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SMAJENJE SIROMAŠTVA
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION UNIT

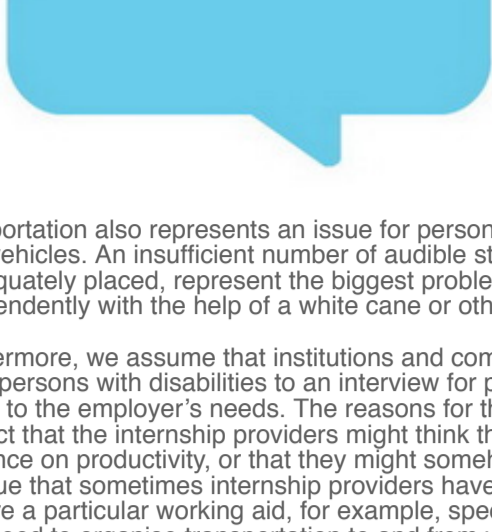


49th NEWSLETTER

ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

INTRODUCTION

On the Occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Faster Way from the Classroom to Getting a Job – Our Perspective

Written by: Lazar Bulatović and Nikola B. Ilić, interns at the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia

Internships provide young people with the opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired during their education and to grow and mature at both professional and personal level, thus making the first step in starting their careers. Have you ever wondered about the difficulties persons with disabilities face during the process of finding opportunities for applying for internships?

In the first place, the buildings in which offices are located can be architecturally exceedingly inaccessible, especially for people who need wheelchairs to get around. The use of public transportation also represents an issue for persons with disabilities because of the small number of low-floor vehicles. An insufficient number of audible street signals and guiding tracks, which in some cases are inadequately placed, represent the biggest problem for blind and visually impaired persons who walk independently with the help of a white cane or other aids for orientation and movement.

Furthermore, we assume that institutions and companies offering internship opportunities do not always invite persons with disabilities to an interview for potential internships, even though their profile is well-suited to the employer's needs. The reasons for this are multiple. However, they can be summarised into the fact that the internship providers might think that physical or mental disability would have a negative influence on productivity, or that they might somehow spoil the public image of the company or institution. It is true that sometimes internship providers have to adapt the workplace for a person with disabilities or acquire a particular working aid, for example, special voice software for persons with visual impairment, or they need to organise transportation to and from work for persons who have difficulty using the public transportation independently. Nevertheless, it is very important to understand that, in most cases, these adaptations are not as expensive as people sometimes think.

Another challenge is the number of persons with disabilities who actually apply for internships, which is extremely low. According to the statements of persons with disabilities who were consulted during the preparation of this text, and who successfully completed their internships, this challenge derives from the fear of being discriminated against during the selection process, or even during the actual internship.

Finally, we have noted the lack of open calls which would apply only to persons with disabilities.

In accordance with this brief review from the author's point of view, we propose the following solutions for increasing the number of persons with disabilities who would have the opportunity to complete internships:

- In a systematic way enable persons with disabilities to have internships within institutions and public enterprises.
- In order to address the fear of being discriminated against felt by youth with disabilities, organise training courses on antidiscrimination for employees.
- Exchange examples of good practice between companies and institutions that employ persons with disabilities and those which plan to start employing them.
- Organise thematic meetings and training courses which aim to develop internships for persons with disabilities; this would include individual presentations during the interview with the internship provider, which would be customised exclusively for persons with disabilities.

Within this context, an important step was made with the publication of the [Guidelines for developing the Antidiscrimination Policy for employers in Serbia](#), produced by the Commissioner for Protection of Equality.

Even though, it appears that persons with disabilities face more challenges in the process of finding internships than people without disabilities, examples of good practice do exist. The Centre for Students with Disabilities of the University of Belgrade provides internship opportunities for final year students and graduates. Persons with disabilities should apply for internships regardless of potentially unfavourable circumstances. This will undoubtedly increase their visibility among potential employers and enable them to become interested in what persons with disabilities have to offer. It also seems necessary to actively and continuously encourage internship providers and potential employers to include persons with disabilities in their staff.

