

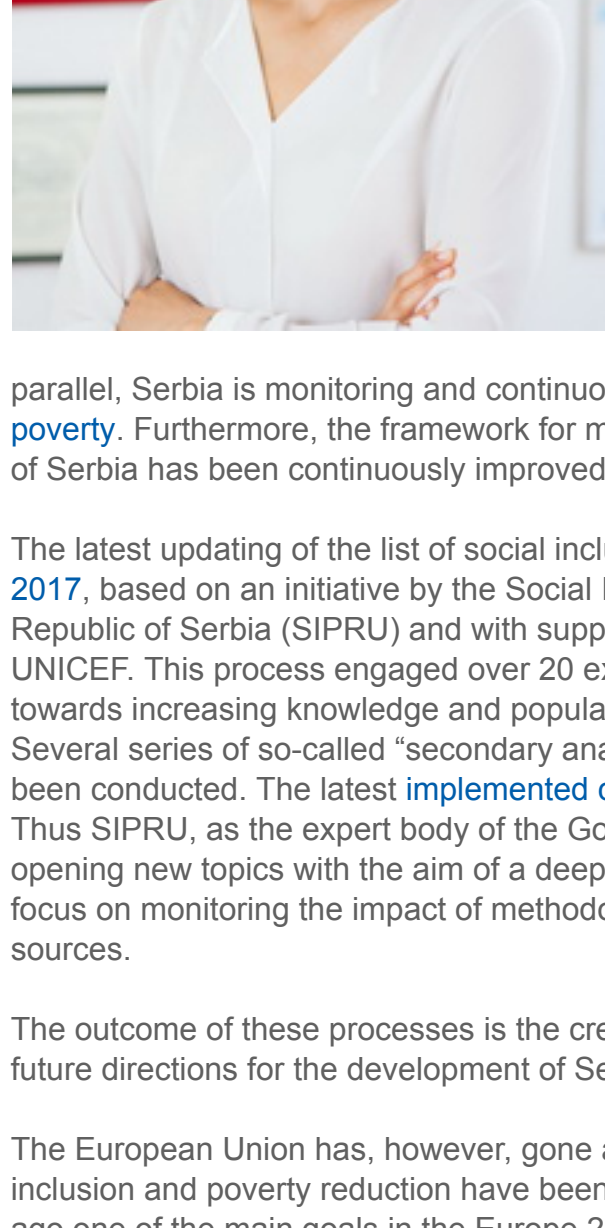


57th NEWSLETTER

ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Measurements with a Goal



Written by: Biljana Mladenović, Deputy Manager and Economic Analyst, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia

"What we do is affected by what we measure"

The issue of measuring social phenomena and processes was always a challenge, both regarding measurement opportunities and regarding concepts, since they change in time. The measurement of poverty and social exclusion is one such phenomenon. In this case, the political sensitivity of the topic represents an additional challenge. Nevertheless, the results gained and the lessons learned are a real treasure that should serve to continuously guide public policy.

The statistical basis for monitoring and reporting on living standards in the Republic of Serbia is being constantly improved. Since 2013, the **Survey on Income and Living Standards (SILC)** has become part of statistical practices, whereby we have joined European Union practices. In

parallel, Serbia is monitoring and continuously improving national poverty indicators, such as **absolute poverty**. Furthermore, the framework for monitoring social inclusion and poverty reduction in the Republic of Serbia has been continuously improved since 2009.

The latest updating of the list of social inclusion and poverty reduction indicators was completed in **late 2017**, based on an initiative by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (SIPRU) and with support by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and UNICEF. This process engaged over 20 experts. Furthermore, considerable efforts have been made towards increasing knowledge and popularizing the topic, both among decision-makers and researchers. Several series of so-called "secondary analyses" of data in the field of poverty and social inclusion have been conducted. The latest **implemented cycle** of these analyses focused on data from the SILC survey. Thus SIPRU, as the expert body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, confirms its efforts towards opening new topics with the aim of a deeper understanding of exclusion and poverty, with a significant focus on monitoring the impact of methodological changes on the comparability of data in primary data sources.

The outcome of these processes is the creation of significant statistical potential that can be used to guide future directions for the development of Serbia.

The European Union has, however, gone a step further. In addition to monitoring, topics related to social inclusion and poverty reduction have been placed high on the political agenda. For example, ten years ago one of the main goals in the Europe 2020 Strategy was "raising 20 million persons from poverty" by 2020. Ten years later the EU is preparing an evaluation of the Europe 2020 Strategy and **announcing** the first reflections on the achievement of the main goals in the field of poverty and social inclusion.

