same time the greatest improvement recorded by any country between two PISA surveys.

On the scales of both mathematical and scientific literacy, progress achieved in comparison to 2006 results was seven points. Reading and mathematical literacy of Serbian students are about 50 lower than in OECD countries, which corresponds to the effect of slightly more than one year of schooling in OECD countries. The least progress was made in terms of scientific literacy. In this area, Serbia lags behind OECD countries by one and a half school years.

The most significant data from PISA tests pertain to reading literacy as the basis for other forms of literacy, as well as to the result that indicates a high level of equity of our educational system.

PISA survey showed once more that the level of gender equality in Serbia was above that in the region. Female students scored better in reading literacy, whereas males scored better in mathematical literacy, which corresponds to the gap in OECD countries.

Similarly to OECD countries, there are no gender differences in Serbia in terms of scientific

literacy levels of boys and girls. Compared to other countries in the region, the situation in Serbia is more favorable.

Students' socio-economic status accounts for about 10% of the differences in reading literacy levels among students. This is lower than in OECD countries and countries in the region.

PISA is the largest international survey in the field of education, identifying the extent to which students, upon completion of compulsory education, have acquired knowledge and skills of importance for success in their professional and personal lives. Students are expected to apply their knowledge to various relevant out-of-school situations, rather than only regurgitate information.

In PISA surveys, literacy is tested in three domains: mathematics, reading and science. Surveys are organized by OECD; since 1993, have been conducted at three-year intervals, and Serbia joined in 2003. A total of 178 schools and about 5,000 students participated in the 2009 survey.

Contact and information: Ministry of Education, tel.: 011 36 16 489, [www.mp.gov.rs](http://www.mp.gov.rs)

**Roma Children in Serbia to be Covered by Preschool Program**

According to the UNICEF report "The State of the World's Children 2007", Roma children's enrollment rate in preschool institutions was about 4%.

Through intensive cooperation with the Roma Education Fund (REF), UNICEF and OSCE in the spring of 2010, a campaign was launched to promote the enrollment of Roma children in the Preschool Program and in the first grade of primary education. A network of offices of the Ministry of Education and other agencies joined the campaign, focusing on the enrollment procedures (schools and preschool institutions, health centers, social work centers).

The overall goal of this international Consortium is to make preschool education services available to all Roma children in Serbia. REF and its partners are working towards improving the implementation of new policies and legislation at the local level to ensure accessibility of the preschool program to all children and to inform the Roma community more thoroughly on new education legislation and on the Antidiscrimination Law.

**Roma Freshmen at the University of Novi Sad**

Through assistance of the Roma Integration Council and the Roma Inclusion Office, 44 Roma students have enrolled the first year of studies at the University of Novi Sad in this academic year. For those studying away from their usual place of residence, accommodation in student dormitories is provided.

In addition to the enrolled freshmen, there are also five applicants for doctoral dissertations at the University of Novi Sad, as well as five applicants for master programs at public and five at private faculties.

The program is realized through the implementation of affirmative measures in Roma education and in coordination with the Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

Contact: Roma Education Center, [www.ec-roma.org.rs](http://www.ec-roma.org.rs)

**Serbia in the Civil Servant Mobility Program**

Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro and of the Ministry of Education of Moldova have visited Belgrade as part of the civil servant mobility program, with a view to improving regional cooperation among countries of South-Eastern Europe in the fields of education, science and research.

The program, which has been in progress for three years, is implemented by the regional cooperation organization Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (TFBHC).

Serbia joined the program in 2010; its participation was facilitated in partnership of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Technological Development and Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, which initiated and organized the program in Serbia.

Visitors from Montenegro and Moldova became acquainted with the Serbian education system, the process of developing the National Qualifications Framework and European programs and projects in the area of education.

Contact and information: [www.taskforcehumancapital.info](http://www.taskforcehumancapital.info)

**EXHIBITION: Material Culture of the Roma in Serbia**

The exhibition authored by Dragoljub Ackovic was featured in Atelje 212 from November 17 through December 27, 2010.

The exhibition included exhibits from the Museum of Roma Culture evidencing the material culture of the Roma in this region, such as tools, national costumes and various items.

The exhibition was sponsored by the city of Belgrade.

Contact: Museum of Roma Culture, [www.romamuseum.rs](http://www.romamuseum.rs)

**Registry of Charitable Trusts and Foundations in Serbia from March 1, 2011**

The Law on Charitable Trusts and Foundations will be enforced from March 1, 2011. The Registry of charitable trusts and foundations and representative offices of foreign charitable trusts and foundations will be kept by the Serbian Business Registers Agency (SBRA), as a task delegated to it by the Ministry of Culture.

Charitable trusts, foundations and funds established and registered pursuant to the old Law on Charitable Trusts, Foundations and Funds will be obliged to align their statutes and other instruments with the provisions of the new Law within 12 months, i.e. by March 1, 2012.

