



Government of the
Republic of Serbia

October 2012

13th

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.

PROF. DRAGAN VUKMIROVIĆ PHD, DIRECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC STATISTICAL OFFICE

Statistical Data as Reliable Indicators of the Status of Society

The Republic of Serbia is undergoing a process of intensive activities in the field of harmonization with EU standards and practices. Monitoring and measuring the results of these activities, in particular in economy, largely represents an obligation for official statistics. As this obligation is lasting and will be particularly important in the period following EU accession, efforts should be invested into strengthening and developing the official statistical system.

The most important task of the official statistics is to provide a realistic overview of social and economic trends in the country, as well as a reliable foundation for decision making on all levels – from public administration and other institutions to economic entities and interested citizens.

A lot of attention was directed at preparing and conducting major statistical activities over the past three years: the Census of the Population, Households and Homes 2011 and the Agricultural Census 2012, with significant financial assistance by the EU. We will have a comprehensive insight into agricultural production for the first time in over 50 years. Data collected through the Population Census was used as a basis for implementing the Agricultural Census. The Agricultural Census started on 1 October and will last until 15 December 2012. The 6,200 census takers will, during this period, be tasked with recording every inch of used

arable land, every single head of cattle, and every single legal person engaged in agricultural activities. The Agricultural Census will provide data on the location of farms, agricultural fund, irrigation, use of fertilizers and chemicals for the protection of plants, number of heads of cattle and beehives, organic production, agricultural machinery, fish ponds, forested surfaces, etc.

In addition to these large-scale activities, the Republic Statistical Office is also implementing its regular activities, working on further harmonization with EU regulations.

At this point it is certain that, as of next year, we will begin implementing the survey considered by European countries to be the most relevant for monitoring poverty, social inclusion, inequality and living standards in general - Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC).

The implementation of this survey in EU countries started in 2003, whereas for us it represents an obligation within European integration. Although the EU has not, as of yet, officially required Serbia to introduce this survey, the RSO, aiming to be ready for this official requirement, is moving one step ahead and intensively working on training staff, drafting methodological instructions, and creating instruments for the implementation of this survey.

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MIODRAG POČUČ:

Let Us Call Things What They Are

I have recently seen a chart that clarifies the concepts of *inclusion, integration, exclusion and separation* in a very illustrative way, which can be used successfully to understand the idea of accessibility as it has the same form in the design of our everyday environment – architecture, transport, economy... Let me give a few examples.

Exclusion – blunt exclusion of certain social groups as a result of inadequate solutions in the environment. Everybody can recognise it in different forms – inaccessible thoroughfares, public buildings and entrances, or inaccessible public transport, as well as numerous obstacles that fully impede mobility.

The concepts of integration and inclusion are fundamentally different, although equated by many.

Integration means including certain groups in mainstream society, usually for humanitarian reasons. In that case, the existing environment is only partly modified in order that all social groups could use it, but it is essentially unchanged.

This model may be observed daily: various vehicles specially adapted for the transport of PWD, special marking for the part of a pedestrian crossing with a dropped kerb, access ramps usually located on back entrances to public buildings or separate toilets.

Although integration is a positive model, its solutions still separate certain groups, but within the boundaries of the existing society. Such “lip service to inclusion” is paid without changing the society in substance, i.e. without rebuilding the entire environment – public buildings, transport, services, information. **It is not founded on changing the people’s views.** In this model, the end users do not have a say in anything. *Continued on page 4*

Government of Serbia Adopts the First Public Finance Stabilisation Package

The Government of Serbia has adopted the first package of measures aimed at the stabilisation of public finance, which foresees cutting the consolidated budget deficit from the current level of 7.1% to 6.7% by the end of the year, and further to 4% by the end of 2013.

Programme implementation should lead to savings amounting to RSD 26 billion in the last quarter of this year and RSD 120 billion (about EUR 1 bn) next year. The maximum monthly public sector salary may not exceed RSD 162,000 without the length-of-service increment. It will be possible to raise salaries and pensions by 2% in October and 2% in April next year. Pensioners with monthly income under RSD 15,000 will receive assistance amounting to RSD 16,000 per year.

A total of 130 parafiscal charges have been abolished to relieve entrepreneurs, and car registration will be cheaper from 1 October.

The standard VAT rate will increase from 18% to 20% from October, but, from 1 January, small and medium enterprises will be allowed to pay VAT only after collecting payment for their invoices. In addition, the amount of VAT that may be reclaimed by farmers is increased from 5% to 8%. The reduced VAT rate of 8% is kept for all foodstuffs.

Source: www.mfp.gov.rs

Consultations on Establishing the Social Inclusion Fund

On 25 September, the Government of Serbia Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit concluded the consultations aimed at defining the most adequate model for implementing vulnerable groups social inclusion programmes.

With a view to putting into practice the recommendations from the First National Report on Social In-

clusion and Poverty Reduction, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has launched the Study of Options for Establishing the Social Inclusion Fund, which should contribute to more efficient and successful utilisation of the available national funds, as well as the future EU funds earmarked for social inclusion.

Monitoring Social Inclusion Indicators

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit has published the second amended edition of the report "Monitoring Social Inclusion in Serbia – Overview and Current Status of Social Inclusion in Serbia Based on Monitoring EU and National Indicators 2006-2012".

The publication is available at the SIPRU website: www.inkluzija.gov.rs

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit
Tel. 011 311 46 05, www.inkluzija.gov.rs

Agriculture Census after 42 Years

From 1 October to 15 December, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia will organise and carry out the 2012 Agriculture Census. The last agriculture census in the territory of Serbia was carried out in 1960.

The census will provide an overview of the state of affairs in Serbian agriculture and its potentials, on the one hand, and weaknesses and problems to be solved, on the other. The information obtained will be used by agricultural policy makers to make decisions and develop short- and long-term agricultural development strategies.

Contact: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, tel. 011 2412 922
www.popispoljoprivrede.stat.rs

Office for Human and Minority Rights Set Up

After the Government of the Republic of Serbia was formed in July 2012, the new Law on Ministries was passed, introducing many changes in terms of competencies compared to the previous period.

One of the changes consists in dissolving the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Self-government, whose competencies are now divided between the Ministry of Justice and the newly established Office for Human and Minority Rights as an authority directly linked to the Government. The Office will work on protecting and promoting human and minority rights, and also on general matters concerning the status of members of national minorities.