Despite a number of criticisms of the concept and methodology of measuring poverty, present from the start, the EU did not give up on investing efforts into poverty reduction. The criticisms put forward can be grouped into "fundamental" ones – does at-risk-of-poverty measure poverty or inequality, can trends in at-risk-of-poverty be related to an essential increase of the living standards of a particular country, and "technical" ones related to the level of comparability of data between countries and through time, further complicated by methodological changes in member states, as well as "political" ones directed towards each member state taking responsibility for achieving the goals set by the EU. This last aspect is important, particularly having in mind that the nationalization of goals makes it possible to define national priorities different to those defined at the EU level. Furthermore, the goal set initially – 20 million persons fewer at risk of poverty by 2020 – was soon changed to *reducing the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 20 million by 2020*.

Last year's analyses implemented at the European level confirmed an already noticeable trend – **the lowest level of achievement of the goals** lies precisely in the domain of poverty and social exclusion. The first reduction in the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion occurred only in 2017, by **three million** compared to the baseline year (2008). Furthermore, there are **no other main goals of the European strategy** further from achieving the **desired value** defined by the Europe 2020 strategy.

Despite this, the EU did not give up on monitoring and reporting, at least in regards to poverty reduction. Reviews of achieved results are being regularly implemented both by the EU, as well as by **member states** and a number of independent think-tank organizations. This provides for an overview of various aspects related to poverty reduction and social inclusion and the formulation of more adequate measures that would improve the situation in this field.

Close to 2.7 million people in Serbia live at risk of poverty and social exclusion, while over half a million are unable to meet their basic living needs. Even though the data appears discouraging, the measures that can be undertaken are an important trump card. A significant statistical base has been created during previous years in the field of poverty, at the disposal of public policy creators in Serbia.

EU practices, confirming the inclusion of poverty goals in key strategic documents and monitoring their achievement, are the best guides for our state. However, we should also learn from the mistakes and challenges of the EU. This is an opportunity for the Republic of Serbia and it is important to make use of it.

NEWS

Economic Development and Employment

► **Report on the Implementation of the National Employment Action Plan for 2018 Adopted**

► **Business Incubators and Science-Technology Parks an Opportunity to Raise Competitiveness**

► **Agreement Signed with the Ethno-Network – Continued Economic Empowerment of Women in Villages**

► **Training Programme for Entrepreneurship Development among Youth NEET Presented**

► **First Fund for the Development of Social Economy in Serbia Started**

Social Welfare and Healthcare

► **First EU-Western Balkans Ministerial Meeting on Employment and Social Affairs Held**

► **Public Review of the Draft Law on Social Cards Complete**

► **Protocol on Cooperation with 15 LSUs with the Aim of Improving Social Welfare Services Signed**

► **Project for the Empowerment of Reproductive and Sexual Health of Young Roma Women Presented**

► **Swiss PRO Published the Assessment of Local Capacities in Social Protection and Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups**

Education

► **Ministerial Meeting of the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training Held**

► **"Democracy in Action" Conference Held**

► **National Report on the State of Human Capital Development Presented**

► **"Career Guidance and Counselling as a Mechanism to Prevent Student Drop-Out" Training Held**

► **Winners Declared of "Open Data in Teaching" Competition for Secondary Schools**

Vulnerable Groups and Human Rights

► **Conference on Gender Responsive Budgeting Held**

► **Conference on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Held**

► **Regional Conference Held on the Results of the Roma Inclusion Decade**

► **Survey on the LGBTI Population in the EU, Serbia and Northern Macedonia**

► **MMA Opens Exhibition Accompanied by Interpretation for the Blind and Vision-Impaired Persons**

EU Integration

► **Report on the Implementation of the ESPR under the EU Accession Process for 2016 and 2017 Adopted**

► **Harmonized Draft Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 Published**

► **Closing Conference of the "Voice of Communities on EU Integration: Incentive to a Dialogue of CSOs and Local Authorities on Public Policy" Project Held**

► **"Piecing Together" – the EU Support to 22 New Projects for Fostering Social Cohesion**

EU News

► **The European Council Adopts the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World**

► **New FEAD report demonstrates support makes a difference to daily lives of people**

► **Who will live and work in the EU in 2060?**

► **In-work poverty in Europe: a study of national policies**

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT

Awards Given to Local Self-government Units for their Contribution to the Development of all Forms of Accessibility in 2018

Cities Leskovac, Sombor, Smederevo, Loznica and city municipality Vračar received awards for the contribution to the development of all forms of accessibility on their territory in 2018. Municipality Svilajnac received the recognition for continuous work on accessibility development, while commendations for participation in this year's competition were given to cities Vršac, Vranje, Zrenjanin, Novi Pazar, city municipality Pantelejev in Niš, city municipality Savski venac in Belgrade, municipalities Mionica, Brela Palanka, Raška, Vrnjačka Banja, and Paraćin.