**Enlarging the Digital Anthology of Serbian Literature**

On January 1, 2011, the digital Anthology of Serbian Literature ([www.ask.rs](http://www.ask.rs)) will be enlarged with selected works by Miloš Crnjanski, Branko Ćopić, Vladan Desnica, Isidora Sekulić, Dositej Obradović and other major authors.

The digital Anthology of Serbian Literature contains more than 100 pieces of folk, old and new literature available for download free of charge. In addition to folk poetry and prose, medieval hagiographies and major works of the 18th and 19th centuries, the edition features early 20th century public

domain pieces, as well as modern literary works whose authors granted permission for publication. All works are in the Serbian language and Cyrillic script.

The selection was made by the Teachers Training Faculty of the University of Belgrade, and digitization was performed by the Microsoft Software Development Center of Belgrade as part of Microsoft's "Partner in Learning" program.

Contact: Microsoft Software d.o.o. [www.ask.rs](http://www.ask.rs)

MUHAMMAD YUNUS, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE  
AND FATHER OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Social Enterprise – a Means of Solving Problems

*Continued from page 1*

It is women who try to build a future with persistence, to go one step at a time when they have money. For this reason, we started changing our business policy and focusing our activities on them. To our great pleasure, nowadays women account for a majority of borrowers.

At the moment, we have 8.3 million borrowers throughout Bangladesh. Our bank lends to poor women without collateral, without any guarantee, and collects payments at a very high rate of 97%. We designed the bank in such a way as to give women borrowers a stake in the bank. Being owners of the bank, they receive its profits back, and their lives are transformed. We have established a rule in Grameen Bank that each borrower must open a savings account on joining the bank.

Grameen Bank operates in weekly cycles – borrowers must pay a loan installment each week, but they must also make a deposit into their savings accounts. Today, after 34 years, savings deposits in Grameen Bank total half a billion dollars. When we lend, more than half of the money lent comes from our clients' savings accounts. We have established and are successfully managing a pension fund, a health insurance company, three eye hospitals, a mobile telephony company, etc.

We have started a number of social enterprises, some in cooperation with multinational companies from Europe, America and countries worldwide.

*Excerpts from the speech given in Belgrade on October 30, 2010, as part of the Social Business Tour 2010*  
[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs)

### Social Business Tour 2010

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and father of social entrepreneurship, Professor Muhammad Yunus visited Belgrade on October 30 as part of the "Social Business Tour 2010" project. The project was launched in the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, with the aim of promoting the concept of social entrepreneurship in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Social entrepreneurship is a modern business model focused on finding solutions for social problems. The main idea of the concept is seeking maximum benefit for the people, rather than maximum profits. Investors receive their investment back and the dividends are not paid. When investors are paid, the profits are retained by the company and used for further expansion and upgrading of operation. Grameen Bank's successful business model has demonstrated that small amounts of money, if distributed with care, can change lives of poor people fundamentally.

The Social Business Tour 2010 is a joint initiative of the ERSTE Foundation, Erste Group, the good.bee microfinance organization, Grameen Creative Lab and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of the Republic of Austria. The initiative was hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit.

Contact: [www.socialbusinesstour.com](http://www.socialbusinesstour.com)

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Discussion on Draft Law on Cooperatives

The Ministry of Economy and Regional Development is conducting a public discussion on the Draft Law on Cooperatives in the period 15 December 2010 – 31 January 2011, in the process of preparation of the law on cooperatives. Public discussions includes presentations and discussions in the Serbian cities on the basis of balanced regional representation.

The latest Draft Law stipulates the parties who may be a cooperant and who and under which conditions may establish a cooperative. Cooperatives may be established as agricultural, housing, consumers, crafts, social, youth, students and others for execution of production, commodity trade, and other activities in line with the law.

The Law should enter Parliamentary procedure in the first quarter of 2011.

The text of the Draft Law is officially available at the website of the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, [www.merr.gov.rs](http://www.merr.gov.rs).

## Employment of Persons with Disabilities

The Republic of Serbia is delivering against its obligation to employ persons with disabilities by earmarking funds to the Budget Fund for Reimbursing the Salaries of Persons with Disabilities employed in companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, for improving working conditions, production programs and other purposes as set forth in the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities.

The Law provides the option for employers to choose the manner in which to contribute to the employment of persons with disabilities. Employers may engage persons with disabilities or participate in financing salaries of persons with disabilities employed in a company for professional rehabilitation or in a social enterprise. Companies may settle their financial obligation by purchasing products or using services of companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities.

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: Competition for Expert Support in Business Development

The Social Business Development Coalition has announced a competition for social enterprises in Serbia to be granted expert assistance in business development.