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

Committee on the Rights of the Child

From this year, for the first time, Serbia will have the Committee on the Rights of the Child as a separate standing body within the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. The Committee has been established with the aim of promoting the exercise of children's rights.

The Committee is chaired by the Speaker of the National Assembly and consists of deputy speakers, representatives of parliamentary groups and the chair of the Committee on Labour, Social Affairs, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction.

The Committee will be tasked with reviewing bills with respect to protection of children's rights and to align them with international standards, monitor their implementation and enforcement, cooperate with national and international institutions and local authorities, initiate the adoption of amendments to regulations concerning the protection of children's rights, etc.

Contact: Centre for the Rights of the Child, tel. 011 33 44 170
www.cpd.org.rs

Amendments to the Law on Non-contentious Proceedings Passed

The Serbian National Assembly has passed the amendments to the Law on Non-contentious Proceedings, thus enabling about 6,500 "legally invisible persons" to register their births within three months of the day of initiating the procedure. After the Bill Amending the Law on Non-contentious Proceedings was introduced on 21 August, the Assembly passed it on 31 August.

Source: National Assembly, www.parlament.gov.rs

PROF. DRAGAN VUKMIROVIĆ PHD, DIRECTOR OF THE RSD Statistical Data as Reliable Indicators of the Status of Society

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Monitoring poverty has been based on data obtained through the Household Budget Survey (HBS). However, data collection for this survey lasts for a year, and processing is possible only subsequently, with a focus on household consumption. In order to obtain data on poverty comparable with the EU, our methodology needs to be fully harmonized with the EU methodology, wherein poverty is expressed relatively, i.e. against the total population, based on total household income. This, unfortunately, means that we will not have data comparable with the data from the period prior to the introduction of SILC, but we will have data comparable to other countries. An additional value for the new survey, and a novelty in poverty statistics, is that we will be able to monitor poverty in the long term, since each household selected for the sample during one year will be monitored during the following three years, providing us insight into how certain policies (adopted to reduce poverty and increase social inclusion) affect vulnerable households.

The Labour Force Survey is one of the regular RSO surveys, fully harmonized with European statistics. The survey is implemented twice every year (in April and October), across a sample of approximately 8,000 households, providing a large number of economic and social inclusion indicators. The plan is for this survey to be implemented quarterly, i.e. four times a year, as of 2013.

The Statistical Office was engaged, in cooperation with partners, in the Time Use Survey, important since its data indicates differences in time use between various groups and categories of the population. The key differences are those in activities and workloads of women and men in the Republic of Serbia, particularly in regards to paid and unpaid activities in the household. The data thus collected represents a valuable source of data that can aid in developing and applying relevant social policies in regards labour and division of labour, culture, sports, youth living conditions, living conditions for the elderly, etc. This survey is also important from a gender equality perspective, since it contains data on the participation of women and men in basic daily activities.

In 2004 the Republic Statistical Office, with the help of UNICEF, initiated the ChildInfo database, later to be named DevInfo. The Republic DevInfo database is used for monitoring the realization of the Millennium Development Goals for development, social inclusion and poverty reduction, the National Action Plan for Children, as well as gender equality policies. Recently, the Municipal DevInfo database was also formed, containing official statistical data and key indicators up to the municipal level, aiming to monitor the state and development of municipalities. In late 2006 the DevInfo system was proclaimed to be a special interest tool for the Republic of Serbia and became part of the regular programme of the Republic Statistics Office.

The Republic Statistics Office was one of the best assessed institutions in the latest European Commission Progress Report for Serbia (2012). Progress in the field of statistics regarding the application and harmonization of methodologies with EU standards was assessed as excellent, along with the excellent implementation of the Population Census in 2012, and the start of the Agricultural Census in 2012. We are exceptionally pleased by this and it gives us additional motivation to improve the work of the official statistics.

International Day for Eradication of Poverty

The United Nations declared October 17 to be the International Day for Eradication of Poverty. The day commemorates the promotion of awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and deprivation in all countries, in particular in developing countries.

The International Day for Eradication of Poverty has been commemorated since 1987, when countries are called to invest more efforts to advance the status and living standards of the population.

How to Improve the Public Review Process

Civil society organizations gathered around the initiative The Law Is Ours, together with the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, have organised a round-table discussion titled How to Improve Public Review in the Law Making Process. The comparative law paper Analysis of Public Review in the United States, Slovenia and Macedonia, including Recommendations for the Improvement of Public Review in Serbia, was presented at the meeting. Over one hundred participants from state institutions, civil sector, donor community and media participated in the meeting.

Contact: Office for Cooperation with Civil Society
Tel. 011 311 38 59, www.civilnodrustvo.rs

2012 Progress Report on Serbia Released

On 10 October 2012 the European Commission adopted its 'Enlargement package'. The Commission concluded that Serbia continues on its way to sufficiently fulfilling the political criteria and the conditions of the Stabilisation and Association process.

The Report emphasizes that there has been some progress as regards preparations for the European Social Fund, as well as in the field of social inclusion. In the field of social protection, the adoption of implementing legislation on welfare allowances and the introduction of earmarked transfers to local municipal governments for community services have provided a basis for the implementation of the Law on Social Welfare. Also, social services are being improved and active measures to increase social inclusion of the Roma have continued.

On the other hand, the Commission is of the opinion that there has been no progress in the field of labour law and that further efforts are needed in this area. The Report also states that there has been some progress in the area of health and safety at work and little progress in the area of social dialogue.

As regards employment policy, the Commission finds that there has been some progress – the National Employment Action Plan for 2012 has been adopted in accordance with National Employment Strategy 2011-2020. Also, two new measures were introduced in order to address the problems of unemployed people without working experience or qualifications. However, the annual budget for active labour market measures was reduced by 14% compared to 2011 and the total allocations for active employment policy continue to represent only 0.1% of GDP.

Finally, the Commission finds that there was good progress in the area of sectoral statistics. As regards social statistics, the survey of income and living conditions (SILC) is about to be introduced.

Source: www.europa.eu

On EU Employment and Social Policy

According to the latest EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, the labour market and social situation in the EU have continued to be unfavourable overall and to show clearer signs of polarisation – Austria has the lowest unemployment rate of 4.5%, while, on the other hand, 25.1% of the active population is without jobs in Spain.

