

UPR YOUTH COALITION SUBMISSION FOR THE
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1. This submission was prepared by Serbian CSOs, i.e., youth associations, youth organisations and organisations for youth, youth professional networks, and informal youth groups (hereinafter: UPR YOUTH COALITION SERBIA).
2. The Report is based on the findings of projects and activities monitoring and reporting on youth rights and needs. These projects and activities were implemented by the UPR Youth Coalition Serbia members, and their experience and conclusions stem from the direct work with and for youth in Serbia.
3. Only one of the recommendations made by Moldova to the Republic of Serbia (113.43), as part of the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review – UPR in January 2018, concerning the adoption of the National Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic and Partner Violence Against Women and Girls, could be linked to youth.
4. In the Resolution 35/14: Youth and Human Rights, the Human Rights Council urges the Member States to consider addressing issues pertaining to the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights for youth through the universal periodic review.
5. After it received the first alternative report focusing on youth in Serbia, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued recommendations¹ to the Republic of Serbia, for the first time, directly concerning the improvement of the status of youths in the field of economic and social rights. A dialogue was opened with the Committee and the State of Serbia on what needs to be done to improve the situation of young people in this field.
6. Encouraged by these results, we also prepared and submitted an additional alternative report to the UPR mechanism, which should result in the issuance of recommendations to the Republic of Serbia for improving the current state of youth rights.
7. The following CSOs are members of the UPR YOUTH COALITION SERBIA: Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS), Civic Initiatives, National Association of Youth Workers (NAPOR), the Union of Secondary School Students of Serbia (UNSS), Mental Disability Rights Initiative of Serbia (MDRI), Association of Women - FemPlatz, Za Tebe #VAŽNOJE, the Initiative of Roma Women Students, Child Rights Centre, Centre for Youth Work (CZOR) and Centre for Youth Integration (CIM).

YOUTH'S RIGHT TO WORK

8. The 2021–2026 Employment Strategy and its 2021–2023 Action Plan recognize youth as hard-to-employ persons. The only measure envisaged in the Strategy in response to the numerous problems faced by youth is the *Improvement of the Labor Market Position of Youth* involving the following: formalization of traineeships; prevention of further misuse of non-labour contract modalities; specialized entrepreneurship training programs and mentoring support; piloting some elements of the Youth Guarantee scheme in a maximum of three NES branch offices, et al. The Action Plan does not set out any activities for formalizing traineeships, preventing misuse of non-labour contract modalities, improving programs, or funding youth entrepreneurship. The set target values for youth participation in labour market measures, as well as for the number of youth involved in programs encouraging youth employment within the youth policy, are extremely low.ⁱⁱ

9. Although the Strategy highlights the abuse of work of those youth who are engaged via student and youth cooperatives, neither the Strategy nor the Action Plan address this issue.ⁱⁱⁱ

10. When analysing labour and employment policy in Serbia, as well as related regulations that have a particular impact on young people and are aimed at developing their competencies to enter the labour market, such as the Law on Internships and the Volunteering Act, we have noted deficiencies when it comes to how these policies are developed in terms of transparency and civil society participation, as well as in how their effects are evaluated.^{iv}

11. “My First Salary,” the incentive program aimed at young people, enacted in 2020, was criticized as not being in line with the existing Serbian legislation, effectively introducing a new modality of employment not recognized by the Labour Law.^v Furthermore, the young people involved were offered compensation below minimum wage and were not guaranteed pension or disability insurance. The duration of the training/practice is the same for everyone (nine months), regardless of the complexity and requirements of the job. It is particularly worrisome that no official document evaluating the impact of this program is publicly available.^{vi}

12. Many young people who have participated in traineeship programs reported that they did not sign a contract and received no remuneration. However, the process of drafting the law has been criticized by participating CSOs as untransparent. Additionally, the current Draft contains problematic provisions, such as trainees being paid compensation below minimum wage, which could lead to employers using them as a replacement for paid full-time workers.

