

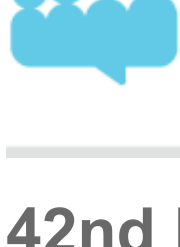
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 SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT

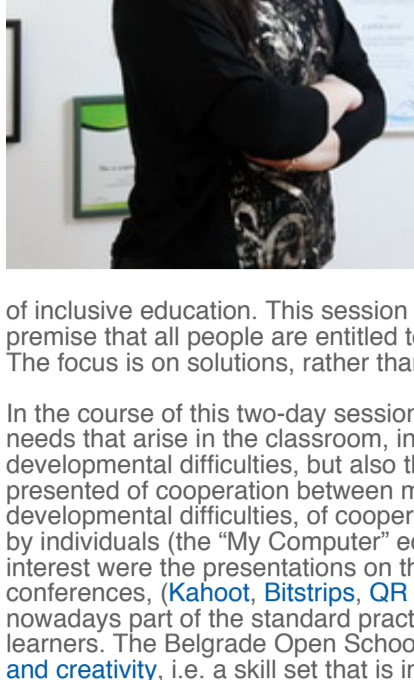


42nd NEWSLETTER

ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Importance of New Technologies in Inclusive Education



Written by: Dragana Malidžan Vinkić, Education Coordinator, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia

Fourth year in a row, the British Council and its partners organized the "New Technologies in Education 2017" international conference in Belgrade from 9 to 11 February 2017. While the conference's primary focus was on how to use new technologies available in the classroom today for educational purposes, how to make classes more interesting and stimulating for young learners and what the optimal technological conditions are for kicking off the process of innovation and application of information and communications technologies (ICT) to education, it also revealed the many roles that education plays in 21st century society, and how a teacher can respond to the new challenges in the classroom. Technologies have thus given rise to the need for new approaches to teaching, for adjustment, to ensure that everybody is included, both technologies and people. From a broader point of view, this is a story about inclusion (Lat. *inclusio* – inclusion, inclusivity, comprised and inclusion).

This conference includes a session on application of ICT in support of inclusive education. This session always provides excellent examples of practices that are based on the premise that all people are entitled to equal rights and opportunities, regardless of individual differences. The focus is on solutions, rather than problems.

In the course of this two-day session, held on **Friday** and **Saturday**, solutions were presented for various needs that arise in the classroom, including examples related to not only students with disabilities or developmental difficulties, but also those in the extended curriculum programme. Excellent examples were presented of cooperation between mainstream schools and special schools for children with developmental difficulties, of cooperation with schools abroad and genuinely original solutions designed by individuals (the "My Computer" educational interactive software application by Ludoluger). Of particular interest were the presentations on the use of software and online tools that were inspired by previous conferences, (**Kahoot, Bitstrips, QR Code Reader, Web 2.0 tools, Skype, Wikispaces**), which are nowadays part of the standard practices in working with students with learning difficulties and others learners. The Belgrade Open School presented its own **game designed to develop social competencies and creativity**, i.e. a skill set that is important for developing good interpersonal relations.

Special emphasis was given to the issue of accessibility of tuition and teaching materials, and the participants thus had the opportunity to learn not only about the terminology (universal design, accessibility), but also about how to create universally accessible textbooks and other electronic content (**documents, presentations, PDFs, video content**), and to hear a presentation on the accessible **Catalogue of Assistive Technologies** prepared by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF.

Very strong messages were delivered to further increase the capacity of teaching staff – believing in oneself, team work, developing empathy, which in turn has a direct impact on developing good interpersonal relationships and creating a positive emotional climate in society and in the classroom, encouraging the active participation of all students in the learning process because children must learn and develop together with their friends and peers, ICT is one of the key tools for fulfilling individual learning needs, and access to adequate technologies is a basic human right.