The EU unemployment rate was 10.3% in April 2012. The number of long-term unemployed has increased to 10.7 million and further increase is anticipated. Experts warn that long-term unemployment leads to discouragement and withdrawal from the labour market.

Youth present a particularly serious problem, given that their unemployment rate at the EU level was 22.5% in July. The youth unemployment rate exceeds 25% in 12 EU member states, while it is below 10% only in Austria, Germany and the Netherlands.

Data indicate that children are increasingly exposed to poverty – after social transfers, the share of children at risk of poverty ranges between 10% in Denmark and Finland to over 20% in Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, Portugal, Italy, Romania, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania and Luxembourg.

The unemployment rate in Serbia amounted to 25.5% in April 2012, or is 3.3 percentage points higher than in April last year, and is the highest since 1998, when statistical records commenced, according to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

Since the onset of the crisis in 2008, the unemployment rate has risen by over 11 percentage points, and about 600,000 people have lost their jobs.

Source: www.ec.europa.eu, www.euractiv.rs

EU Workers Work Longer Hours Than Agreed

Last year, EU workers worked 39.7 hours per week, or 1.6 hours longer than the hours set by collective agreements, as shown by the latest data of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound). The EC extended the deadline for workers' and companies' representatives to agree on the amendments to the Working Time Directive by the end of the year.

The 2011 Labour Force Survey indicates that in Serbia 72% of the workers worked between 40 and 49 hours per week.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

EU Commissioner Wants EU Law Imposing Gender Quotas

The EU commissioner for justice and home affairs Viviane Reding will table a proposal in October that would fine or sanction state-owned companies whose supervisory boards are composed of less than 40 percent of women by 2020.

The draft legislative proposal aims to tackle persistent gender imbalances across the EU. According to the data published in January, women currently occupy less than 14 percent of board positions in top publicly-listed companies.

The EU also states that women still earn 16.4% less than men for the same hours worked.

Source: www.euobserver.com

Skills and Knowledge Gained Out of School to Be Recognised in the EU

As part of the job creation and growth strategy, the European Commission has launched an initiative to stimulate the recognition of skills and competencies gained out of school or university, aiming to effect better employment opportunities, in particular for the unemployed youth and those with insufficient formal education.

With this recommendation, the EC invites the member states to establish national systems for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The Commission's proposal is a part of the initiatives titled "Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" and "Youth on the Move" within the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The proposal should be considered by the Council and adopted by the ministers of education and youth on 23 and 24 November 2012.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

Citizens Still Support Reforms on the Route to the EU

The referendum question "Do you support Serbia's accession to the EU?" would be answered with a "yes" by 49% of the citizens, with a "no" by 25%, 19% would not vote, while 8% do not know how they would answer, according to the results of a survey presented by the Serbian European Integration Office in August.

As many as 68% of citizens still believe that reforms required for our country's accession to the EU should be carried out even if they were not an accession requirement. There has been a clear decli-

ne in unconditional support to reforms compared to the previous survey, when 85% of citizens expressed a positive attitude towards the reform processes.

The largest number of citizens, 41%, include combating corruption among the most important points and those that affect daily life most.

The largest number of citizens, 41%, still perceive the Kosovo status problem as the main obstacle to candidacy.

Source: Serbian European Integration Office
www.seio.gov.rs

IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme

The first call for strategic project proposals within the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme was launched on 3 September and is open until 2 November 2012. The programme is funded by the EU IPA and co-funded by the participating countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia).

The programme aims to build capacities for sustainable development of the Adriatic region through partners' joint strategic activities. The EU funds available for this call total EUR 90,860,776, and beneficiaries from Serbia may participate until the end of 2015. Contact: Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme, www.adriaticpacbc.org

Lifelong Learning Programme

A new competition has been launched by the European Commission, for projects within all sub-programmes that make up the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Institutions from the European Union are encouraged to involve Serbian institutions in projects, as partners.

The deadlines for the submission of project proposals in which Serbian institutions may be involved are as follows: centralised parts of the Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci subprogrammes (multilateral projects, networks and ancillary measures) – 31 January 2013; the Jean Monnet subprogramme (key activity 1) – 15 February 2013; centralised parts of the Transversal subprogramme – 28 February 2013.

Seminars will be organised during the autumn to present the opportunities offered by the Programme.

More information on the competition: Tempus Office in Serbia, tel. 011 344 3342, www.tempus.ac.rs

Insufficient Literacy a Problem in the EU and Serbia

In the EU, one in five 15-year olds and almost 75 million adults have not mastered reading and writing to a sufficient degree. EU education ministers have set the common objective of reducing the rate of 15-year olds who lack basic reading skills from the present level of 20% to 15% in 2020.

In Serbia, according to the 2002 Population Census, the share of the illiterate in the population over 10 years of age was 3.45%, or 232,000, and according to the 2011 Labour Force Survey, in the population over 15 years of age, 3% have had no schooling at all, while 11.3% have not completed primary school.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development plans to have over 5,000 illiterate adult Serbian citizens enrol in primary school.

More than 900 teachers in about 70 primary schools have been trained for adult literacy teaching within the Second Chance programme that should be integrated in the Serbian regular education system.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

Accessibility as a Prerequisite for Social Inclusion

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit organised a meeting titled "Accessibility – a Prerequisite for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and Other Vulnerable Groups" on 3 October, in partnership with the National Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (NOOIS). The aim of the debate was improving the accessibility of public structures by aligning Serbian regulations with the international standards, regulations and conventions in the field of accessibility and design for all.

The conclusions of the debate state that in the autumn of 2012, the Ministry of Construction and Urban Planning will amend the Rulebook on Technical Standards of Accessibility, issue instructions for mandatory application of the Rulebook to the competent local government authorities, and oversee its application and sanction local authorities that fail to apply it.

Organizations of persons with disabilities, on all levels, should monitor the implementation of regulations and accessibility standards in their communities and indicate irregularities in implementation to competent authorities, and should launch initiatives and activities for advancing accessibility and application of the Design for All principle. Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, tel. 011 311 46 05

www.inkluzija.gov.rs

Social Entrepreneurship Platform

The Youth with Disabilities Forum, in partnership with the Social Entrepreneurship Development Centre, launched the project Social Entrepreneurship Platform on 1 June.