The competition is a part of a project entitled "Expert Support Program for Social Business Development", supported financially by the Spanish Millennium Development Goals Fund (MDGF) within the Youth Employment and Migration Program. The idea behind the program is to provide expert support to the existing social businesses and thus improve their operation.

The competition targets social businesses (social entrepreneurship programs) from Serbia, irrespective of legal form (civic associations, private enterprises, cooperatives, consortia, etc.). Individuals, international organizations, public institutions and government bodies are not eligible for the competition.

The competition is administered by the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) and the deadline for applications is January 31st, 2011.

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

## More Funding for Local Governments in 2011

Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia for European Integration and minister of science and technological development Božidar Djelić stated, at the meeting entitled "Underdeveloped Areas – an Opportunity for Investors", held at the Palace of Serbia in mid-December, that the proposed budget for 2011 foresaw increasing transfers to local governments by 28%. This means that next year municipalities will receive 32 billion dinars, instead of just 25 that they received this year. As part of this year's budget revision, the Government earmarked an additional billion dinars for local governments, 50% of which is intended for underdeveloped areas.

As an example of excellent cooperation between the European Commission and the Government of Serbia, three projects were highlighted at the meeting: a development project worth 17.5 million euros for Southern and South-Western Serbia, to be com-

menced in the spring; an environmental protection project in underdeveloped municipalities, worth 18.5 million euros; and the Danube Strategy project, as part of which the Municipality of Golubac has been awarded 18.5 million euros from the EU budget.

Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia Vincent Degert announced further development support to Serbia and presented principles of municipal participation in applying for European funds, highlighting that concrete project proposals are required in order to qualify for EU funding.

The meeting, attended by 48 mayors, was organized by the Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas; the plan for 2011 was also presented at the meeting.

Contact: Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas, [www.kornrp.gov.rs](http://www.kornrp.gov.rs)

## The Calculator Project

The National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED) has presented its Calculator project – a unique online system for comparing and calculating costs of doing business in Serbian local government units, developed in collaboration with the USAID Municipal Economic Growth Activity.

The Calculator is a tool that enables calculation of local taxes, fees, charges and all other duties. Business people are able to calculate initial and ongoing business costs and compare them among municipalities, while municipalities can easily forecast their budget revenues and revenues from investments.

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

## CALL OF THE GENDER EQUALITY DIRECTORATE CLOSED: **Projects for Advancement of Gender Equality Approved**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – Gender Equality Directorate approved 5 project proposals for capacity building and improvement of operation of local gender equality authorities. RSD 1 million has been allocated for the selected projects.

The priority of the Gender Equality Directorate is to establish capacity building and improve operation of local gender equality authorities with a view to implementation of the National Strategy for Improvement of the Position of Women and Advancement of Gender Equality and the Action Plan in line with the Gender Equality Law.

The participants were local associations whose programs will contribute to establishment, capacity building and improvement of operation of local gender equality authorities.

Contact: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – Gender Equality Directorate  
Phone: 011 334 56 65, [www.minrzs.gov.rs](http://www.minrzs.gov.rs)

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY AND THE LAW ON PROHIBITION OF ABUSE AT WORK

### Mobbing Inspectors

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy trained inspectors throughout Serbia in cooperation with the UNIFEM to implement the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Prohibition of Abuse at Work.

Inspectors shall control documents of companies to identify whether men constitute the majority of employees and assess human relations. They will also assess whether women are paid less in a company or discriminated against on other grounds.

In case of irregularities, employers will be issued a decision obliging them to correct them. If employers refuse to do so, a proceeding will be instituted.

## RSO AND UNICEF: **Survey into the Situation of Women and Children**

The Republic Statistical Office of Serbia (RSO) and UNICEF launched a fourth national Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of Situation and Behaviour of Children and Women in Serbia (MICS4).

The Survey will provide data not collected in regular statistical surveys – on education, living conditions and health of women, children and, for the first time, of young men.

The Survey will cover the most vulnerable families with children in the country as well as the extremely vulnerable and marginalized groups such as the Roma.

The data are required for assessment of progress in implementation of Millennium Development Goals, objectives defined in the document “A World Fit for Children “ and the National Action Plan for Children of Serbia.

The RSO associates will visit 8,600 households on the territory of Serbia in order to collect data on education, health care of mothers and children, HIV, potable water and waste disposal, marriage and union, sexual behaviour, care of sick children, nursing, etc.

MICS is an international research programme developed by UNICEF in cooperation with other UN agencies, conducted once in five years in more than 100 countries in the world.