13. **Right to full and decent Employment.** Youth employment grew in the first three quarters of 2021 compared to 2020. Two-fifths of youth were employed in Q3 2021; the gender gap in employment rates was substantial, reaching 16.6% in Q3 2021. The improvement of employment indicators in Q3 2021 year-on-year coincided with the drop in the quality of employment, i.e., the increase in non-standard employment, specifically, in temporary employment (by 32%) and in unpaid household work (by 62%).^{vii}

14. The youth's inability to find stable employment is also demonstrated by National Employment Service (NES) data on the deregistration of youth who found jobs.^{viii} Most youth struck out of the NES register in 2021 because they were hired to perform temporary jobs (fixed-term employment in 68% of cases and temporary and occasional work in 11% of cases). Conclusion of indefinite employment contracts accounted for only 16.5% and self-employment for 3.8% of the reasons for their deregistration.

15. Most jobs held by youth are insecure, wherefore they are unlikely to qualify for unemployment benefits if they lose the work. The right to unemployment benefits may be exercised by workers who have formally been employed without interruption for at least a year.

16. **Employment of youth working on the street.** According to CIM research, only 13.4% of men and 1.5% of women living in Roma settlements in Belgrade are formally employed full-time. More than half (57%) of households living in informal settlements in Belgrade live on less than 150 euros per month from all sources of income, with an average of 4.9 members per household: approximately 30 euros per household member per month.^{ix} The 2021–2026 Employment Strategy, the National Youth Strategy, and the Roma Inclusion Strategy prioritize effective employment measures for Roma youth. Still, they do not recognize nor address youth involved in street work. The 2021–2023 Action Plan for the implementation of the employment strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021–2026 does not recognize and does not directly address young people involved in street work.^x

17. Recommendations:

- **The development of public policy documents focusing solely or partly on youth employment should include ex-ante analyses of the policies’ impact on the exercise of the right to decent work. Furthermore, it should develop goals and measures ensuring full youth employment and formulate measures to increase eligibility for and adequacy of unemployment benefits.**
- **The existing active employment policy programs should be redesigned to enable youth beneficiaries to exercise their right to just conditions of work (right to equal pay for work of equal value), the right to join a trade union, and the right to full social insurance.**
- **The state should recognize youth who live or work on the street as a particularly vulnerable category in the youth employment measures.**

YOUTH’S RIGHT TO HEALTH AND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

18. Serbia still has only five mental health centres, although the 2019–2026 National Mental Health Protection Program Action Plan provided for the opening of another five centres in 2020. The Program states that Serbia has only 47 child and adolescent psychiatry specialists,^{xi} 38 of whom work in psychiatric institutions. In contrast, the other nine work in outpatient health clinics or have private practices.^{xii} Many young people cannot afford private counseling. In addition, Serbia still lacks a law on psychotherapy clearly defining who may work as a psychotherapist and under which conditions. Serbia also lacks a nationwide register of community psychosocial support service providers for youth, which would facilitate their access to reliable information on providers of such services.

19. Critical research data from 2019^{xiii} show that 69.3% of young students in the first year of high school drank alcohol in the previous month, while as many as 27.2% of boys and 19.7% of girls in the first year of high school got drunk at least once in the same period^{xiv}. Somewhat more relevant data are available in the *Research on the Position and Needs of Young People*, conducted for the needs of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This data shows that in a sample of young people aged 15 to 30, as many as 70.9% of young people consume alcohol, 35.9% of whom drink alcohol when they go out with friends (as many as 25.7% of young people who consume alcohol when going out are 15–19 years old^{xv}).

20. The only document that refers to the protection of the population from the harmful effects of alcohol at the national level is the National Program for the Prevention of Harmful Use of Alcohol and Alcohol-Related Disorders, which was adopted in 2017^{xvi} based on the Global Strategy for Alcohol. Out of 10 specific goals in the Program, seven refer to preventive programs outside the provision of health services – education, reducing the availability and advertising of alcohol, traffic safety, price, and excise policy. However, despite such a comprehensive approach to the problem, there are no action plans for implementing the Program, nor are civil society organizations actively involved in its implementation.^{xvii} Alcohol consumption among young people, as well as its circulation, is regulated

by the Law on Consumer Protection, the Law on Advertising, and the Law on Misdemeanours against the Public Order. However, these three laws are not harmonized and do not protect young people, especially minors.^{xviii}

