



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

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Protector of Citizens

Ombudsman

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INPUTS FROM THE PROTECTOR OF CITIZENS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

-The Status of Youth in the Republic of Serbia-

1. Main challenges faced by young people in your country
2. Examples of policies and programmes aimed at supporting young people to realise their rights
3. Measures that can be taken at international level to facilitate/support the realisation of young people's rights

Main challenges faced by young people in your country

1. Unemployment and economic problems (Unemployment rate among young people in the Republic of Serbia in 2016 is 43,2%)¹
2. **Education, the existing educational system** – financial aspect, as well as the mismatch between knowledge, skills and competences gained in education with labour market needs. (The rate of participation in secondary and higher education by young people is extremely low. In 2016, 40% of children completed secondary education, while 7,5% of young people graduated from universities).²
3. **Lack of social inclusion of young people** – young people are not included enough into social, economic and cultural aspects of life. Young people are not included enough into youth policy decision-making either.
4. **Information** – access to information is not ensured according to the needs of young people.
5. **Crime and corruption**
6. **Lack of adequate disease and risky behaviour prevention services for young people, care and support for young people in vulnerable situations, prevention and protection of mental and reproductive health.**
7. **Lack of compulsory health insurance of young people who are not employed, who do not attend regular schools and who live with their family members.**

Examples of policies and programs

- Law on Youth stipulates measures and activities to be undertaken by the Republic of Serbia, the autonomous province and self-government units with the aim of advancing the social status of young people and creating conditions necessary for full enjoyment of young people's rights and interests in all spheres of concern.

- National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2025. The National Youth Strategy identifies the basic principles of action, the courses of action and the expected results of action taken by all relevant youth policy

¹ Ministry of Youth and Sports, Survey on the Status of Youth in Serbia, December 2, 2016, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/ck/uploads/files/Dokumenta/Omladina/istrazivanja/istrazivanje%202016/Istrazivanje%20polozaja%20i%20potreba%20mladih%20teren%20decembar%202016.pdf>

² Ministry of Youth and Sports, Survey on the Status of Youth in Serbia, December 2, 2016, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/ck/uploads/files/Dokumenta/Omladina/istrazivanja/istrazivanje%202016/Istrazivanje%20polozaja%20i%20potreba%20mladih%20teren%20decembar%202016.pdf>

actors aimed at enhancing the social status of young people and creating conditions for full enjoyment of young people's rights and interests in all spheres. The National Youth Strategy builds on the strategic priorities of the state to work with and for young people and, following the objectives set forth in the Law on Youth, to provide conditions which will enable young people to achieve their full potential, take an active role in society thus contributing not only to their personal development but to that of the society as well.

- Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Youth Strategy for the period 2015-2017.
- Strategy for Education Development in Serbia until 2020 identifies the purpose, objectives, goals, instruments and mechanisms for the development of the education system in the Republic of Serbia for the next ten years.
- National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020 identifies the challenges, strategic goals and priorities aimed at employment promotion.
- Under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Center for Career Guidance and Counseling and Fund for Young Talents of the Republic of Serbia were established in 2008. The Fund for Young Talents awards over 2000 scholarships a year.
- Ministry of Culture and Sports supported the establishment of the National Association of Local Youth Offices in 2014, as well as the establishment, in 2011, of the National Youth Council of Serbia as the highest representative body of young people in Serbia. The National Youth Council is an alliance of youth associations which gathers 97 member organizations (organizations of and for the young people) from across Serbia.
- In January 2014, the Government adopted a Decision on the Establishment of the Youth Council, which made a significant step towards monitoring and further development of national youth policy.
- Youth Sector of the Ministry of Youth and Sports implements the following projects in collaboration with international donors:³

- Youth Employment Promotion funded by GIZ YEP and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project was implemented in the period from July 2015 to December 2017. More about the project at <http://yepsimpozijum2015.rs/galerija-simpozijum-2015/>.
- Support to the implementation of the Employment and Social Reform Program in the Republic of Serbia with a focus on the policy of increasing youth employment and employability. The program is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and implemented by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, under the auspices of the Cabinets of Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self Government, and by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

- Aimed at creating conditions for the advancement of the status and participation of youth in the local community and stimulating various forms of youth employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Youth and Sports announced, in September 2017, a call for proposals from local self-governments for the implementation of local youth policy. The review committee received 37 proposals and approved nine of them for funding in total amount of 9,819.050,00 RSD.

- Aimed at reaching the objectives of the National Youth Strategy as well as providing support for the implementation of youth volunteer projects and organizing international volunteer camps, the Ministry of Youth and Sports continues to provide support to the associations of and for the youth as well as their alliances in the implementation of different youth activities in order to promote the active participation of young people in society and encourage their involvement in the development of youth policy in Serbia. It announced a call for proposals in February 2017 on the implementation of the objectives of the National Youth Strategy and the program „Mladi su zakon“. The review committee received 138 proposals and approved 50 of them for funding.

³ <http://www.mos.gov.rs/vesti/omladina-konkursi-kategorija?lang=lat>

- Given that the National Employment Action Plan considers the young people under the age of 30 as „hard-to-employ“ and as those who should be prioritized in youth employment promotion measures, the National Employment Service implements programs and measures aimed at the promotion of youth employment, among which the following are the most important: job fairs, additional education and training programs (there are no data on the number of young people, only program descriptions but they are intended for the young people as well), employment subsidies and self-employment subsidies. In 2015, active employment policy measures from included 21,99 % of young people out of total number of unemployed people registered by the National Employment Service. The ratio of inclusion and the number of all young people registered by the National Employment Service was 72,26 %. In 2016, all active employment policy measures and activities included 16,69 % of young people out of total number of people registered by the National Employment Service. The ration of inclusion and the number of all young people registered by the National Employment Service was 59,7 %.

- Participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Erasmus+ Program *Youth in Action*: At the beginning of 2015, the Brussels-based Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EU Agency, EACEA) announced a call for proposals from organizations and institutions in Serbia and the Balkans within the framework of Key Action 2 – Capacity Building in the Field of Youth. Through the sub-project *Western Balkans Youth Window*, 83 projects submitted by organizations from Serbia have so far been awarded funding in total amount of 4.370.654,41 EUR. Tempus Foundation is responsible for the implementation of the Erasmus+ Program in Serbia.⁴

- In 2018, the European Commission launched a new Erasmus+ general call for proposals in the fields of education, youth and sports.⁵

Measures that can be taken at international level to facilitate/support the realisation of young people's rights

- Participation in the implementation and monitoring of the international treaties and conventions, international bilateral and multilateral cooperation programs on youth rights and status

- International cooperation of all relevant stakeholders aimed at the tackling issues faced by young people and advancing enjoyment of their rights

- Providing support to youth and sports organizations and associations in their international efforts

- Co-financing and financing programs and projects in the areas of youth rights

- Organizing international workshops and trainings aimed at enhancing the status of young people.

⁴ <http://erasmusplus.rs/mladi-odobreni-projekti/o-dosadasnjem-ucescu-srbije/>

⁵ <http://erasmusplus.rs/konkuranje/opsti-poziv-2018/>