Contact: Republic Statistical Office of Serbia, Phone: 011 24 10 947

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

UNICEF, Office in Serbia, Phone: 011 36 02 100, [www.unicef.org/serbia](http://www.unicef.org/serbia)

## Networking of Organizations for Children

At the national conference “Networking for Children” held in Sokobanja, the representatives of 43 associations from all over Serbia adopted a Platform of the Network of Organisations of Civil Society for Children of Serbia (MODS) defining the aims of the network: increased participation of civil society organizations and children in definition of policies for children, capacity building and establishment of communication channels between the network of organizations for children and local, province, republic and international bodies and institutions.

The technical support to the children associations will be provided by the Secretariat for Technical Support to the Civil Society Organisations for Children in Serbia, opened through the EU project “Strengthening Dialogue between Civil Society Organisations of Serbia and EU”

The conference was organized by the Society for Protection and Improvement of Mental Health of Children and Youth from Niš with UNICEF support.

Contact: Society for Protection and Improvement of Mental Health of Children and Youth

Phone: 018 52 34 22, [www.zadecu.org](http://www.zadecu.org)

## FOOD FOR ALL: **Additional 32 Soup Kitchens Needed**

RTV B92 invited companies and individuals to take part in the action “Food for All” aiming to inspire solidarity and ensure at least one quality meal a day for all.

In the course of 2009, the number of the hungry and the poor in Serbia increased from 500,000 to 700,000 or almost 10% of the population. So far, more than 2 million kilograms of food and RSD 15 million were collected for provision of food to the existing and opening new soup kitchens.

Since the launch of the action 5 months ago, the number of soup kitchens increased from 55 to 67, thus halting the negative trend of closure of soup kitchens as a consequence of the financial crisis. In order to satisfy the basic nutritional needs of the most vulnerable citizens 99 soup kitchens are needed in Serbia.

Contact: RDP “B92”, phone: 011 30 12 000 ext. 3117, [www.hranazasve.com](http://www.hranazasve.com)

## PALILULA MUNICIPALITY **40 Wheelchairs Donated**

Forty wheelchairs for outside use were donated to persons with disabilities on December 23, 2010 in the Palilula municipality.

The grant totaling USD 20,000 was provided by the NGO Affirmation of Marginalized Groups with support of the Palilula municipality.

The beneficiaries include three volleyball players from the Spike Club for Sitting Volleyball.

The list of beneficiaries was established based on recommendations from the Center for Social Work of Palilula.

## Petition for Increase of Children Allowance

On the occasion of the International Day for Eradication of Poverty, the Society for Protection and Improvement of Mental Health of Children and Youth organized the action “Children are not Responsible for their Poverty” in Niš. The aim was to request a raise of children allowance -currently below EUR 20 - by signing a petition to that effect. The collected signatures will be presented to the relevant state institutions and EU politicians.

One in four children in Serbia is poor and one in eight children live in extreme poverty. With the allocation of less than 1% of GDP for children and family Serbia ranks last in the region.

The action entitled “Children are Not Responsible for their Poverty” was implemented by the activists of the Open Club. The citizens who signed the petition received symbolic notes of RSD 1,897 – the amount of the child allowance.

Contact: Society for Protection and Improvement of Mental Health of Children and Youth

Phone: 018 52 34 22, [www.oknis.org.rs](http://www.oknis.org.rs)

## INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS **Project “Our New Friend”**

The project “Our New Friend”, aiming to provide support to children with special needs in the process of social inclusion, was launched in preschools.

The project is to prepare the community for the process of inclusion of children with special needs through picture books and workshops for parents and teachers.

The preschool children will receive 30,000 picture books “Our New Friend Stefan” with a small dictionary of the sign language at the end. Boys and girls will learn to accept friends who are a little bit different from them through the story about a boy called Stefan. The series of picture books “Our New Friend” is a project of the NGO “Family Assistance” and the Embassy of Finland.

Contact: Association Family Assistance

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

## New Beneficiaries of the Club for Persons with Disabilities in Valjevo

The Club OSI Plus 2010 is the title of the project extending the service of the Club for Persons with Disabilities by the Town of Valjevo in cooperation with the Society for Cerebral Paralysis and the Federation of Blind Persons and the Federation of Deaf Persons in Valjevo. The Project is part of the program entitled Development of Local Social Welfare Services implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy with the Fund for Open Society and local government.

The project totals RSD 1,100,000, of which RSD 714,000 was allocated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, and the rest is funded by the Town of Valjevo.

Contact: Club for Persons with Disabilities in Valjevo, tel: 014 35 13 185

## EHO RRC: Rehabilitation of Roma Settlements

In collaboration with the Roma in Čurug, the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation Roma Resource Centre (EHO RRC) is building 60 septic tanks and 75 bathrooms. Urgent repairs will be conducted in 85 houses. The construction materials, equipment and expert assistance will be provided by EHO RRC. EHO RRC ensured EUR 145,000 for direct project investments, while the municipality and the Province are expected to invest EUR 50,000.