The awards to local self-governments for their contribution to the accessibility development were presented, for the third time, by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia in cooperation with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Standing Commission of Towns and Municipalities – Serbian Association of Towns and Municipalities, at a ceremony held at the Deputies Club in Belgrade.

Aleksandar Bogdanović, Coordinator for European Affairs and International Cooperation in the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, pointed out that the main goal of the Team was precisely to achieve conditions which would allow every citizen of the country to realize their full potential. "The challenges are really big, starting with prevailing attitudes. No matter how small, prejudices against persons with disabilities are still present. That is why this award is extremely important in terms of promoting and raising awareness that the situation should be improved," Bogdanović said. He indicated that the barriers were not only architectural, but that the removal of all barriers should be discussed, in order to enable a better life in terms of availability of cultural content, information and communication technologies, everything that permeates different aspects of life was important for the realization of the potential of all people.

Click to download the document on the most frequently used accessibility elements prepared by the representatives of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, the Ombudsman and the Standing Commission of Towns and Municipalities (.pdf, Serbian language).

Income and Consumption Decile Analysis in the Republic of Serbia 2006-2017 Published

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia has carried out an analysis of the decile distribution of consumption and income in Serbia for the period 2006-2017. A particular focus of the analysis was aimed at the status of the poorest decile of the population.

A decile analysis is a procedure whereby the equivalent consumption, and/or income of all households or individuals are ranked from lowest to highest. The ranked households and individuals are divided into ten equal groups, so that the first decile contains those with the lowest equivalent consumption/income (poorest households), while the tenth holds the highest (richest households). The deciles divide the total population into ten equal parts, and depending on whether equivalent consumption or income are being reviewed, an appropriate equivalence scale is used.

Click here to download the publication "Income and Consumption Decile Analysis in the Republic of Serbia 2006-2017" (.pdf).

The data accompanying this publication is fully available at: "Income and Consumption Decile Analysis in the Republic of Serbia 2006-2017 – aggregate data" (.xlsx)

Proceedings of the Research "Data-Based and Research-Based Educational Policy Creation Programme"

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in cooperation with the Ministry of Science, Education and Technological Development, has published the research proceedings of young researchers. The proceedings are the result of the "Data-Based and Research-Based Educational Policy Creation Programme".

The papers are part of a special compilation titled Support programme for the development of research capacities in the Republic of Serbia, aimed at establishing dialogue between the academic and research community, policy creators and practitioners. Comprehensive dialogue is a key precondition for improving the process of responsible public policy creation and efficient use of facts and data. The programme is aimed at: improving cooperation between decision makers and the scientific research community; improving research capacities in the field of education; raising the capacities of staff in the educational system for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data of importance for making decisions of importance for educational policy creation.

Regarding the improvement of research capacities in the field of education, the goal is to stimulate researchers starting their careers to use the existing research material and various available data sources by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development and other relevant institutions.

Click here to download the Proceedings of the Research "Data-Based and Research-Based Educational Policy Creation Programme" (.pdf, Serbian language).

Initial Workshop for the Applicants Held under the LIP 2 Programme

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia held a one-day Initial Workshop on 24 May 2019 for applicants (local self-government units and the project partners (local civil society organizations) from Sumadija and Western and Southern and Eastern Serbia) whose project proposals (full applications) were chosen for support under Phase 1: Support to the testing of developed innovative solutions under the "Programme of local initiatives for social inclusion and poverty reduction: Support to the development of innovative models for social inclusion – LIP 2".

The workshop was attended by nearly 30 representatives of local self-government units and civil society organizations that will be supported by Phase 1 of the LIP 2 programme: Support for the testing of developed innovative solutions in four thematic areas, namely: education (City of Pirot, Municipality of Labane, Municipality of Bela Patanka, City of Novi Pazar, Municipality of Raška); social welfare (Municipality of Surdulica, City of Užice, City of Kraljevo, Municipality of Bojnik); employment (Municipality of Majdanpek, Municipality of Ražanj, Municipality of Nova Varoš, Municipality of Cajetina); and health (City of Zaječar, Municipality of Sjenica).