These excellent practitioners went a step further in their reflections on the role of the teacher, by confirming that **it is important for them to eradicate inequalities in access to education and that every student in the classroom is an individual deserving of respect and acceptance as a human being.**

NEWS

Economic Development and Employment

- ▶ Platform for proposals for improving the business environment
- ▶ Steps to reconcile work and parenting
- ▶ The Project for Building the Ecosystem for the Development of Financial Instruments for the Support of Social Enterprises
- ▶ Grants under the Programme Encouraging the Development of Entrepreneurship by Supporting new Businesses

Social Welfare and Healthcare

- ▶ The City of Vršac is Training 19 Additional Personal Companions for Persons with Disabilities
- ▶ The Results of the Survey and the Analysis of Local Agreements for the Protection of Children from Violence
- ▶ Life Expectancy for Women will extend to 90 years by 2030
- ▶ The Phone Number for Reporting Abuse on the Internet is Operational

Education

- ▶ Meeting of the Joint Body for Support to the Social Inclusion and Coordination of Monitoring ISC Performance
- ▶ The World Bank Approved 47 Million Euros for Preschool Institutions in Serbia
- ▶ Workshop for the Preparation of the Manual for the Application of the Rulebook on Recognising Discrimination
- ▶ Consultation Process for the Draft of the Digital Competency Framework has Started
- ▶ The Catalogue of Assistive Technology Presented

Vulnerable Groups and Human Rights

- ▶ "Where are Young People in the Agenda 2030?" Conference on Sustainable Development Held
- ▶ "Creation of Tolerance and Understanding towards the LGBT Community in Serbian Society" Panel Held
- ▶ Around Half of the Serbian Citizens have a Positive Attitude towards Migrants
- ▶ "Strengthening of Young Roma Families" Programme Presented
- ▶ World Day of Social Justice

EU Integration

- ▶ Hahn: EU Leaders Will Confirm the EU Perspective for the Balkans
- ▶ Serbia and EU Discuss Ongoing EU Assistance and Future Projects
- ▶ Nearly Half of the Population of Serbia Supports the EU Membership
- ▶ Increased Funding for Cross-border Cooperation
- ▶ 150 Loans Approved from the EU Programme COSME

EU News

- ▶ Greece is Opening Offices to Help Citizens with Debts
- ▶ Employment and Social Development in Europe Quarterly Review – Winter 2016
- ▶ EU Ombudsman: EU Foreign Service Should Pay its Interns
- ▶ European Commission Postpones the New Vision for Europe until December

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT

Public Call for Towns and Municipalities to Apply for the Prizes for Contributions to the Development of All Forms of Accessibility within their Territory in 2016

The Ombudsman, in cooperation with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, is issuing a public call for awarding prizes to towns, municipalities and city municipalities in the Republic of Serbia that have contributed to the development of all forms of accessibility within their territory, and/or their environment in 2016.

Thus, in addition to awarding the above prize, the Ombudsman wishes to promote good practice examples in the field of accessibility at the local level, as well as to achieve better mutual cooperation among towns and municipalities in the Republic of Serbia, in order to establish the situation in the field of accessibility and the reasons why the regulations guaranteeing the right to accessibility of public facilities and services to persons with disabilities and mobility impairments are not being applied in full, as well as to formulate recommendations and plans for improvements within their competence.

The deadline for application has been extended to 17 March 2017. More information and the application form can be found at www.ombudsman.rs

Representatives of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit Attended the Presentation of the ESRP Draft in Skopje

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is in the final stage of creating the Employment and Social Reform Programme (ESRP). The Draft has been prepared, and a public discussion is in progress. A consultative event was organised on this occasion on 21 February in Skopje. The event was attended by numerous representatives from relevant institutions, social partners, civil society organisations, international organisations, and other stakeholders.

The representatives of line ministries of the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia presented ESRP objectives and measures from the following areas: employment and labour market, human capital and skills, as well as social inclusion and social protection. Lijijana Simović, Director General of the Directorate for EU Integration, Programming and Implementation of EU funds of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Government of Montenegro, and Ivan Sekulović, Head of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, shared their experiences with the participants regarding the adoption and implementation of the ESRP. It was proposed that the governments which have already adopted the ESRP should act proactively towards the European Union in order to access the funds of the European Social Fund for the Western Balkans.