21. Recommendations:

- **Strengthen and expand the community support network by opening youth centres offering free counseling. Establish a nationwide register of psychosocial support service providers would facilitate the protection of youth’s mental health and the prevention of their mental health problems. As noted in the National Mental Health Protection Program, the school curricula must include programs equipping children and youth with techniques for maintaining and improving mental health.**
- **Continuously endeavour to design more optimal responses to the health needs of youth, following the expert recommendations of international organizations and the national strategic documents on youth protection.**
- **Improve or adopt a new National Program (or strategy) for preventing the harmful use of alcohol that corresponds to national needs and follows international recommendations. This should be done by determining the current situation, evaluating the previous Program and the achieved goals, and creating action plans for its implementation with clearly determined indicators of success and the budget. We also propose that civil society organizations that work with young people, their umbrella associations, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and other relevant actors be involved in creating the new National Program, its implementation, and evaluation.**
- **Harmonize all public policies that relate to protecting children and young people from alcohol consumption entirely or in certain parts to raise the age limit for the first consumption of alcohol among young people and children.**
- **Ensure the effective and full implementation of all public policies that relate to the protection of children and young people from the influence of alcohol in whole or partially, specifically through the effective control of competent inspectors, the establishment of the age limit for the purchase (including online purchase) of alcohol and the prohibition of alcohol advertising through all media channels, social networks, and public media.**

YOUTH’S RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

22. The Ex-Post Analysis of the 2015–2025 National Youth Strategy shows that the share of youth who reported that they had taken part in an environmental action in the previous year varied at around 10% per annum in the 2018–2020 period.^{xix} The results of a survey conducted by the Child Rights Centre coincide with these data: only 8.7% of the respondents said that they had taken part in local policymaking in their place of residence.^{xx} The legislative framework of the Republic of Serbia neither recognises nor ensures the sufficient participation of children and youth in making local policies in the environmental protection and sustainable development field. At the moment, the legislative framework provides greater opportunities for children to influence the creation of local policies through eco-

activism and act through citizen associations or informal associations than through mechanisms developed within local self-governments that are almost non-existent.

23. Around 1.2 million youth in Serbia live in excessively polluted cities and municipalities. Excessive air pollution was officially registered in eight cities and seven urban agglomerations,^{xxi} meaning that the air over three million people in Serbia breathe is excessively polluted.

24. The Analysis of the Republic of Serbia's Legislation from the Perspective of a Child's Right to a Healthy Environment^{xxii} shows that this area is insufficiently recognised in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia. There is no systematic legislative framework in this area, but the child's right to a healthy environment is indirectly regulated through a legislative framework that governs various areas of environmental protection or other legal areas. As regards the regulations related to air pollution, waste management, water pollution, biodiversity protection, spatial planning, and adaptation to climate change and noise protection, the findings of this analysis have shown that the legislative framework does not sufficiently recognise children as a particularly vulnerable group. Furthermore, the legislative framework does not contain provisions that would ensure an additional level of protection for children or minors or apply to children specifically.

25. Another thing the legislative framework lacks is a basis for exercising the right to education about environmental protection. This is primarily due to the fact that the most important subjects – Civic Education, Nature Keepers, and Sustainable Development, whose curricula are directly related to human rights, child's rights, environmental protection, and sustainable development – are elective subjects, and as such cannot ensure the full exercise of this right. This applies to both primary and secondary education and requires a change in terms of the urgent introduction of a mandatory subject in this area.