EHO RRC will organise educational work with children and youth, and raise awareness about the importance of health care and maintenance of health living environment among the inhabitants of the settlement. The lawyers of EHO RRC will undertake field visits to help the inhabitants exercise their legal rights, and also to enable them to take part in the vocational training, employment and self-employment programmes through 3-month skills' trainings.

Rehabilitation of Roma settlements is part of the project "Social Inclusion and Improvement of Living Conditions of Roma Men and Women in Čurug, municipality of Žabalj".

Contact: EHO RRC, Phone: 021 46 96 16  
[www.ehons.org](http://www.ehons.org)

## 40 New Apartments for Social Housing in Negotin and Leskovac

40 apartments were handed over to refugee, IDP and domicile vulnerable families in Leskovac and Negotin.

In Negotin, 15 IDP, one refugee and four domicile socially vulnerable families moved into the new apartments.

In Leskovac, 16 displaced and four domicile socially vulnerable families received keys to the new apartments, thus closing the last of the six Collective Centers on the territory of this municipality.

Both buildings for Social Housing in Supportive Environment (SHSE) were realised as part of the project "Dignified Solutions for Displaced Persons living in Collective Centers or Private Accommodation in Serbia" funded from the European Union IPA 2007 funds and realised in cooperation with the Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia and UNHCR.

To date, SHSE concept has been implemented in 27 municipalities throughout Serbia where a total of 550 units were built.

Contact: Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia  
Phone: 011 28 57 890, [www.kirs.gov.rs](http://www.kirs.gov.rs)

## Social Housing for Refugees and the Displaced in Belgrade

The Mayor of Belgrade, the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees, the City Center for Social Welfare and UNHCR signed, on 1. December, a Memorandum of Understanding for construction of a building under the programme of Social Housing in Supportive Environment funded by the Bureau for Populations, Refugees and Migrations of the US Government.

The first 20 housing units building to be built in Belgrade for refugees and IDPs is realised in compliance with the National Strategy for Resolving the Problems of Refugees and IDPs.

The key promoter of this project, to be implemented by UNHCR and the NGO Housing Center, was the Humanitarian Fund Ana and Vlade Divac .

Contact: City Center for Social Welfare  
Phone: 011 26 50 329, [www.gcsrbg.org](http://www.gcsrbg.org)

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Social Transition Programme

Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) published a public call for the program Social Transition aiming to support the process of transition of the social protection system through provision of funds to local, non-governmental and non-profit organizations taking a proactive and creative attitude to social issues.

The maximum donation amounts to EUR 15,000. The call is implemented in collaboration with the Cooperative of Dutch Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe (CNF CEE). The projects for the Social Transition programme may be submitted throughout the year, and the Donations Committee shall select the projects two or three times during the year. The Donations Committee shall recommend the projects to the Cooperative of Dutch Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe that will make a final decision on the projects to be supported.

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF)  
Phone: 011 26 22 511, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## PUBLIC CALL: "Community Advocacy Program"

Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) published a public call entitled "Community Advocacy Program".

In partnership with the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) and with financial support of USAID, BCIF wishes to promote and support associations of citizens in Serbia in developing successful models of public representation in local communities.

10 organizations will be selected. Two representatives of each will attend trainings in public representation. Following the training, the best developed and most realistic projects would be granted financial support for implementation amounting to USD 12,000.

The deadline for applications expired on 13 December 2010.

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF)  
Phone: 011 26 22 511, [www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

## Call for Proposals of the Global Poverty Action Fund

Non-governmental organizations were eligible to submit project proposals aimed at reducing poverty in response to the call for proposals of the Global Poverty Action Fund.

Projects will be awarded funding between 250,000 and four million pounds and the annual grant may amount to 40% of the annual budget of the applicant NGO. One non-governmental organization may apply for up to three grants and must contribute one quarter of the project budget. Projects may last up to three years.

The Global Poverty Action Fund, which provides funding to civil service organizations, has been established by DFID (UK Department for International Development). The Fund supports projects focused on service delivery in support of poverty reduction and the most off-track Millennium Development Goals in poor countries.

The call was open until December 14th, 2010.

Contact: [www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk)

## EU DELEGATION IN SERBIA: Public Call for Development of Services for Children with Disabilities

The EU Delegation in Serbia announced a public call for proposals for development of the existing or development of new services for children with disabilities and their families at the local level.

The project is looking to improve social inclusion of children with disabilities and their families through provision of local services of social protection, advance the role of local authorities in provision of services and establish partnerships with stakeholders involved in provision of support to vulnerable groups.

The maximum duration of activities is 24 months. The deadline for submission of project proposals is 04 March 2011.

