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SMANJENJE SIROMAŠTVA
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT



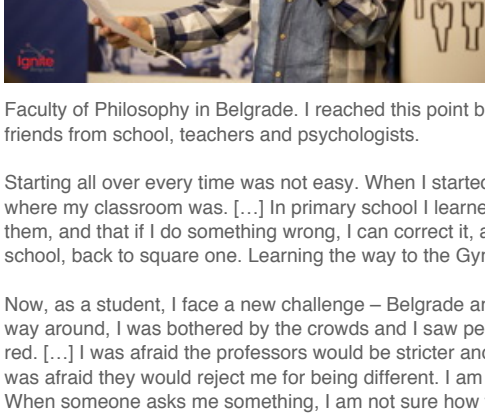
31st NEWSLETTER

ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

INTRODUCTION

STEFAN NOVAKOVIĆ: We All Have Special Needs and We Are All Different – That's What We Have in Common

From the 32nd Belgrade Ignite event "Get Involved 3" (29 October 2015, Impact Hub, Belgrade)



I am Stefan Novaković, I am 20 years old. I was born in Pančevo, where I completed primary and secondary school. I am here this evening to tell you a story about myself, but also to speak on behalf of all those they call children with special needs. That's a silly name, because we all have special needs and we are all different, that's what we all have in common.

People must understand that they all want to function independently and would like to go to kindergarten, school, and find work because they are useful for all of society. Here, I just enrolled at the History Department of the

Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. I reached this point because I had support, primarily from my family, friends from school, teachers and psychologists.

Starting all over every time was not easy. When I started primary school, I had to learn the way to school, where my classroom was. [...] In primary school I learned a lot of things, to be nice to my friends, to help them, and that if I do something wrong, I can correct it, as well as my friends' mistakes. [...] After primary school, back to square one. Learning the way to the Gymnasium, new friends, teachers, classrooms.

Now, as a student, I face a new challenge – Belgrade and faculty. At first, I was afraid I would not find my way around, I was bothered by the crowds and I saw people crossing the street when the traffic light was red. [...] I was afraid the professors would be stricter and of how my new colleagues would accept me. I was afraid they would reject me for being different. I am different because I have poor contact with others. When someone asks me something, I am not sure how to answer, I have a bit of trouble finding adequate words. However, I've met new friends from other cities, sometimes they talk with me, sometimes I talk with them. [...]

After faculty, I would like to find work, make a living and live independently, form a family when the time comes, and one day invite my friends to visit. I still have a bit of a problem in communication, but I learn. I would just like it if people were better and helped others in trouble and were honest. We have to look after ourselves, our environment, but also not create differences between people and not ridicule them.

More information on the video 32nd Belgrade Invite event can be found [HERE](#). This page will soon present transcripts and video recordings from the event.

NEWS

Economic Development and Employment

- Serbia Improves Ranking by 9 Places on World Bank List
- Results of Social Contribution of Companies Asked

Social Welfare and Healthcare

- Telecenter for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired Persons Open
- Social Housing in Belgrade by European Standards

Education

- "Policies and Practices of Inclusive Education in Serbia" Event Held
- Public Hearing "National Qualifications Framework – Connecting Education and Labour Market in Serbia" Held
- University of Belgrade Activities for Providing Access to Students with Disabilities
- Roma Youth from Niš Continue Education Due to EU Scholarships
- Khan Academy in Serbian Now Available to All

Vulnerable Groups and Human Rights

- Amendments to the Law on National Councils of National Minorities Announced
- Integration of the Roma an Important Condition in the EU Negotiations
- The Conference "Role of ICT in the Development of Inclusive Society" Held
- The Project "Support to Advancement of Human Rights and Zero Tolerance for Discrimination" Presented
- SOS Platform for Helping the Young - Victims of Digital Violence

EU Integration

- Action Plan for the Chapter 24 Submitted to the EU Members
- EC Adriatic Ionian Transnational Cooperation Programme 2014-2020
- Erasmus+: 2.2 Billion Euros for Projects Available in 2016
- The Network for Human Trafficking Broken up Thanks to IPA Regional Projects
- Vršac - A Most Successful Municipality in Using the EU Pre-Accession Funds

EU News

- Agreement on Cooperation between the EU and Western Balkans in a Refugee Crisis
- European Agriculture Enters a Hi-Tech Era
- "New Seal of Excellence" Helps Regions Choose Outstanding Research Projects

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT

"How to Find Information on Sources of Financing and Resources for Schools, Teachers and Professional Associates" Guide Published

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, published the "Guide for Schools, Teachers and Professional Associates: How to Find Information on Sources of Financing and Resources for Schools, Teachers and Professional Associates".

The Guide intends to provide schools, teachers and professional associates with useful information for improving the quality of work through various sources of financing and resources, additional stimulation for the improvement of teaching and learning through projects and applying to donors, and contains useful information on the process of planning aimed at school development, sources of information on trends in the educational sector, as well as international and local sources of financing for school activities.

[Click here to download the publication "Guide for Schools, Teachers and Professional Associates: How to Find Information on Sources of Financing and Resources for Schools, Teachers and Professional Associates"](#).