The project is aimed at creating a social entrepreneurship platform by scanning the situation, building capacities for the development of business ideas, exchanging knowledge and establishing social enterprises.

The project lasts nine months and is implemented in Užice, Bor, Subotica and Leskovac, supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway.

Contact: Youth with Disability Forum of Serbia, tel. 011 32 20 632

www.forum-osi.org

SENS Gathers 26 Members

The Social Economy Network Serbia (SENS) has gathered 26 members so far, including civic associations, enterprises for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, limited liability companies and cooperatives.

The SENS was established in 2011 by Group 484 with the support of the Italian UniCredit Foundation.

Contact: SENS, www.sens.rs

The Right to Work for Persons with Intellectual Difficulties

The Belgrade-based Creative Educational Centre for People with Development Disabilities (KECMNRO) has commenced the project Promoting the Right to Work and Creating Work Opportunities for Persons with Intellectual Difficulties.

The project's main goal is to build capacities for the exercise of the right to work and social integration of per-

sons with intellectual difficulties in the labour market.

The project is implemented with the financial support of the EU Delegation through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

Contact: Creative Educational Centre for People with Development Disabilities (KECMNRO) tel. 064 196 58 06, www.kecmnro.org.rs

MIODRAG POČUČ:

Let Us Call Things What They Are

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Inclusion means fully including everyone and a holistic change of the overall social system. **It is based on rights rather than humanitarianism** – all people are part of society and participate in it. The end users are undeniably involved in making decisions.

For example, in order to enable children, the elderly or persons with disabilities to use thoroughfares, the entire transport policy must be changed – engineers should be educated on different bases, rulebooks and standards for designing thoroughfares must be aligned, and works should be carried out as planned.

In Serbia, examples of inclusion are visible today mainly in large shopping malls. They are built so that we all use them equally – their car parks, shops, playrooms, restaurants, toilets, etc.

For the entire text and more texts by various authors, please visit: <http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs/blog>

Experiences of Professional Work with PWD

The Serbian Association of Enterprises for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities (UIPS) has presented the Collection of Papers by Professionals Working in Enterprises for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, summarising the theoretical and practical experiences of psychologists, special educators, sociologists and pedagogues working as professional assistants on a project for social integration and employment of persons with disability.

The project has been supported by the Lola Produzetništvo. Contact: UIPS, tel. 011 616 90 01, www.uips.rs

Inclusive Academy Programme

The Inclusive Academy programme, implemented jointly by the Youth with Disabilities Forum and Société Générale Bank, enables upgrading of skills and knowledge of persons with disabilities and strengthening their competencies in the labour market through participation in training and workshops. The first programme cycle was attended by 20 participants, 11 of whom are currently pursuing internships in the bank, three have been recruited on an open-ended basis and four more have found jobs in other companies.

The Inclusive Academy has launched an invitation to apply for the second programme cycle, which will last four months and will be free of charge for all participants. The deadline for applications expires on 31 October 2012.

The Inclusive Academy programme is this year's winner of the First Prize for Corporate Volunteering in the competition organised for the second time by the Business Leaders Forum Serbia and SMart kolektiv in collaboration with the USAID and ISC. More information is available on the web site www.fmi.rs.

ASSOCIATION FOR ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Advertisement for Volunteers

The Stari Grad Association for Assistance to Persons with Developmental Disabilities Živimo zajedno (Living Together) and the Centre for the Protection of Infants, Children and Youth have published an advertisement for volunteers for the programme Shared Care.

Volunteers should take part in preparing and accompanying parentless children with developmental disabilities to and from school. The children are in residential care at the Centre for the Protection of Infants, Children and Youth. The Centre's residential unit is home to more than 150 children with developmental disabilities.

Volunteers will receive training, mentor support, transport and an allowance for activities within the programme. Contact: Živimo zajedno, tel. 011 2629 787, www.zivimozajedno.com

PHOTO NEWS

Five Medals for Serbia at the Paralympics

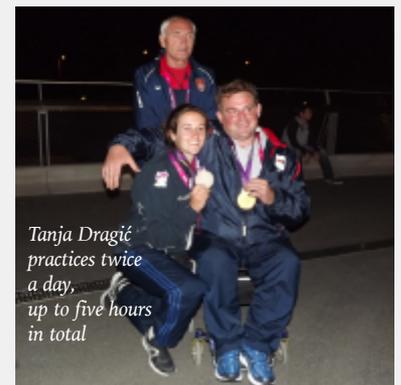


Draženko Mitrović has won 19 medals so far

Serbian contestants returned from the Paralympic Games, held this summer, with five medals – two gold and three silver.

And this is not all: they also became the holders of three world records, two fourth places and a few other high rankings.

Serbian Paralympic athletes have announced they do not plan to break this pattern next summer, when they are expected to appear at the IPC Athletic World Championships.



Tanja Dragić practices twice a day, up to five hours in total

Competition of the Equality Commissioner's Office

The Office of the Equality Commissioner launched a competition to award three million dinars to civil society organisations for the purpose of situation testing in discrimination cases.

The competition targets organisations involved in protecting human rights and preventing discrimination on the grounds of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and health status, age, national affiliation and ethnic background. The application deadline was 7 September.

Contact: Equality Commissioner, tel. 011 243 80 20
www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs

SCTM Sets Up Gender Equality Working Group and Expert Team

The Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) has established an inter-sectoral Working Group on Gender Equality, which will lead the activities of the component Gender Equality at the Local Level within the programme Support to Local Governments in Serbia in the EU Integration Process.

The Programme is implemented in partnership with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

In addition to seven representatives of municipalities, five local experts on local government and gender equality are involved, as well as four representatives of SCTM technical departments and one representative of the Gender Equality Directorate.

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

Citizens Dissatisfied with Results in the Human Rights Sphere

The Assess Your Rights survey has shown that more than 80% of citizens assess negatively the authorities' human rights protection and anti-corruption measures, and 99% of them assess negatively the authorities' anti-corruption measures.

The survey is carried out on the B92 web site by the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights and UNDP. The survey has been launched to involve citizens in evaluating the fulfilment of recommendations addressed to Serbia by the UN Human Rights Council in 2008.