OPEN CALLS

- ▶ The National Employment Service Open Calls
- ▶ Open Call for Co-financing CSOs (EIDHR) (Deadline: 13/3/017)
- ▶ Co-financing of Projects for Public Information in Languages of National Minorities (Deadline: 16/3/2017)
- ▶ Open Call for Small Grants for CSOs Monitoring Public Administration (Deadline: 17/3/2017)
- ▶ BOSIFEST 2017 Film Competition Opened (Deadline: 5/4/2017)
- ▶ Open Call for the Unemployed for Disbursement of Self-employment Subsidies for 2017 (Deadline: 10/4/2017)
- ▶ Call for Submissions for "Mama Cash" Fund Grants for 2017 (Deadline: 15/05/2017)
- ▶ Annual Calendar of Open Calls for 2017 on the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society Website

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

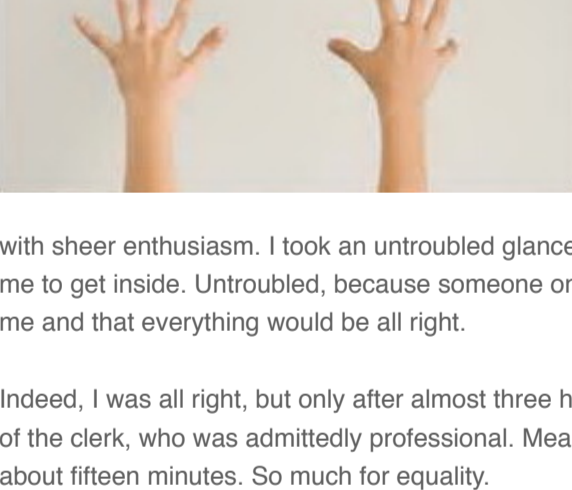
READ MORE...

- ▶ The Open Parliament – New Website where Citizens can Vote for Draft Laws
- ▶ Participate in the Online Week 2017
- ▶ Study on the Challenges and Needs of Social Enterprises and CSOs in Serbia
- ▶ First National Network of Schools and Preschool Institutions against Sexual Violence Established
- ▶ Teachers and Parents Increasingly Joining School Clubs in Serbia
- ▶ UNESCO's GRALE III Report Promoted
- ▶ Entrepreneurs in Eastern Serbia Awarded More than RSD 15 Million in 2016
- ▶ Empowering Women from Regional Trade Union Council 'Solidarity'
- ▶ Career Days – The Project Helping Youth to Find Jobs or Training
- ▶ Team from Pančevo Wins the Ministry of Data Challenge
- ▶ Winners of 2017 "Anđelka Milić" Award Announced

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

SOCIAL INCLUSION BLOG

JELENA MILOŠEVIĆ: Personal Documents – Why Simple, When It Can Be Complicated?



As much as we would like to postpone it, there comes a time in our lives when we have to apply for a new passport and identity card. They say that the procedure is now computerised, networked, simplified. However, my recent experience has proved that it is not exactly like that for everyone. (...)

I chose an accessible police station relatively close to where I lived and managed to arrange accessible transportation for both ways, which remains one of the greatest obstacles to everyday life of persons with disabilities in Belgrade.

I was delighted when they called my name only about ten minutes after the scheduled time and I walked into the office for submission of applications with sheer enthusiasm. I took an untroubled glance at the photo booth, which was definitely too small for me to get inside. Untroubled, because someone on the phone told me that I could bring my photos with me and that everything would be all right.

Indeed, I was all right, but only after almost three hours spent at the station wasting my time and the time of the clerk, who was admittedly professional. Meanwhile, everybody else finished their business in only about fifteen minutes. So much for equality.

The clerk first decisively rejected the photos that I brought with me. Then, when I explained that I could not fit inside the booth as it was too small and asked whether she could take the camera out and take the photos outside of the booth, she gave an authoritative answer – 'No'.

I agreed with her proposal to finish the paperwork first. I assumed it would be the easier part. She completed her part of the job neatly and efficiently, and then it was my turn – to sign the application and do a fingerprint scan. However, we got stuck again. Those devices are attached to the computer with very short cables, while my posture in the wheelchair was reclined sitting (owing to the nature of my disability) and I could not lean forward to reach them. I could barely reach the table, which was also fixed in its place. So, we had to make the device 'reach out' towards me somehow.

After various manoeuvres with the wheelchair, I managed to position myself at a certain angle, while we stretched the cables to the limit towards my right hand so that I could sign the application and scan my fingerprints, fearful that the taut cable might unplug. That would really take the trouble to the next level.