26. Recommendations:

- **Improve the existing legislative framework in the field of air pollution, waste management, water pollution, biodiversity protection, spatial planning, climate change adaptation, and noise protection so that it recognises and respects the specifics of children as a vulnerable group and ensures the full exercise of children's and youth's rights to a healthy environment in all these areas.**
- **Improve the legislative framework in other areas of environmental protection so that it recognises the aspect of the child's right and youth to a healthy environment.**
- **In the existing legislative framework for environmental protection, amend the provisions on the obligation to adopt strategic documents to include the obligation to define special measures related to children in all strategic documents.**
- **Ensure that all public information in the field of environmental protection is transparent and accessible in a youth-friendly language.**
- **Introduce a mandatory subject in primary and secondary schools whose curriculum includes the issues of human rights, children's rights, youth rights, environmental protection, and sustainable development.**

YOUNG WOMEN

27. The Serbian authorities stated in 2021 that free HPV vaccines would be available for 9–19-year-olds as of April 2022.^{xxiii} Menstrual products are not on the list of goods and services subject to a lower VAT rate.^{xxiv}

28. **Right to Safety in Private, Public, Digital, and Media Spaces.** TV reality shows increasingly broadcast content portraying women in an unacceptable fashion, interfering with their privacy, promoting unacceptable behavior patterns and models, involving sexual harassment and violence, live sex, etc.^{xxv} Violence against women and girls in public places is widespread. It happens mostly in dark and empty spaces, but also in public, in the presence of many people. The findings of the FemPlatz research show that public transport stops and public transport are highly unsafe for girls and younger women (especially on lines far from the city centre), and so are the rear parts of transport vehicles.^{xxvi}

29. The year 2021 ended with a new online movement “**I didn’t report it**” – over 20,000 tweets were posted over a brief period of time reflecting the prevailing patriarchal and misogynous norms of Serbia’s society and explaining why only a rare few women who experienced violence have sought help from the institutions.

30. There is a chronic lack of sex-disaggregated data in the Republic of Serbia, so we hope that implementing the new Law on Gender Equality will change that. Statistical data classified by sex and age (as a minimum) has received a provision in the Law on Gender Equality (Article 12, Paragraphs 1 and 4). We hope that we will have disaggregated data by the next UPR cycle.

31. Safe houses are not accessible to women with disabilities (this includes young women with disabilities), while Roma women face problems related to admission to safe houses. The importance and seriousness of their situation are often downplayed, and they are often informed that there is no place in the safe house, or they are not provided with the correct address of the safe house and other necessary information.^{xxvii}

32. Recommendations:

- **The Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (REM) should urgently react to open violence and explicit content that have become integral to all TV reality shows.**
- **Decision-makers should create protection mechanisms in which women and girls will feel safe to report violence.**
- **Actively inform parents of children and youth about HPV vaccination.**
- **It is necessary to educate boys, girls, and their parents about gender-based violence in the earliest phase of schooling.**
- **Sex education should be introduced in elementary schools to timely work on the issues of recognizing different forms of violence and raising awareness of what behaviors are socially unacceptable, incriminated, and punishable.**
- **Employees in schools, state administration, and public services should be continuously educated based on specially created educational programs on gender equality and violence against young women and girls to respond promptly and effectively and prevent the manifestation of violence.**

YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

33. **Personal Assistance and Domiciliary Care and Assistance.** The criterion under which applicants for personal assistance must be “capable of independently making decisions”^{xxxviii} discriminates against persons with intellectual impairment and effectively denies them access to the service. Personal assistance and/or domiciliary care and assistance is the critical form of support for the independent living of all persons with disabilities, irrespective of the kind of impairment.^{xxix}

34. **Right to Personal Mobility.** The National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) medical commissions have, on average, dismissed 63% of applications for budget-funded medical-technical aids^{xxx} over the past five years.^{xxxi} A 2021 survey of persons with disabilities showed that 62.3% of the respondents had to buy their own aids, while 45.5% needed aids that were not even on the list of NHIF aids. The List of Aids, adopted together with the Rulebook, does not include a number of newer generation aids and assistive technologies.

35. **Work and Employment.** National law does not sufficiently protect youth with disabilities in the labour market from discrimination. The reason for this statement stems from the fact that the denial of reasonable accommodation in the recruitment process and at the workplace is not recognized as a particular form of discrimination on the grounds of disability, as the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities noted in its recommendation to Serbia.^{xxxii} Denial of reasonable accommodations is not recognised as a specific form of disability-based discrimination in anti-discrimination laws.