We would like to conclude our review by inviting all institutions and public and private enterprises to do everything in their power to give young people with disabilities the opportunity to have internship and work experiences, as well as stimulating work environments, which will certainly contribute to long-term competitiveness and innovation of these organisations.

NEWS

Economic Development and Employment

- ▶ [By Introducing Circular Economy, Serbia Would Receive 30 Thousand New Jobs](#)
- ▶ [Seven Best "Ideas for a Better Tomorrow" Awarded EUR 40,000](#)
- ▶ [Panel Discussion "How to Become a \(Green\) Millionaire?" Held](#)
- ▶ [The "Youth and the Economy – One Step Away from Successful Business" Workshop Held](#)

Social Welfare and Healthcare

- ▶ [Improve the Services for People with HIV](#)
- ▶ [The EU donated EUR5.4 million to Serbia in support of social inclusion](#)
- ▶ [Swiss Support to the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Serbia](#)
- ▶ [In the Case of Violence against Children and Peer Violence, Preventive Measures are the Most Important](#)

Education

- ▶ [Conference on Fostering a Democratic Culture in Schools Held](#)
- ▶ [New Erasmus+ General Call for Proposals for 2018 Announced](#)
- ▶ [Seven Ministries in the Fight against Peer Violence](#)
- ▶ [The "Let's Motivate our Children to be Active" Project Accepted by all Schools](#)
- ▶ [Education for Refugee Children and Asylum-Seekers](#)
- ▶ [Students at the Presentation of the BOSIFEST at the Book, Media and Education Fair](#)

Vulnerable Groups and Human Rights

- ▶ [Public Consultations on Amendments to the Law on National Councils of National Minorities](#)
- ▶ [Serbia is Dedicated to Promotion of Gender Equality](#)
- ▶ [The "16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women" Global Campaign](#)
- ▶ [Unemployment Remains the Biggest Problem of the Roma in the Region](#)
- ▶ [Fifth Meeting of the SCTM Network for Roma Issues](#)
- ▶ [National Minorities Budget Fund has been Activated after 15 Years](#)

EU Integration

- ▶ [Serbia's EU Accession Journey is Much More Important than the Destination](#)
- ▶ [Economic Reforms in the EU Accession Process](#)
- ▶ ["European Policies and Rural Communities Development" Debate](#)
- ▶ [Serbian organisations awarded grants for improved EU-related communication](#)

EU News

- ▶ [European Pillar of Social Rights: Proclamation and signing](#)
- ▶ [Forecast: euro area economy on track to grow at fastest pace in a decade](#)
- ▶ [Conference on the contribution of Social Economy to economic growth and social cohesion in the EU](#)
- ▶ [European Women to Work for Free Till End of Year](#)

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT

Regional Conference on Measuring Gender Equality in Western Balkans Held

Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in cooperation with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro, supported by the Regional School for Public Administration, organized on December 1 a regional conference entitled: "Measuring Gender Equality in the Western Balkans".

Gender equality is one of the priority areas in countries of the Western Balkans, all facing challenges in achieving gender equality. Hence, the conference was aimed at facilitating the exchange of experience in data collection and measuring gender equality, as well as the use of data in policymaking among civil servants involved in gender issues from the Western Balkans countries, experts from the region and from the European Union member-states, representatives of the non-governmental and international organizations.

One of the conference topics was the Gender Equality Index, a measuring instrument developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality for measuring the gap between men and women in six domains: money, work, time, power, health, knowledge and in two sub-domains – intersecting inequalities and violence. Representatives from Serbia, as the first country outside the European Union to calculate its Gender Equality Index, provided insight into the process of introducing the Index and presented the results of the Gender Equality Index in the Republic of Serbia.