In October, Serbia is to submit feedback to the UN Human Rights Council regarding progress made in improving the situation in this area. This UN body will review Serbia's progress in this regard in February 2013. Citizens' answers collected through the Assess Your Rights action will be forwarded to the Council.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

25% of the Elderly Believe They Are Discriminated Against

One quarter of the elderly in Serbia claim to have personally experienced discrimination, and more than one half think that the state does not take adequate care of them, shows the survey carried out by the Institute for the Study of Cultural Development in connection with 1 October, the International Day of Older Persons. With 17% of its population older than 65, Serbia is among the older nations in Europe and globally.

The survey was carried out on 1430 respondents in 25 Serbian towns and cities, and the respondents were persons over 65 years of age. In 25.5% of the cases, the elderly believe they are discriminated against by their families, and 42.2% feel loneliness and a lack of company. In their free time, elderly men in Serbia most often watch TV, walk, read newspapers, while women most often knit, crochet and embroider.

Source: Beta

Pride Parade Banned

The Ministry of Interior of the Government of the Republic of Serbia announced that, following a security assessment and recommendations, a decision was made to ban all gatherings on October 6, including the "Pride Parade", to preserve public order and security of citizens and their property.

The Prime Minister of the Government and the Minister of Interior Ivica Dacic stated that this decision did not aim at transgressing or disproving anyone's human and civic rights and freedoms, but at protecting the security of citizens of Belgrade and preventing potential conflicts and unrest which may jeopardize also diplomatic-consular representative offices of foreign states.

Source: www.srbija.gov.rs

Competition for Roma Youth Leaders and Human Rights Promotion Activists

In the framework of the Roma Youth Action Plan, the Council of Europe Youth Department launched a call for participants for training Roma youth leaders and activists for promoting human rights and taking action against discrimination.

The training, which will take place between 21 and 29 October in Budapest, is aimed at empowering and developing the competencies of Roma youth leaders and activists to take action against discrimination – at the local, national and European levels – based on human rights and active youth participation.

The application deadline was 7 September.
Contact: Ministry of Youth and Sport, tel. 011 311 37 57
www.mos.gov.rs

Accepting Asylum Seekers a Challenge for Communities

The number of asylum applications in Serbia is on the increase and the country is bound to face various challenges in that respect, including how local communities will accept asylum seekers.

In the area of asylum, it is necessary to strengthen public authorities' capacities and build the required infrastructure, it was stated at the round-table discussion Towards Europeanisation of Serbia on the practice and policies in the area of asylum, organised on 30 August by Group 484 and the Open Society Fund.

The report presented at the meeting states that, according to the data of the Ministry of the Interior, about 9,500 irregular immigrants were registered by December 2011, compared to 2,500 in 2010. The number of persons expressing intention to seek asylum in Serbia increased sixfold compared to 2010, reaching a total of 3,134 in 2011.

Source: www.euractiv.rs

Empowerment Programme for Youth Living with HIV and AIDS

Without Prejudice is a comprehensive one-year programme of the AS Centre for the Empowerment of Youth Living with HIV and AIDS, and forms part of the national response to HIV infection.

The project Without Prejudice is aimed at preventing HIV infection, improving the quality of life and social status of young persons with HIV or AIDS, their family members and friends.

The programme is supported by funds of the Belgrade-based Youth of JAZAS and the Geneva-based Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) totalling 2.9 million dinars.

Contact: AS Centre for the Empowerment of Youth Living with HIV and AIDS, www.aids-support.com

Be a Man Club Camps

With the support of the Obrenovac Municipal Administration's Youth Office, Centre E8 organised summer camps for activists of Be a Man clubs. Club activists worked together on promoting healthy life styles, and the project aimed to influence youth by various interesting contents so that they would use their time as productively as possible.

The camps represented a follow-up activity of the Be a Man project, which works on positive changes in young men's views and behaviour with the goal of combating violence and developing gender equality.

Source: www.beograd.rs

Best Youth Idea Competition

The British Council in Serbia launched a call for young people between 16 and 36 years of age to apply for the competition for the best youth idea. Interested applicants were expected to record a video not longer than 90 seconds, presenting their idea to improve the community. The application deadline was 30 September.

The call is realised as part of the Active Citizens – British Council Serbia project, aimed at motivating young people to become involved in the life and development.

Contact: British Council, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/serbia.htm>

Seize This Day with Me Festival Awards

The film Tihi, directed by Marko Cvejić, was voted the best documentary on the 10th International Film Festival Seize This Day with Me, held in Novi Sad between 24 and 30 September. The best director award was presented to Vladimir Perović for the film Zvezdana prašina (Stardust), while the film Neizlečivi (Incurable), directed by Marija Škrlec, won the best screenplay award. The best cinematography award went to the film Bolji smo zajedno (We Are Better Together) by Kosta Djordjević and Bojana Andrić, and the most effective film award – to Glas (Voice) by Ksenija Jurašić.

A total of 30 films were screened on this year's Festival.
Contact: KAO Parnas, Tel. 021 467 053, www.kaoparnas.org.rs

The Sixth Competition for VIRTUS Award

The Balkan Community Initiatives Fund, with financial support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and in partnership with the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Serbian Government (SIPRU), has announced the sixth competition for the VIRTUS Award for Corporate Philanthropy.

The competition is open for all domestic and foreign companies, corporations, public institutions and authorities, enterprises, media houses, as well as corporative funds and foundations. Deadline for application is 2 November 2012.

Established in 2007, VIRTUS Award is the first and the most esteemed award for corporate philanthropy in Serbia that promotes corporative social responsibility.

The four main categories to receive the VIRTUS award include the contribution at the national level, contribution to the local community, small and medium-sized enterprises and long-term partnership between profit and non-profit sector.

In addition, this year's competition will also present the award for the contribution to social inclusion, which will be granted in partnership with Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Serbian Government, as well as three other special awards – for contribution to the most innovative project of the year, for volunteering and for media contribution.

Award winners will be announced in the second half of January 2013. Additional information about the competition is available at www.bcif.org/virtus. Contact: Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF), tel: +381 11 26 22 511, www.bcif.org

CSR CERTIFICATES AWARDED Social Responsibility Champions

The companies Coca-Cola HBC, Eurobank EFG, Holcim Srbija, SUNCE Marinkovic and Tigar are the first recipients of the CSR Certificate, which guarantees that their business activities comply with the highest standards of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The certificates were awarded by NALED, in cooperation with SMart kolektiv and Balkan Community Initiatives Fund, with the support of the Institute for Sustainable Communities.