Mapping of Social Protection Services at Local Level Initiated

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in cooperation with the Republic Institute for Social Protection, is implementing the initiative Mapping Social Protection Services at the Local Level. The mapping is being implemented by the Centre for Social Policy and Educational Centre from Leskovac. This comprehensive survey will be implemented within the territory of the Republic of Serbia, in a total of 145 local self-government units.

The goal of the mapping is acquiring insight into the current status and number of social protection services at the local level. Likewise, the findings and recommendations of mapping the services of social protection under the mandate of local self-government should contribute to: the further development of non-institutional forms of protection, the development of pluralism among service providers and integrated social protection services, as well as the improvement of the accessibility, efficiency and quality of services.

Data on social protection services will be collected as of 1 November, from centres for social work and departments for social activities, and/or all state and non-governmental providers of such services. The results of the mapping are expected in the spring of 2016.

"Initiative for Youth Employment" and First Project Activities Initiated

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, is starting an initiative for youth employment, as well as support to the implementation of the Employment and Social Policy Reform Programme - ESRP.

The goal of the initiative is the improvement of the intersectoral approach to the issue of youth employment, strengthening monitoring in all phases of testing the measures and cooperation with social partners. The pilot phase in 2015-2016 is part of a wider SDC programme, "From Education to Employment: Development of Youth Skills and Public-Private Partnerships in the Republic of Serbia".

One of the planned activities is testing innovative approaches to youth employment and improving their employability through initiatives for establishing partnerships at the local level, aimed at collecting and analysing experiences at the local level and improving public policies.

32nd Belgrade Ignite Event "Get Involved no. 3" Held

The 32nd Belgrade Ignite "Get Involved 3", dedicated to marking the International Day Against Poverty and the issue of social inclusion, was held on 29 October 2015 at the Impact Hub in Belgrade.

Ten excellent and inspirational speakers once again, with sign language interpretation and in an accessible space, presented what social inclusion means for them, through five-minute presentations. The audience could learn: what life is like in Serbia with HIV/AIDS; whether our society accepts persons having changed their sex; is movement using a wheelchair an obstacle for active life; how to build one's family a home with one's own two hands; how to get a job you love through self-employment; how music can help empower youth; how each one of us can help the refugees passing through Serbia; how to support the professional development of persons with autism through inclusive education; whether it is possible to lead an active life after the age of 60.

The 32nd Belgrade Ignite "Get Involved 3" is the third of its kind organized by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the association "Serbia in Motion". [Visit our YouTube channel and view the videos of the presentations from last year's Belgrade Ignite dedicated to social inclusion.](#)

International Day Against Poverty Commemorated

The International Day Against Poverty is marked on 17 October. In the Republic of Serbia, nearly a quarter of the population is exposed to the risk of poverty or social exclusion. The latest data indicates an increase in the poverty rate in 2014, compared to previous years – 8.9% of the population could not meet their basic needs in 2014.

Data indicates that the most vulnerable is the population outside urban areas, particularly in Central Serbia, children up to 14 years of age, youth (15-24), uneducated, unemployed and inactive bearers of households. The economic crisis struck the hardest among those categories of the population who were already in the worst situation prior to the crisis, since their relative position compared to the population average declined further.

More information on poverty and social exclusion trends in the Republic of Serbia can be found on the web page [Poverty Statistics](#).

OPEN CALLS

- [First Call for Project Proposals within Interreg-IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria-Serbia \(Deadline: 18/1/2016\)](#)

- [Share Your Knowledge – Become a Mentor 2015/2016 \(Deadline: 30/11/2015\)](#)

You may follow the news on open calls regularly at: socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/en/tenders

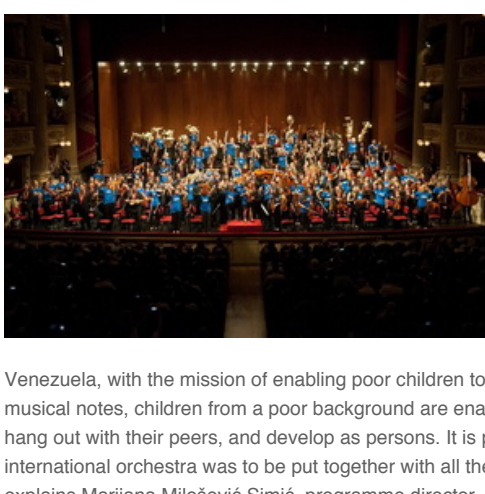
READ MORE...