The goal of the initial workshop was to remind the participants of what should be the result of their work during the four months of support through Phase 1 and to reflect on the project proposals and proposed activities, success factors, contracting and technical details.

More information and the materials used during the implementation of the Initial Workshop (.pdf, Serbian language) can be found [here](#).

Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit Supports New Issue of "Liculice" Magazine

The new, 53rd issue of the "Liculice" and its magazine was published, dedicated to the opportunities for youth in the labour market in Serbia, and their views and values.

The issue was produced in cooperation with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (SIPRU), and relies largely on the survey "Youth in Serbia 2018/2019", implemented by the "Friedrich Ebert" Foundation. The thematic issue presents interviews with the authors of the famous series "Morning Changes Everything", showing in a picturesque manner that everything is no longer "easy when you're young", and the new worries that burden the generation leaving the relative carefree twenties towards the adult world.

Among regular features, the new issue brings us the *Letter to a Younger Me* by philosopher, literary critic and translator Ivan Milenković, a reflection on the complex linguistic history of Yugoslavia by renowned linguist Ranko Bugarski (*Yugoslavia for Beginners*), a critical reflection on the drastic sanctions for failure to respond to screening examinations threatened by the Law on Health Insurance against precisely the poorest citizens and residents of informal settlements, while the new article in the *Little School of Media Literacy* series deals with hidden advertising for commercial and political purposes.

For more information visit www.liculice.org

OPEN CALLS

► **Training for young journalists in Brussels (Deadline: 15/7/2019)**

► **Applications Open for the Roma International Scholarship Programme for the 2019/2020 School Year (Deadline: 25/7/2019)**

► **Applications Open for Summer Camp of Innovation "I Have an Idea" (Deadline: 4/8/2019)**

► **EXIT and NIS Organizing Fourth "Youth Heroes" Call – Looking for the Young Heroes of Serbia! (Deadline: 20/8/2019)**

► **Divac Foundation: Call for Student Scholarships for the 2019/2020 School Year (Deadline: 23/8/2019)**

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

READ MORE...

► **Project Implementation Agreements Signed for Works on Facilities for Housing Victims of Domestic Violence and Children**

► **Public Review Held on the First Voluntary National Report on the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals at the Assembly of AP Vojvodina**

► **"Sustainable Development Goals – Status of Roma in Serbia" Workshop Held**

► **Swiss Government supports the establishment of Citizens' Advisory Services in 13 local self-governments**

► **Save the Children: Serbia 46th on End of Childhood Index**

► **"Administrative Procedure from a Human Rights Standpoint" Manual Published**

► **Eliminating Being Transgender from the List of Mental Disorders: A Step Forward in Exercising the Rights of Transgender Persons Worldwide and in Serbia**

► **Results of Monitoring and Analysis of LGBT Content in Media in Serbia for 2018 Published**

► **Catalogue of Resource Centre Services for Civil Society Organizations in Serbia Published**

► **"MAN 2019: Understanding and Preventing Violent Extremism" Conference Held**

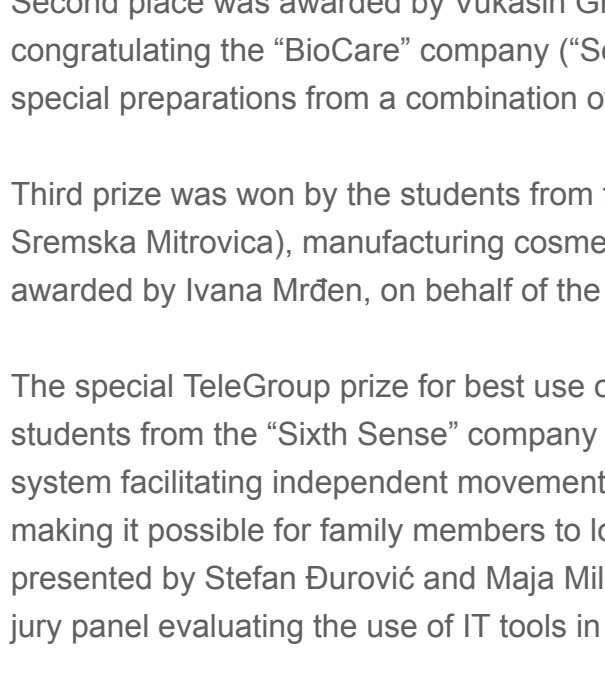
► **First Survey on Philanthropic Activities in Serbia Presented**

► **"Practical Academy – Niš": Successful Interns Certified**

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

SOCIAL INCLUSION BLOG

SANJA DENIĆ: Question Mark – Educate Yourself



In the previous blog post "Question Mark – Learning through Play" we discussed the specifics and features of the Question Mark app that can be downloaded for both the Android and the iOS operating system.