Contact: Delegation of the European Commission in the Republic of Serbia  
Phone: 011 20 83 200, [www.europa.org.rs](http://www.europa.org.rs)

## A Village Finds a Recycling Centre

The village Minićevo, on the Zrenjanin-Knjaževac road, is one of the best in the south of Serbia, inter alia, thanks to the fact that the citizens bought recycling machines and started recycling of plastic and cardboard waste.

The Minićevo recycling plant has thus far processed 20 tons of cardboard and 2 tons of plastic waste. They have fenced and arranged the village dump where twice a month waste collected in the village is being brought to. The inhabitants pay RSD 185/month for waste collection.

The centre of the village of Minićevo resembles an urban situation. The clean and cleared main street reflects the high environmental awareness of the inhabitants.

## Portal Serbia recycles e-waste

A portal "Serbia recycles e-waste" was established – a portal for networking of NGOs, CSOs, citizens' associations and environmentally conscious companies and citizens into a national network for proper treatment of e-waste.

The project is implemented by the organization "Environmental Movement Zemun" under the auspices of the Fund for Environmental Protection.

Contact: Environmental Movement Zemun  
[www.lagumica.org.rs](http://www.lagumica.org.rs)

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE:****CSO Quality Insurance Systems**

A three-day regional conference on "CSO Quality Insurance Systems" was held in Zagreb. The delegation from Serbia also took part in it.

The Serbian delegation comprised representatives of TACSO office in Serbia, Civic Initiatives, Centre for Non-Profit Sector Development, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team and the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund. The Serbian delegation discussed the plan of activities for introduction of the system of quality insurance for CSOs in Serbia.

The conference, organized by the regional TACSO project, gathered some hundred representatives of the civil society, government institutions and media from the West Balkans and Turkey.

TACSO (Technical Support to Civil Society Organisations) is a project of support to non-governmental organizations implemented by the Swedish Consultancy SIPU International in cooperation with the local partners on the Western Balkans and in Turkey.

The main objective of the project is capacity building of CSOs and strengthening their role in the democratic processes in the respective countries.

Contact: TACSO Serbia, Phone: 011 21 29 372,

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

**"Civil Society Suggests" Internet portal launched**

Wishing to make the EU integration of Serbia more efficient, the European Movement in Serbia launched an internet portal "Civil Society Suggests" allowing the civil society organizations to take part in the reforms processes by identifying problems in their communities and proposing solutions thereto.

Based on division of competencies of the ministries, the framework for submission of proposals is given in eight categories: justice, human and minority rights, regional, rural and local development, economy, trade and services, agriculture and environmental protection, mining, energy, infrastructure, education, youth and science, health, labour and social policy and culture.

The proposals will be processed in the form of clear recommendations, posted on the internet portal and forwarded to the ministries, Office for EU In-

tegrations, EC Delegation in Serbia and numerous institutions involved in the process.

"Civil Society Suggests" is a part of a more complex project entitled "Local Government and Civil Society in the Process of Programming and Projections of the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance to Serbia 2007 – 2013.

Contact: European Movement in Serbia  
[www.emins.org](http://www.emins.org) [www.cdspreclaze.org.rs](http://www.cdspreclaze.org.rs)

**PUBLIC CALL: I can also do it! 2010**

Sixteen proposals for actions, most of which related to environmental protection and public spaces beautification have been selected at the public call "I can also do it! 2010" targeting youth associations and informal youth groups. 71 project proposals were submitted. The objective of the call is to provide incentives to young people aged 15-30 to take action in resolving problems in local communities.

The project is implemented by the European Movement in Serbia and funded by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Contact: [www.emins.org](http://www.emins.org), [www.resivoje.rs](http://www.resivoje.rs)

**2010 VIRTUS  
Awards Presented**

The recipients of the awards for corporate philanthropy VIRTUS 2010 were announced at a gala ceremony held at National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. The VIRTUS award has been presented since 2007.

The main award, for contribution at national level, was granted to Eurobank EFG, which also received an award for support to the most innovative project of the year.

The company "Hemofarm" was awarded for its contribution to the local community, Bnja Komerc ltd. For contribution in the category of small and medium sized enterprises, Ernst&Young for long-term partnership between the business and non-profit sectors and the Public Broadcasting Company RTS received the special award for media contribution.

VIRTUS competition is organized by the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund with the financial support of USAID and in partnership with the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC). The support was also provided by VIA Foundation, Foundation of the Brothers Rockefeller and numerous other partners.

Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF), Phone: 011 26 22 511  
[www.bcif.org](http://www.bcif.org)

**Competition for European Award  
for Employee Volunteering**

The Forum of Business Leaders and Smart Collective have, in cooperation with the Business in the Community International Campaign, announced a competition for European award for projects of employee volunteering aimed at support to employment.

This is the first time that the award is being granted and it is open for the projects developed in support of employment.

The award is presented in the following categories: large company and a small/medium sized enterprise, as well as in categories innovation and newcomer, awarding projects that have an innovative approach to a certain problem or are at an early stage of development but show potential to achieve significant results.