The certificates were granted as part of the "Civil Society Advocacy Initiative program in Serbia", financed by the USAID. Contact: NALED, tel: +381 11 33 73 063 www.naled-serbia.org

Social Investment Pioneer Awards 2012

The Principles for Social Investment Secretariat – UN Global Compact has invited the companies from all around the world to showcase social investment best practices in 2012.

Launched at the 2012 Rio+20 Corporate Sustainability Forum, the Social Investment Awards program aims to acknowledge and present the best social investment practices of the SME sector and the multinational signatories of the UN Global Compact. Applications are sought in the following categories: responsible business, inclusive business, shared values, social business and strategic corporate philanthropy.

Awards will be granted to SME sector and multinational companies in each category. Deadline for applications expired on 30 September. Contact: <http://p4si.org/awards.shtm>

RARIS: Business Support Project in 32 Municipalities

In Cooperation with nine regional development agencies in Serbia, RARIS (Regional Development Agency Eastern Serbia) has launched the project of "Standardization of Non-Financial Business Support Services in 32 Municipalities".

The goal of the project is to support area-based partnerships and to enhance the regional and local economic development by strengthening and standardizing the services for non-financial support to the business sector. The implementation of the project is supported by the USAID Sustainable Local Development Project.

RARIS also published the Guide to Rural Tourism, intended for tourism workers in the field of rural tourism and the media, as well as representatives of institutions and organizations that support rural tourism.

The Guide was published within the project "Towards the EU standards in rural tourism of Eastern Serbia", with support from the Fund for an Open Society, MERD and the GIZ-KWD project.

Contact: RARIS, tel: +381 19 426 376, www.raris.org

Green Initiative's Recycling Address Book

More than 300 locations across Serbia where citizens can bring their waste for recycling have been entered into the Recycling Address Book. The Address Book is published in the Watch Out Garbage! section of the Green Initiative website.

The Address Book is a unique searchable database, which provides the information about locations where it is possible to bring certain types of waste for recycling (paper, PET packaging, metal, glass, electronic and electrical waste) and it also includes 115 addresses of public utility companies and private operators that manage waste.

The Recycling Address Book was developed as part of a Green Initiative project, in cooperation with the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ICS) and with financial support from the USAID.

Source: www.zelenainicijativa.rs

My Choice Award

The gold medal "My Choice", an acknowledgement in the field of corporate social responsibility, was presented to Naftna Industrija Srbije, whereas the campaign "Let's All Help" by the Ana & Vlade Divac Foundation was awarded the gold medal for the best socially responsible initiative.

My Choice acknowledgements were also presented to Holcim Srbija for local community investments, Srpska Banka for its Foundation for 5+, supporting the education of talented children, Banca Intesa for the cultural heritage protection project "The Place I Love", Delta Holding for supporting persons with disabilities and Unicredit Bank for investments in humanitarian projects.

Acknowledgement plaques were also awarded to the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation and the TV B92, for their support to humanitarian activities.

The purpose of My Choice award is to stimulate businesses to invest in environmental protection and community development, as well as to contribute to social enhancement.

The awards are a part of the campaign "Serbia Has Quality!", which has been implemented for four years by "My Serbia" Association with the support from the Belgrade Chamber of Commerce.

Source: mojasrbija.rs

EXCERPTS FROM NIKOLETA KOSOVAC'S BLOG: Homeless World Cup

Ever since Nikoleta Kosovac, an activist of Liceulice, heard about the Homeless World Cup, she has been promoting it as an idea for social inclusion of marginalised groups and she plans, together with the Liceulice team, to join this initiative.

Mel Young, co-founder of The Big Issue, and Harald Schmied, editor of the Megaphon, the Austrian street newspaper, arrived at the idea to organise the World Cup for homeless persons in late 2001. Two years later, Graz was the first host city of the tournament, gathering 18 national teams. The next year, out of the 141 players that had participated, 31 were already in full-time employment.

"Beating Homelessness through Football" is the slogan of the competition, which will have its tenth edition this year. The tournament will include 56 men's and 18 women's national teams (read more at: <http://www.homelessworldcup.org>)

The goal of the Homeless World Cup is to create a different social influence on the marginalised groups and bring the public attention to the issue of poverty around the world, as well as to promote the positive effects of football as a collective game. The players develop a feeling of belonging to a team and of the necessity of being a team player. Persons excluded from the life of a community develop new prospects and build fresh, healthier attitudes to life and self-esteem. The full text, as well as the author's several other publications, are available at: <http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs/blog/>

SupERSTeP for Youth Business Ideas

The competition for business ideas, announced as part of the "Youth Business Serbia" programme, is intended for young persons up to 35 years of age, with residence in the following cities and municipalities: Niš, Merošina, Doljevac, Gadžin Han, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Beočin, Sremski Karlovci, Temerin, Gornji Milanovac, Čačak, Kraljevo, Vrnjačka Banja, Raška, Subotica, Sombor and Kanjiža. These cities and municipalities are members of inter-municipal partnerships, established with the support of the USAID Sustainable Local Development Project in 2011.

Young people are given the opportunity to develop business plans, which will be considered, in February 2013, for the award of loans under Erste Bank's supERSTeP credit line, intended for young persons starting their own businesses. The selected business plans will be offered loans in the amount of EUR 100,000, with an interest rate which is 4% lower than the bank's regular offer.

The competition is open until 28 October 2012. Read more at www.biznismladihsrbiye.org

Data on NGOs Funded from the National Budget Updated

The database of organisations that received funds under the Budget Line 481 – Financial Support for Non-Governmental Organisations has been updated with the 2011 data, which ensures the transparency of public funding under this budget line for the period 2008–2011.

Integrated database provides systematic insight into how the ministries spend the public funds. It also includes all individual beneficiaries of financial support, the amounts granted under the Budget Line 481, as well as the national authorities that disbursed the funds under this Budget Line in the last three years. Contact: Centre for the Development of Non-Profit Sector www.crnps.org.rs

New Review of CSO Networks

TASCO Serbia has published the new Review of CSO Networks in Serbia. The Review includes information about 90 CSO networks, platforms and initiatives operational at the national level in Serbia.