The Question Mark app can be used as a didactic tool, as well as for fun and leisure, and because of the large number of options it can also be very useful to teachers, educators, parents... This app makes it possible to create a quiz on any topic we want a child to master. We need to come up with a title, questions, find or record photos of items that will represent the answers and we can start creating a quiz. This kind of control over the contents of the quiz to be presented to the child also provides for full adaptation and an individualized approach to the child's interests, capabilities and needs for play and learning. Cell phones and mobile apps represent part of the everyday world of children and we should use them for learning through play, in this case using educational quizzes.

How an educator, teacher or parent uses the Question Mark app depends on the child itself, i.e. on what it should master, as well as on the creativity and imagination of the teacher/parent as the quiz creator. The Question Mark app makes it possible to apply the same material (in this case 10 pictures showing the same car, but in different colours) in various ways and to create a quiz adapted to the age, capabilities and needs of the child.

The Question Mark app was used to create 4 quizzes from the same pictures. Each quiz teaches colours, but in different ways. The pictures used for creating these quizzes can be downloaded [here](#). (...)

Example quiz: Telling Colours Apart

The goal of the quiz is telling apart, differentiating and naming colours, mastering global reading.

The background colour for this quiz is also black, while the letters are yellow, to make them prominent against the black background. We can choose a combination that the child finds pleasing.

The quiz option with 2 possible answers was chosen, but if the child's attention is longer and if they are used to this method of work, we can also use the option with 4 possible answers.

We can use the Cyrillic or Latin script when creating this quiz.

The quiz "Telling Colours Apart" created using the Question Mark app can be seen [here](#). (...)

We can use the same pictures to create the same quizzes for learning colours in any foreign language – e.g. English, Russian, German...

The Question Mark app can be downloaded for both the Android and the iOS operating systems.

You can also let us know what you think of the application or ask us a question about it on our Facebook page [Create a Quiz and Have Fun!](#)

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

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

SUCCESS STORY

Junior Achievements Serbia: National Competition of Best Student Companies Held

The "BioAlly" student company from the Medical School in Kruševac won first prize in the National Competition of Best Student Companies, held in Novi Sad from 19 to 21 May 2019. This student company produces an organic white powder used as a solution for regenerating the body. The prize was awarded to the secondary school students by Katarina Obradović Jovanović, Assistant Minister of Economy, and they will represent Serbia in July at the **European competition of student companies to be held in Lille, France**.

Second place was awarded by Vukašin Grozdanović, coordinator of the OPENS 2019 project coordinator, congratulating the "BioCare" company ("Sestre Ninković" medical school, Kragujevac) that manufactures special preparations from a combination of dandelion and carrot.

Third prize was won by the students from the "Dolce Rosa" company ("Draginja Nikšić" medical school, Sremska Mitrovica), manufacturing cosmetics from rose derivatives. The diplomas and prizes were awarded by Ivana Mrđen, on behalf of the ManpowerGroup Srbija Company.

The special TeleGroup prize for best use of information-communication technologies was awarded to students from the "Sixth Sense" company (Technical School, Mladenovac), developing an innovative system facilitating independent movement for persons with disabilities in public spaces, at the same time making it possible for family members to locate them in real time wherever they are. The prizes were presented by Stefan Đurović and Maja Milienković from the TeleGroup Company, comprising a separate jury panel evaluating the use of IT tools in the business operation of student companies.

The twenty best secondary school teams from across Serbia presented products and services by their companies on Monday as part of the sales fair in the Promenada shopping mall, while on Tuesday they presented their business plans to an audience and the jury in the University Rectorate building in Novi Sad.

Students "employed" in these companies during the school year gain knowledge on market economy and entrepreneurship through "Junior Achievements" programmes, guiding their company from its founding to the development of a company report and the closing of the company. The "Student Company" programme is part of the Government of the Republic of Serbia project "Debate of Entrepreneurship" implemented by the Ministry of Economy. The European Commission designated it as the best model of entrepreneurial education for secondary school students. (...)

The competition was implemented by the Junior Achievements Serbia organization with financial assistance by the Ministry of Economy, United States Agency for International Development, the TeleGroup company, the OPENS 2019 project, the ManpowerGroup Srbija company and the Promenada shopping mall.

The entire text in Serbian can be found [here](#).

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

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