The public institutions which support development of corporate volunteering will be awarded in a special category: public authority.

Employee volunteering projects that do not refer to employment support shall be discussed only in the national selection for a special jury award.

All the national winners shall take part in an international competition, and the European winner shall be announced at the conference Responsible Business Convention in London on 17-18 March 2011.

The FBS and Smart Collective also launched a "Bank of Time" – a programme of individual volunteering whereby the employees of companies – members of the Forum – shall transfer their know-how and experiences to non-profit organizations.

The aim of the programme is for the employees in companies to give a personal contribution to solution of a social problem they care about, as well as for the companies to put knowledge and skills of their employees at the disposal of local communities.

Smart Collective and the FBS have also announced a competition for free support of experienced managers – business mentors to young entrepreneurs.

The competition targets young entrepreneurs – aged maximum 30, who will be assisted by volunteer mentors to develop business and entrepreneurship potential. The one year training shall take place 2-4 hours a month. The competition is part of the project "Do something! – Business Mentorship for Young Entrepreneurs". The project is funded by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Contact: Smart Collective  
[www.smartkolektiv.org](http://www.smartkolektiv.org)  
Contact: Forum of Business Leaders of Serbia  
Phone: 011 24 40 096, [www.fpl.rs](http://www.fpl.rs)

**TEMPUS OFFICE: Preparatory  
Workshops for Potential Candidates**

Tempus Office is organizing workshops for preparing projects aiming to assist those who plan to apply projects at the forthcoming competition or wish to participate in a project application and need to learn more about the rules of the Program.

Introductory workshops are aimed for persons who want to learn about terminology used in the Tempus program, competition text, clarifications about priorities, types of projects and eligible costs, and logframe.

The aim of other workshops is to develop projects. The participation is free of charge and shall be organized in Belgrade, Nis, Novi Pazar, Novi Sad and Kragujevac.

Contact: National Tempus Office, phone: 32 33 409  
[www.tempus.ac.rs](http://www.tempus.ac.rs)

**Education of Future Business Leaders**

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Coca-Cola Hellenic Serbia has been implementing the programme "Coca-Cola Talents" – a long-term programme of granting scholarships and training students aiming at supporting the future business leaders.

The objective of the programme is to promote sustainable development of talents in execution of educational and professional aims.

The company provides financial support amounting to EUR 2000 per academic year as well as training support for seven students.

The students will attend the training for two years including theoretical classes, practice through work on the projects in Coca-Cola Hellenic with the possibility of contracting employment in the company following graduation.

Contact: Coca-Cola Hellenic, Serbia  
Phone: 0800 11 22 33, [www.cchbc-talents.co.rs](http://www.cchbc-talents.co.rs)



## MINISTRY FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS: E-Certificates Given to Municipalities in Vojvodina

Jasna Matic, Minister for Telecommunications and Information Society has presented electronic certificates to the representatives of local governments on the territory of Vojvodina. These are a prerequisite for introduction of e-governance in municipalities.

The e-governance Internet portal [www.euprava.gov.rs](http://www.euprava.gov.rs) is functioning in seven municipalities. In Loznica, e-provision of 24 services to citizens has been ensured.

The Government will disburse loans amounting RSD 4 million to the poorest municipalities for introduction of e-governance.

Contact: Ministry for Telecommunications and Information Society  
Phone, 011 20 20 057, [www.mtid.gov.rs](http://www.mtid.gov.rs)

### WORKSHOP:

## Portal E-Government and Accessibility

The National Information Technology and Internet Agency has, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, organized a workshop on electronic accessibility of Internet portal e-Government to the persons with disabilities.

Representatives of 15 organisations of persons with disabilities took part, as well as the representatives of National Information Technology and Internet Agency and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

The topics discussed were the removal of obstacles in the process of issuance of electronic certificates to the persons with disabilities, development of new electronic services for persons with different forms of disability. A proposal was put forward to develop a guide for use of the Portal adapted to the members of organizations as well as to introduce a new space on it for persons with disabilities.

Only 59% of organisations for persons with disabilities and even fewer individuals use Internet.

Contact: National Information Technology and Internet Agency  
Phone: 011 33 40 361, [www.rzii.gov.rs](http://www.rzii.gov.rs)

## Competition for Raising Municipal ICT Capacities

The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society has opened a competition for projects raising ICT capacities in municipalities.

Proposals should include the implementation of ICT projects aiming to establish new eGovernment services, raising the quality of the existing eGovernment services, enabling accessibility of services for citizens and raising capacities in terms of hardware, software and communication infrastructure.