This is the pioneer publication of this type in Serbia and it represents Serbia's first step towards promoting the visibility of civil society organisation networks.

Contact: TASCO, tel: +381 11 21 29 372 www.tasco.org

ERSTE Foundation Award for Social Integration 2013

For the fourth time, the ERSTE Foundation has announced the call for applications for the Award for Social Integration.

The call for applications is open for non-profit organisations proposing efficient, innovative and sustainable projects that contribute to social integration of marginalised groups.

In addition to the prize money totalling EUR 610,000, the 33 award-winning organisations will also receive public relations consultants' support for a period of two years.

The short listed organisations (about 130 finalists from all participating countries) will be invited to enrol in ERSTE Foundation's NGO Academy.

The call for applications is open until 11 November 2012.

Contact: ERSTE Foundation, tel: +43 50 100 15 844 www.socialintegration.org

The First Civil Society Fair in Vojvodina

TASCO Serbia Regional Office, in partnership with the Serbian Government's Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, Provincial Secretariat for Interregional Cooperation and Local Self-Government and the Centre Living Upright, organised the First Civil Society Organisations Fair in Novi Sad on 12 October 2012. The fair was also accompanied by a thematic debate on Transparent Financing of Citizens' Associations from the Local Public Funds – Current Practices, Challenges and Possibilities.

The goal of the Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Fair is to promote the work, increase the visibility and enhance the involvement of CSOs in the democratic social processes towards the EU integration, as well as to showcase successful projects.

Contact: TASCO Serbia Regional Office, tel: +381 11 21 29 372 www.tasco.org

Third Cycle of the "Mladgrad" Award

For the third consecutive year, the Civic Initiatives presented the "Mladgrad" Award, on the occasion of the International Youth Day, 12 August.

"Mladgrad" (Young City) is awarded to local self-governments, organisations, groups and individuals for their contribution to enhancing the position of young people in the local community. The purpose of the award is to promote youth success stories and encourage organisations and groups to sustain their efforts towards improving the life of young people in their communities.

The Award is organised in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Self-Government, ICS/USAID, TASCO and OSCE.

Contact: Civic Initiatives, tel: +381 11 32 84 164 www.gradjanske.org

Special Consultative Status for AWC with the United Nations Economic and Social Council

At its session in July 2012, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to grant special consultative status to the Autonomous Women's Centre. This status has enabled the Autonomous Women's Centre to actively communicate and cooperate with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as with the UN Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies.

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

BCIF Competition for the Active Communities Programme

The Balkan Community Initiatives Fund has announced a competition for the Active Communities programme.

Local associations and informal groups whose maximum budget does not exceed RSD 350,000 are eligible to apply.

The initiatives should relate to the local community, stimulate active inclusion of

citizens and contribute to overall well-being of the local community by using local potentials and resources. The programme is not limited with respect to topics. Deadline for submission of project proposals expired on 4 October.

Contact: BCIF, tel: +381 11 26 22 511 www.bcif.org

Code of Ethics of Serbian Civil Society Organisations

The Civic Initiatives has invited all civil society organisations to adopt the Code of Ethics of Civil Society Organisations in Serbia.

The idea of the need to adopt the Code originated from the experience of the non-profit sector from the last 20 years, which showed that the ideas and meanings of the concepts such as the general well-being, public interest, system of values or democratic society were not and could not be universally understood. Since their meaning is of essence for operation of non-profit organisations, the Code of Ethics should be an instrument for

self-regulation, i.e. for establishment of a community of organisations, which have clarified what their fundamental values are and what their meaning is, and which have voluntarily agreed to adhere to them.

By adopting the Code of Ethics, CSOs would more clearly indicate the gaps, as some kind of a society's corrective agent, between the officially upheld values, on the one hand, and the actual behaviour and their practical implementation, on the other.

The Code of Ethics is available on the Civic Initiatives' website: www.gradjanske.org.

Public Discussion of the Competition "Possible Serbia"

A total of 103 applications were submitted for the competition "Possible Serbia", which was open until 13 May, whereas the public discussion of the best proposals was concluded on 10 September.

The winning proposals will be announced and the awards will be presented in September and October. The scope of a number of applications exceeded the terms of the competition, yet the jury decided to include the proposals in the public debate since they found them genuinely interesting.

The comments with which the citizens

influenced the selection of the best proposals will be forwarded to the competent institutions in Serbia.

The project "Possible Serbia" is implemented by the European Movement in Serbia, in cooperation with 19 civil society organisations and with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC).

Contact: European Movement in Serbia Tel: +381 11 36 40 174, www.emins.org, www.mogucasrbija.rs

Cross-Sector Partnerships

SMart kolektiv published the paper "Cross-Sector Partnerships: Fundamental Principles, Examples of Good Practice and the Handbook for Successful Partnerships". The publication includes theoretical and practical information about cross-sector partnerships, as a tool for community development, which is available to public sector representatives at the national and local levels, CSOs, as well as to companies and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Particular attention is given to contemporary concepts of partnership development.

The paper was published with the support of the USAID.

Contact: SMart kolektiv, tel: +381 11 24 40 096, www.smartkolektiv.org

Street Festival of Activism

The Street Festival of Activism "Vreva" was organised for the first time in Belgrade on 21-22 September. "Vreva" (commotion, turmoil) was launched by Liceulice – Platform for Activism, as the first festival that integrates various forms of action, expression and engagement related to public spaces and community activism.

The fundamental idea of the festival is the assertion of such values as multiculturalism, tolerance, de-marginalisation, antidiscrimination, inclusion and environmental protection.

Contact: Liceulice, tel: +381 11 24 40 096 www.liceulice.org

The Walker Award

The Walker award was presented for the first time in Niš to organisations and individuals that contributed to resolving the community problems.

The Walker was established by the Niš-based civil society organisation "Proaktiv" and it is awarded in five categories: the media, the individual, civil society, public administration and businesses. Source: www.juznevesti.com

More Households with Internet Access

A research by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) has revealed that 47.5% of Serbian households have internet access, which is a 6.3% increase compared to last year.

The penetration of internet access is the highest in Belgrade (60.5%), in Vojvodina it is 49.3%, whereas in central Serbia it is 40.6%.

Internet access is most commonly found in households whose monthly income exceeds EUR 600 (86.3%), whereas the share of households with incomes below EUR 300 is only 29.8%. About 51% of the households with internet access are using ADSL connection, whereas 38% have broadband connection.

The share of persons who have never used a computer is as high as 38.9%, while internet has never been used by 48.4% of the respondents.

More than 840,000 persons use public administration e-services, whereas the population purchasing or ordering products and services online has doubled in size in the last year.

Computers are used by 98.7% of businesses in their activities, while 97.7% of them have internet access, which is an increase of 0.5% compared to 2011. In 73.8% of the cases, the companies with internet access also have their websites. In Belgrade, 85.9% of businesses have websites, in Vojvodina the share is 75.4%, whereas in central Serbia it is at the 59-percent mark.

Around 87% of the businesses with internet access use public administration e-services. Contact: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, tel: +381 11 24 12 922, www.webrzs.stat.gov.rs

Website for Secondary School Students

The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection launched a website intended for secondary school students.

The website titled "You Have the Right to Know", available at www.pravodaznas.rs and www.pravodaznam.rs, serves as a guide for secondary school students on how to exercise all their rights, including the right to free access to information of public importance.

Contact: Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection
Tel: +381 11 34 08 900, www.poverenik.rs

Online Map of Accessible Buildings Created

As part of the campaign "Associate with Accessibility", teams of activists updated the map with over 4,000 accessible and inaccessible buildings in Serbia. The campaign assessed the accessibility of schools, local administration buildings, police stations, as well as small stores, bakeries and butcher shops, which are equally important for daily life of persons with disabilities.

The Facebook application Accessibility Map is available at <https://www.facebook.com/JednakeMogucnosti/>
Source: www.pristupacnost.org

Conference on ICT in Teaching

The Belgrade Open School's Centre for Research of Information Technologies, with the support of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit and the Digital Agenda, has invited all interested professors and teachers who creatively use ICT in their work to register for participation in the second one-day conference titled "ICTeachers2", which is scheduled on 25 October 2012. The aim of the conference is to promote the usage of information and communication technologies in the educational process.

Additional information on how to register and how the presenters of good practices in using ICT in teaching are selected will be published by the Belgrade Open School's Centre for Research of Information Technologies on the Facebook page Nastavnici (teachers) (www.facebook.com/nastavnici).

Read more about the ICTeachers2 project at www.bos.rs/nastavnici.

Online Vehicle Registration in 20 Minutes!

Vehicle owners have the option to schedule the technical inspection of their vehicles via the e-Administration portal, as well as to pay all registration charges online, by a single payment order.

By the end of the year, at least 20 garages certified for vehicle inspection will be licensed for registration renewal by the Ministry of Interior.

The primary goal of this project is to enable the citizens to fulfil all their legal requirements in one place, as well as to introduce the obligation of the state to ensure that its citizens can fulfil those requirements in one place and in as little time as possible. The service is available at www.euprava.gov.rs.

Silver Surfers

Within the Silver Surfers project, 115 persons older than 55 years of age from eight cities have been trained in basic computer skills, while the second part of the project includes competitions between grandparents and grandchildren.

The project has been designed and implemented by the International Aid Network (IAN), with the support of the Digital Agenda Administration, on the occasion of the year 2012 – the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

The average age of Serbia's population is 41.2 years. According to estimates, by 2030, a quarter of the population will be older than 65.

Contact: IAN
tel: +381 11 76 17 197
www.ian.org.rs

Bill Gates Donates to Jagodina Library

The Public Library in Jagodina has won a \$10,000 prize awarded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, for the project of refurbishment of village libraries, where farmers will learn about new information technologies. The goal of the project is to train the farmers to buy and sell on the internet. Out of 16 village libraries in the Jagodina area, four have been refurbished with this money so far and one more is pending.

Jagodina Public Library was one of four winners from 130 candidates from all around the world that applied for the contest of the NGO Beyond Access, financed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Contact: Jagodina Public Library, tel: +381 35 244 580
www.jabooka.org.rs, www.agrolib.rs

Tell-tale Web Application

The web application Tell-tale won the second prize in the contest titled "Promotion of Communication between Citizens and Public Authorities through Internet", organised by the Digital Agenda Administration last year.

The aim of the application is to enable all citizens to report problems in their communities to local self-governments. The application allows for quick identification of problems and their timely resolution. An additional feature of the application is the option to review all problems reported by citizens, as well as to check their current status. This option increases the transparency and efficiency of local authorities. The application is available at <http://tuzibaba.cicevac-razanj.com>

Municipalities Share Experiences with e-Administration

At the initiative of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, a meeting was organised in October, where municipal authorities presented examples of good practices under the topic "e-Administration at the Service of Society and Economy". The exchange of experiences and good practices should contribute to social inclusion and poverty reduction at the local level.

Based on the conclusions of the meeting, the National Democratic Institute will support about a dozen municipalities over the next 12 months in building their capacities for introduction of e-administration.

The meeting was prepared in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign and Domestic Trade and Telecommunications.

Contact: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, tel: +381 11 31 14 605, www.inkluzija.gov.rs

Online Real Estate Registry

The Republic Geodetic Authority (RGA) has launched a new web-based service "KnWeb", available at <http://katastar.rgz.gov.rs/KnWebPublic>, which allows the general public to search the central database of the Serbian Real Estate Cadastre.

RGA has also developed an application for public authorities and local self-governments, which provides them information about surface areas, terrain, registered mortgages, amounts in pertinent contracts, banks involved etc.

Public authorities are able to find all relevant information about particular real estate, whereas the general public is given insight into the basic information about the real estate and its owners.

Contact: Republic Geodetic Authority
Tel: +381 11 26 50 886, www.rgz.gov.rs

CALENDAR of Important Dates

OCTOBER

- 01 October – International Day of Older Persons
- 03 October – International Children's Day
- 10 October – World Mental Health Day
- 15 October – White Cane Safety Day and International Day of Rural Women
- 16 October – World Food Day
- 17 October – International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- 24 October – United Nations Day, World Development Information Day and Breast Cancer Awareness Day

NOVEMBER

- 07 November – European Science Day
- 08 November – Educational Workers' Day in Serbia
- 14 November – World Diabetes Day
- 16 November – International Day for Tolerance
- 17 November – International Students' Day
- 20 November – Universal Children's Day
- 23 November – International Humanitarian Day
- 25 November – International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

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