National Statistical Office Releases Publication: "Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia, 2017"

The National Statistical Office released the fifth issue of its publication: "Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia, 2017". The publication was supported by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

The publication resulted from the review of the beneficiaries' needs for monitoring the situation in society and relations between genders using statistical data, with the intention of rendering statistical data more useful in the design and implementation of policies aimed at eliminating gender inequalities and advancing equal opportunities for all. Regular systemic provision of statistical indicators and their advancement is necessary for the situation analysis, taking relevant measures and monitoring their implementation.

The data are diverse and relate to the following fields: Population, Health, Social Protection, Education and Science, Employment, Earnings and Pensions, Standard of living, Time use, Judiciary, Decision-making, International indexes. [Click to download publication "Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia, 2017" \(pdf\)](#).

Analysis of unmet healthcare needs in the Republic of Serbia published in the PLOS ONE scientific journal

Analysis "Predictors of unmet health care needs in Serbia; Analysis based on EU-SILC data" initiated by Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit Government of the Republic of Serbia, is published in journal PLOS ONE, and is available [here](#).

Analysis is prepared by the team of health experts.

OPEN CALLS

- ▶ [Call for Entries: Best Design or Drawing on the Topic of Active Civic Participation \(Deadline: 7/1/2018\)](#)
- ▶ [First Call for Proposals under Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020 Open \(Deadline: 26/1/2018\)](#)

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

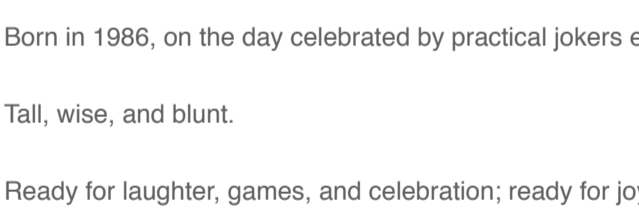
READ MORE...

- ▶ [600 Million Dinars for Population Policies in the Next Year](#)
- ▶ [World Children's Day: Children Take Over Serbian Parliament](#)
- ▶ [Paunović and Saint-Lot Sign a Two-Year Memorandum of Understanding](#)
- ▶ [Research on Economic Activity of Civil Society Sector Presented](#)
- ▶ [FRKA 2017 – Roma Culture and Activism Festival \(8 December, Dom Omladine\)](#)
- ▶ [Handbook for Administrative and Financial Management in Associations](#)

You may follow the news on social inclusion and poverty reduction regularly at:

socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/en/

SOCIAL INCLUSION BLOG

ANITA ERKER: Auto-ism - to be Young, Forever Young

"You'll see, it's not so bad. He is a completely normal boy," she says.

"Common don't look at your feet, it's not anything bad, and there is nothing for you to understand," she feels out loud.

I was six when I found out that he would be six forever.

"Maybe he will be playing more when he grows up, but he is your brother, and even when he is not showing it, you have to know that he loves you," she said still mixing the roll cake filling.

That is my brother.

That is a person who knows how to be a brother. A child in the mind of an adult, a kid in a body of a grown man. A young man who, today, the same as before, loves that roll cake to his very core.

The sweetness of child deserts and sherbet in shape of a man. (...)

Brother.

Born in 1986, on the day celebrated by practical jokers everywhere.

Tall, wise, and blunt.

Ready for laughter, games, and celebration; ready for joy – not only his but everyone's.

Loyal and honest, too honest when observing. Careful and creative. Wound up. Essentially wound up and smilingly-anxious. A ticking time bomb ready to receive mistakes. Strong enough to snap at you, since because of you, he is not happy. This belief in the veracity of an act, in promises. Don't you dare tell autism you want something, if you don't want it. Don't let autism take your word for something, if your words flow fluently with imagination. Don't try to say to autism that something is impossible, if it knows that it is not.

So my dear non-autistic world, there's the rub.

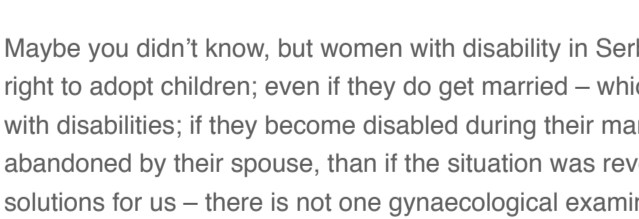
Autism reflects the unwillingness of the context (material, human, and spiritual) to admit to itself the truth that it follows and/or can follow. To be autistic means to have your own world. To have your own world means that you do not accept someone else's, which is already built. Built means being capable of building. Autism reflects the inability to construct anything else but oneself in that world. Autism smashes the mirror every time you try to upgrade its built-in world. Do not touch anything that belongs to the child. Do not mess with the pace of life. Do not improve something which cannot be improved. Try the pace. Win the pace over with your own, loyally.

(...)

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

We Shouldn't Let Obstacles Discourage Us; We Need to Fight for the Rights of Women with Disabilities!

Transcript of the speech given by Jasmina Ignite during the 39th Belgrade Barać Perović Invited No 5" (24 October 2017, Impact Hub, Belgrade)

(...) I did not choose to be different. Like most children, I was born healthy. I played tennis and did karate, I dreamt like all girls of becoming an actress, a stewardess... But, when I was just 15, I became incurably ill. I was confronted with a progressive muscular dystrophy, which causes disability, which is in my case at 100%.

However, it wasn't just me who was faced with this illness; it was my whole family. (...)

Did you know that 80% of girls with disabilities never enroll in school, let alone finish it? I was lucky in that aspect, but then there was the question: what next? I heard the doctor say to my parents: "The cure does not exist, the illness is progressive, and she will end up in a wheelchair." What will happen to me? All I wanted – like everyone else – is to have a family: to get married one day, to have children... But from where I was standing, it all seemed incredibly difficult. I thought that I was alone in all of this and that my parents would just leave me in some institution. As I said, I was fortunate to have a wonderful family, but what happens to those who do not have a family? What happens to the ones who do not have the possibility to fight for what they want?

Fortunately, I met some incredible people from the [Association of Students with Disabilities](#) and the "From the Circle" organisation, I even managed to reach the Government of the Republic of Serbia, where I signed a project regarding the Safe House with the Minister Zorana Mihajlović, and I succeeded in doing something important for the entire country. I met with the Mayor of Niš – I, a person who cannot even enter the Assembly building without five people carrying me up the stairs – I managed to do something important, not only for my city but also for my country.

Maybe you didn't know, but women with disability in Serbia don't have any rights. They do not have the right to adopt children; even if they do get married – which is rare – they get divorced more often than men with disabilities; if they become disabled during their marriage, there is a greater chance they would be abandoned by their spouse, than if the situation was reversed; the healthcare system doesn't have solutions for us – there is not one gynaecological examination table suitable for women with disabilities; everyone is discouraging us from becoming mothers (I wanted to have my son Strahinja so much, I risked my life to disc him); when a woman with a disability gets divorced, her child is taken away, the child is either given to the father, or gets placed in a foster family... So it's not even double-discrimination, it is multiple discrimination!

However, this cannot and should not discourage us! Precisely these obstacles where what gave me the strength to continue fighting! Even if I fall down (and I am a frequent guest at Orthopaedics, just this year I visited it four times), and I am forced to be in the wheelchair again, I will get up and continue fighting, I will not let it be the end. I am fighting to change the legislation; I am fighting so women with disabilities would have equal rights, benefits, support systems and services, such as personal assistance, priority with placing children in kindergartens, and the right to receive meals at school, and not let anyone take their child away which is the easiest thing to do – and it does not destroy just one life, but the entire family! Let's instead introduce support services. I will continue to fight, and I will win, and I expect nothing less from all of you. I know that you will support me and become my partners!

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

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

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