Contact: National Information Technology and Internet Agency  
Phone: 011 33 40 361, [www.rzii.gov.rs](http://www.rzii.gov.rs)

## Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities Presented

A workshop on assistive technologies was held in Belgrade. Hardware and software devices were presented which reduce or remove obstacles faced by the persons with disabilities when using computers.

The aim of the workshop was to stress the significance of enabling persons with disabilities to use computers and other information technologies in order to be equally included into the modern society.

Assistive technology allows persons with certain forms of disability to use almost all of the

advantages of computers and express their full capacity. This technology of simplified access may be used in education as well as in adapting the work place to the employees with disability.

The center which provides support for persons with disabilities to use assistive devices is the EHO Resource Centre in Novi Sad.

The workshop is part of the project "Click to Europe" supported by the EU (GOPA) and organized by the International Aid Network (IAN).

Contact: International Aid Network (IAN),  
Phone: 76 17 197, [www.ian.org.rs](http://www.ian.org.rs)

## More than 1100 Schools Applied for Digital School Project

A total of 2,714 schools applied for the project Digital School of which 1,131 from main schools and 1,583 from dislocated school classes.

In 1,524 applications, computer classrooms were requested, while 1,190 requested laptop computers with an overhead projector.

More than 2,700 computer classrooms in Serbia – more than 90% primary schools - will be equipped on the basis of the call for project proposals "Digital School".

The computer classrooms will include up to 30 seats for pupils on interconnected personal com-

puters, as well as all the appropriate equipment.

The total value of the project, funded by the Ministry for Telecommunications and Information Society – head of the project, is EUR 5.6 million.

The most underdeveloped municipalities will receive the assistance of the Ministry for provision of adequate power supply, desks and Internet connections if not already existing in schools.

Contact: Ministry for Telecommunications and Information Society  
Phone: 011 20 20 057, [www.mtid.gov.rs](http://www.mtid.gov.rs)

## Electronic VAT Registration in Ten Revenue Services Branch Offices

The Chamber of Commerce of Serbia has, in cooperation with the Tax Authority, enabled entrepreneurs to declare VAT electronically in ten branch offices of the Tax Authority.

Local companies may declare taxes electronically in Tax Authority in Belgrade – municipalities of Stari Grad and Novi Beograd, Niš, Kragujevac, Novi Sad, Leskovac, Čačak, Užice, Kraljevo and Subotica.

The pilot project shall become a legal obligation as of 1 January next year. The VAT declarations will be submitted only electronically as of 1 June 2011.

This advantage simplifies, accelerates and reduces the costs of business. It is made possible thanks to the electronic signature i.e. qualified electronic certificate issued free of charge by the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia to the entrepreneurs, companies and enterprises.

The Chamber of Commerce of Serbia is accredited by the Ministry for Telecommunications and Information Society as a Qualified Certification Authority for issuance of qualified electronic certificates to legal and natural persons. In addition to the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia and PTT Serbia are also accredited.

Contact: Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, phone: 011 3300 900  
[www.pks.rs](http://www.pks.rs)

### SUPPORT TO INTERNET PRESENTATION OF COMPANIES

## The Shine of Web Sky – Website as Present

Small and medium sized enterprises may take part in the competition for obtaining a free of charge web site via the project "The Shine of Web Sky – Website as Present"

The project "The Shine of Web Sky – Website as Present" is implemented by the Krojač School of web design with the support of the Ministry for Telecommunications and Information Society.

Within the framework of this project, companies will be selected to receive a business web site designed by the students of the Krojač School – future web designers.

The aim of the project is to improve the quality of Internet presentation of local companies as well as for the pupils to obtain references and be thoroughly informed with the practical aspect of their work and market.

The web sites will be comprised of seven pages, a module for individual updating of content. A free one-year hosting has also been ensured.

Contact: Krojač Ltd, phone: 011 31 62 710  
[www.krojacevaskola.com](http://www.krojacevaskola.com)

## Electronic Issuance of Personal Documents by 2014

The legal changes will allow for full transition to electronic issuance of personal documents by 2014. The whole country will be networked by that time thus allowing the state authorities to obtain documents ex officio instead of requesting them from the citizens.

The electronic personal documents are registered and issued as of this year. The central system for electronic processing of personal documents allows citizens to obtain certificates from birth registries in any city in Serbia. The validity of these documents is indefinite.

The total value of the project is approximately EUR 3 million.

Social Inclusion  
and Poverty Reduction Unit  
Palace of Serbia, Office 122  
Bul. Mihajla Pupina 2, 11 070 Beograd

Tel: (+381 11) 311 46 05, 311 47 98  
Fax: (+381 11) 213 97 54

e-mail: [sipru@gov.rs](mailto:sipru@gov.rs)  
[www.inkluzija.gov.rs](http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs), [www.srbija.gov.rs](http://www.srbija.gov.rs)

*The Newsletter was published with support of the  
Swiss Development Cooperation and the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway*