**Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue**

Belgrade

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**Contributions to the Report of the UN Secretary General on the challenges in respecting human rights in the context of combating all aspects of drugs in the world**

When it comes to activities in the area of respect for human rights in the context of the combating all aspects of the world drug problem, The Office for Combating Drugs is a service of the Government of the Republic of Serbia responsible for coordinating the work of state administration bodies in the field of combating drugs, as well as for professional, administrative and operational tasks in that area. The Office implements and strategically supports numerous activities, both independently and in cooperation with relevant international institutions, as part of regional projects, as well as with representatives of local self-government units in the Republic of Serbia, and in cooperation with civil society organizations.

* In the field of international cooperation, with the aim of harmonizing national drug policies with relevant international standards and guidelines, the Office is successfully cooperating with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

The Office for Combating Drugs regularly participates in the meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the UN in Vienna, and during 2023, at the 66th session of the Commission, the Office for Combating Drugs of the Government of the Republic of Serbia organised a side-event on the topic “Improving multidisciplinary approach towards people who use drugs and people in recovery in Western Balkans Countries”. The Office also implemented the “Listen first” project, in cooperation with UNODC.

* In the field of regional cooperation, the Office actively supports the regional project “Biram oporavak”, which is implemented by the “Izlazak Association” from Serbia, Celebrate Recovery from Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Preporod” Association from Montenegro, with the support of the World Federation Against Drugs and the Office for Combating Drugs of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The Regional Forum on Drug Addiction and Recovery was held in Belgrade for two years in a row, which aims to improve the position of people affected by addiction.

Over 200 professionals from the field of addiction and recovery and representatives of relevant state administration bodies and civil society organizations attended the Forum. Participants had the opportunity to learn about examples of good practice, current topics such as treatments, new addictions, and numerous research results in the field of addiction recovery, presented by experts from Europe and the region.

* As far as activities implemented in the Republic of Serbia, the Office for Combating Drugs participates in the preparation of policies for combating drugs at the national level. Office representatives are members of the Working Group for the preparation of Operating Plan for the Prevention of Drug Abuse for the period from 2023-2024.
* In the area of cooperation at the local self-government level, the Office for Combating Drugs and “Izlazak Association” formed seven Multidisciplinary Teams in the Republic of Serbia, with the aim of providing support to vulnerable categories affected by the problem of addiction. Multidisciplinary teams in local self-government units (Loznica, Šabac, Sremska Mitrovica, Bačka Palanka, Novi Pazar, Bor, Majdanpek) aim to develop a platform to support vulnerable categories affected by addiction, providing mutual support to participants in efforts related to addiction, both for the benefit of the local community and in the interest of the end users.
* In the area of cooperation with civil society organizations, the Office for Combating Drugs has signed Memorandums of Cooperation with 22 civil society organizations whose activities include recovery from addiction, rehabilitation, resocialisation, destigmatisation, and raising awareness of the harm of drug abuse. In cooperation with CSOs, the Office strives to network the civil and public sector, by organising conferences, trainings, and panel discussions. The Office is also a strategic partner in the implementation of projects of CSOs, the most relevant of which include projects by DPNSEE (project “Emergency support for the provision of HIV and Harm Reduction services among key populations in Ukraine and refugees in selected neighbouring countries"), and NGO ReGeneracija (project “Good policies for a good society”); project “Working with women victims of violence with experience in drug use”.