Soon after, we were back to photo taking. The clerk, who had by that point realised that we would solve any problem if we joined efforts, decided to try and upload the photo that I had brought with me. She really did her best, but the system would not accept it, period. Then her superior officer came in and, intrigued by the whole affair, began examining how the camera was fixed to its mount. If somebody could fix it there, it was logical to assume that it could be unfixed. With a bit of patience, skill and resourcefulness, they managed to take it off. It was still connected to the computer with another short cable, so it was not entirely loose, but it was long enough to turn it towards me and take photos from an unusual angle, with a bit of wrist twisting. (...)

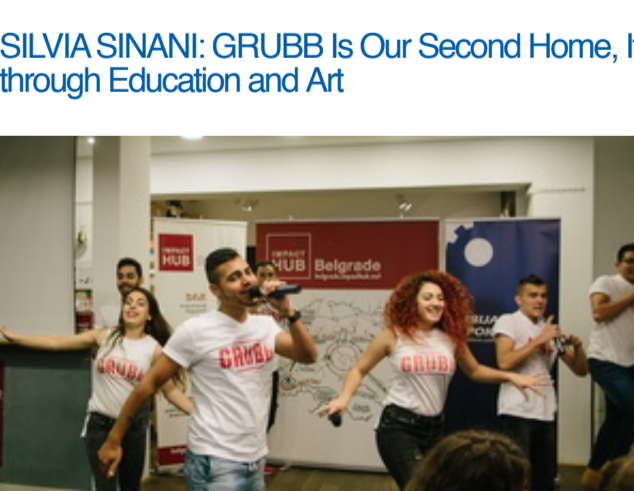
Of course, it is true that there are many more people who are able to fit inside the photo booth than those that are not, like me, but we are also citizens of this country. We must have personal documents; therefore, the conditions for obtaining them must also be ensured. (...)

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

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

SUCCESS STORY

SILVIA SINANI: GRUBB Is Our Second Home, It Helps Roma Children to Win Freedom through Education and Art



Transcript of the speech at the 37th Belgrade Ignite, called 'Get Involved No 4' (25 October 2016, Impact Hub, Belgrade)

When people ask me what GRUBB means to me, I tell them that it is my second home.

My name is Silvia Sinani and I am 19 years old. At the GRUBB centre, I hold educational and dance workshops. I help children to fulfil their dreams, just as I have fulfilled mine. Now I am standing before you as a proud member of

Roma people. I have finished secondary school and I help new generations to do well at school and expand their horizons; I try to share with them the valuable experience I have gained since I have joined the GRUBB family.

Because this is exactly what GRUBB is about: the feeling of belonging here, of being important, of having somebody to rely on, to ask help from, to grow, develop your talents and acquire new skills!

I was only 16 years old when I became a part of this show, which has helped me to get to know myself, as well as to realize what I want to be in my life. And so, at age 16, I was given a chance to be a part of a great musical called the GRUBB Show, which combines traditional Roma and modern hip-hop music to tell a unique story about our life, our customs and our daily struggle against the prejudices we are facing everywhere we go.

I did not just become a member of the musical's A-team, I also went on a tour of Canada, which lasted a full month! Can you imagine a month across the Atlantic, without mum and dad, without my sisters. "But I am a big girl", that's what I used to tell myself. And an important person. I didn't go on the stage only as Silvia, but as a Roma girl, representing all of us. And, you know, people get carried away by all that. Grand theatres, the media, the scene, costumes, makeup – a big mix-up in my head. I immediately had a reality check: in the dress rehearsal, right before the premiere, the director brought me back from the clouds to reality, because I was talking when I was supposed to keep quiet and listen; I was nearly removed from the team! Because rules are there to be followed, while discipline is not something that Roma people excel in – it is in our nature to resist rules and to be spirited and talkative.

However, we can also be mature, responsible and committed! That is how the books "GRUBB Stories 1" and "GRUBB Stories 2" came to be written in our creative writing workshops. And they were written by us, Roma. They have been translated into English, French and German, so that our voice can be heard beyond the boundaries of our country. The books are illustrated with our photos and they are truly unique in the world. I am telling you, we can do so many things! (...)

And that is who we are – GRUBB, Roma people who are educated, successful and ready to share their culture and customs with you.

And this is me – Silvia Sinani, happy to be living my dream and helping Roma children to win their freedom through education and art.

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

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