36. **Access to Healthcare and Right to Participate in Treatment Decisions.** Health institutions do not have support systems or procedures ensuring that youth with disabilities are informed about the proposed treatment clearly and in a manner befitting their age and maturity.^{xxxiii} In the absence of institutional procedures, the degree of participation of children and adolescents – including those with disabilities – in treatment decisions and the amount of information they receive depends exclusively on the health workers’ sensitivity and commitment.

37. Young people with disabilities still face prejudice and discrimination when achieving political participation and participating in decision-making processes. According to the MDRI report^{xxxiv}: “Key obstacles to the political participation of persons with disabilities are the following: a lack of support services, inaccessibility of institutions, services, and voting materials, complete deprivation of legal capacity, low expectations (among persons with disabilities and the general public), low awareness (among persons with disabilities and the general public), and the low awareness and desire of political parties to put persons with disabilities on their lists in places where they have a chance to be elected.”

38. Recommendations:

- **Adopt clear and transparent public policies on the rights of persons with disabilities to aids and assistive technologies, including the adoption of a new Rulebook.**
- **Expand the list of aids through consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, with a special focus on the organizations of youth with disability.**
- **Conduct training and education for healthcare professionals on UNCRC and child protection in the healthcare decision-making process. Create professional guidance and a code of conduct on this topic.**

- **Change the regulations (rulebooks) that prescribe eligibility criteria for receiving PA service.**
- **Enable a legal and administrative framework for the participation of young people with disabilities.**

Meaningful participation in the decision-making processes

39. The normative and strategic framework of youth policy in the Republic of Serbia represents one of the key problematic starting points in the realization of a systemic approach to the achievement of improved care for the position and needs of young people. The current Law on Youth and the National Strategy for Youth, which regulate the field of active participation of young people, are not harmonized with other laws and documents that regulate the field of youth; legal and strategic solutions are outdated and do not meet the needs of young people, which is why they do not encourage the further development of the youth policy system and do not adequately recognize the relevant actors. Also, these documents do not sufficiently enable intersectoral cooperation within the horizontal topic of youth, in order to encourage systemic care for young people and their active participation in decision-making.^{xxxv}

40. The field of youth policy is regulated by the Law on Youth, which was adopted in 2010.^{xxxvi} For many years, the civil sector has pointed to the need to create a new Law on Youth that will correspond to the current system and existing infrastructure, but also create legal solutions for current unregulated issues. Prime Minister Ana Brnabić in her exposition^{xxxvii} highlighted as a priority the amendment of the Law on Youth, this goal was not achieved, due to the slow and disinterested work of the institutions and the lack of political will of the ministry in charge of youth to realize this process. The process was officially started and only one meeting of the Working group^{xxxviii} was held, after which the process stopped without providing an explanation to the Working group members.

41. Due to the need to harmonize with the Planning System Law, the process of amending the most important strategic document of youth policy, the Youth Strategy of the Government of the Republic of Serbia 2015 - 2025, was initiated. Youth representatives were involved in the drafting of the Strategy for the period 2022 – 2030.^{xxxix} The strategy has undergone a public debate, after which it is expected to be reconciled with the comments received and adopted. The key shortcoming of the strategy is that it remains exclusively within the competence of the Ministry of Youth and Sports without investing in the competence of other ministries, which lacks an intersectoral approach to creating a response to the needs of young people. The key issue remains the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the strategy, which should measure the impact of the strategy on improving the position of young people, which was not implemented in the past period and does not include young people. The last Action Plan of the Youth Strategy expired in 2020 and since then, due to the postponement of the Strategy, youth policy activities have been implemented without an action plan. Nevertheless, work on the Action Plan has not yet started, which further prolongs the implementation of the strategic document of youth policy.