- [UN Report "Progress of the World's Women" Published](#)
- [eGovernment: As of January 50 Documents for a Baby on One Paper](#)
- [Digitalisation of M-4 Form and Other PIO Fund Services](#)

You may follow the news on social inclusion and poverty reduction regularly at: socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/en/

SOCIAL INCLUSION BLOG

SNJEŽANA JOLIĆ: You Have Value



(...) Social networks have brought us a new form of connecting people, and thus, through them, I've found many of my primary school friends. [...] I was touched the most by the fate of two of my friends who, seeking happiness, entered unhappy marriages. I know it is not easy being a girl with a disability in a small town. Marked in many ways. Of course, in such places everything usually has to go according to a standard sequence, and one of the things in such a sequence is marriage. You are valued according to how much your neighbours

appreciate you, what kind of young man asks for your hand, and how many children you have. If you are not married, you simply have no value. If you have a disability, your chances for marriage decrease, along with the number of suitors. Then it is usually: take what you can, and so you are convinced, in part by your environment, in part by customs, and in part by yourself, that the suitor you face must be a good guy since he wants you.

Thus these two friends of mine – one of them, as a girl, incredibly beautiful, with boys flitting about her at the time when the hormones started to work like bees around a flower, the other cute, but rather withdrawn – found their husbands. The pretty one got married to a drunkard who abuses her, beats her, and with whom she has four children. Beautiful children, just like their mother used to be, yet she is now just a shadow of that beautiful girl. I tried to find something familiar in her eye, the spark of that devil bravely stepping through life. Unfortunately, I did not find it. I did not even recognize her. If she hadn't told me who she was, I would probably never have worked it out myself.

The other one, the withdrawn one, says her husband does not beat her, but he is hard-headed, wants everything his way. I see sadness in her eyes and I look at her two girls, even more beautiful than their mother used to be. However, what gives me joy is that she still wants to fight. She did not give up. (...)

I do not tolerate violence or violent people. I simply cannot sit in their company. When I know one of my friends was abused in their families, whether she has a disability or not, I simply wish to kidnap them and take them somewhere far away, where they would be protected. I try to help them with kind words and love, though conscious that they know it all themselves, but do not have the strength to resist, for whatever reason. However, I know that no one can be protected from violence until they protect themselves. Until they say STOP.

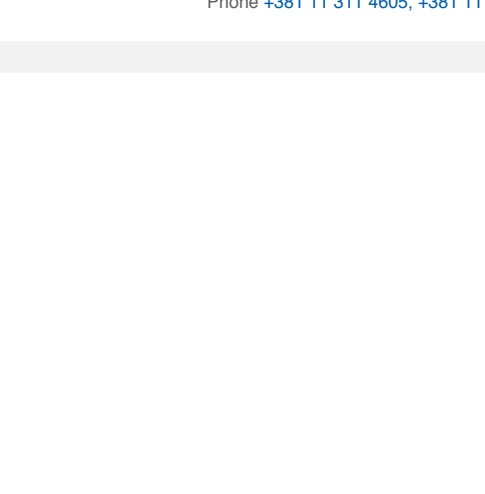
You have to know that you have value. You have value even if you are not married, if you have no children, you have value if you have a disability.

The text in its entirety can be found at the [Social Inclusion Blog](#).

Other texts by our bloggers can be found at: www.socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/blog/

SUCCESS STORY

Music – Link to Peers Worldwide



Around 250 students from three music schools in Serbia, Čuprija, Jagodina and Paraćin, as well as kids in the programme of the Novi Sad Centre for Social Work, are attending musical workshops by "El Sistema Srbija", implemented by the Music Art Project. The best among them had the opportunity to participate in concerts in late August at "Milan Expo 2015", at the third gathering of youth orchestras working in accordance with this model of education.

"El Sistema" was created 40 years ago in Venezuela, with the mission of enabling poor children to gain primary education in music. Through musical notes, children from a poor background are enabled to get off the streets, avoid vice, but also hang out with their peers, and develop as persons. It is present in 60 states, and if an imaginary international orchestra was to be put together with all the kids, it would have four million young musicians, explains Marijana Milošević Simić, programme director. It was initiated in Serbian schools in the autumn of 2014; it involves work with children from seven years of age to those in the final grades of music schools. It is free, and children play in orchestras, despite being educated as solo players. (Previous) musical knowledge is not required for the children. (...)

- Music is a universal language. When a child conquers a note, sings successfully or plays a sequence, you cannot measure their happiness, feeling of self-confidence, says Marijana Milošević Simić and continues explaining why this programme has multiple benefits. – Not only children from economically poor families are vulnerable. A child attending music school without having its own instrument is also in some way poor, she adds.

Global networking provides for having renowned artists as guests. – You cannot imagine the smile of a seven year old's face, not quite a virtuoso on the violin, when an international conductor places him on the post of first violin in the orchestra, says our interlocutor. Children from Serbia thus had the opportunity of being conducted by the famous Gustavo Dudamel, along with Zubin Mehta one of the most sought-after conductors of today. It is interesting to note that he, as a boy in his native Venezuela, was introduced to music precisely through the "El Sistema" workshops.

The programme is free, and professors have to complete training to be able to work with kids from vulnerable categories. The plan is to increase the number of schools where it is accessible in Serbia. Negotiations are under way with principals in Vranje and other cities in the south of the country. Also, one idea is to form a baby orchestra with children aged up to nine years. Another wish is to obtain instruments so that as many young musicians as possible can learn to play.

(...)

The text in its entirety can be found [here](#).

More success stories can be found at socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs

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