42. In the process of implementing the Strategy for Youth, a major problem is the project method of financing civil sector organizations defined by the Rulebook on financing and co-financing of programs and projects of public interest in the field of the youth sector.^{xl} The work of youth associations and associations for young people is hampered by the implementation of program activities in project cycles that last from 3 to 6 months, require the implementation of a large number of short-term activities in a

short period of time and thus do not enable the development potential of the program, but represent occasional and temporary action in the field of youth policy and of work with young people. Given that most funds are allocated to organizations based in large centers, there is no adequate influence on the development of youth policy in less developed local communities. If organizations that receive funds implement activities on a wider territory and operate within less developed communities, regardless of the existence of activities that are implemented in this territory, such action does not encourage the sustainability of the results because there is no provision of systemic support to organizations from less developed areas and encouragement of the development of associations in the field of youth politics. Also, due to the fact that organizations whose work is not available and visible to the public with the same or similar projects year after year receive funds in competitions, it is necessary to monitor and evaluate projects and apply this criterion in determining funds.^{xii} A big problem with this Rulebook is the absence of the possibility of submitting an appeal on the results of the competition, nor the possibility of viewing the score lists of projects according to the criteria defined by the Rulebook.

43. Two other laws of importance for young people are in focus: the Law on Volunteering, the adoption of which was suspended after a public hearing and The Law on Internships, which is a new law necessary for adoption in order to influence the solution to the large problem of youth unemployment and reach young people in the NEET situation^{xiii}, but also to enable the further implementation of programs supported by the state in the field of youth employment (such as Youth Guarantee). Members of the Working Group for the Law on Volunteering, in the process of drafting the law, pointed out numerous problems to which the proposed draft law did not respond, such as the record of volunteers, defining the types of volunteering and distinguishing between short-term and long-term volunteering, evaluating and promoting volunteering. The draft law envisages the formation of an interdepartmental body that will coordinate the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, which will include youth representatives and which will direct the encouragement of volunteering among young people.^{xiii} The absence of the Law on Internships leaves room for a large mismatch between the education system and the labor market. In the creation of this law, it was particularly important to include the recommendations of the Council of the European Union from 2014^{xiv} in order to create legal solutions that guarantee the quality of internships. In the process of creating the Law on Internships, the biggest discussion was caused by the issue of the amount of the minimum compensation for doing work internships, about which the youth representatives stated that it should be at least two-thirds of the minimum wage.^{xv}

44. One of the basic institutional problems and obstacles of further development of youth sector in Serbia is the capacity of the Ministry of Youth and Sports to deal with the harmonization of youth participation at the national and local level, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of youth programs. The small number of employees, as well as insufficient resources for the implementation of policies, prevent greater support for all actors of youth policy^{xvi}. Also, local self-governments as well as other institutions, do not have no legal obligations towards this ministry and therefore are not obliged to have constant communication and cooperation.^{xvii}

45. After the legal recognition of the National Youth Council of Serbia^{xviii} and the possibility of selecting youth representatives in the Council for Youth of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, The Youth Council of the Government of the Republic of Serbia began to meet more often, in 2022, only one session was held due to the election campaign and the Government formation process.^{xix} Although the Youth council has started to meet more often, co-management approach has not yet been established. The Ministry in charge of youth does not recognize its role of coordinating this body through harmonizing different policies and programs for youth with the real needs of young people.¹

46. Local Youth Councils are advisory bodies within municipalities whose existence is not mandatory. For this reason, young people initiated in different ways to make these bodies mandatory through the

Law on Youth and through harmonization with the Law on State Administration and Local Self-Government. Out of a total of 145 local self-government units, even 65 do not have youth councils (45.5%). Analysis of the state of youth councils at the local level showed that out of 79 established councils, 29 exist only on paper, are not functional and do not involve young people in their work.^{li} As there was no further work of the Working Group on the Law on Youth, this initiative was not implemented.

47. There is still a large amount of misunderstanding of the importance of involving young people in the creation of documents and the work of institutional bodies. Young people do not trust institutions and do not believe that their voice is heard. 78.8% of young people, believe that it has no influence on decision-making processes^{liii}, and 57.4% state this as one of the biggest problems of young people in Serbia^{liiii}. In the process of encouraging and educating young people about political participation, the civil sector has been insisting for years on the introduction of civic education as a compulsory subject in high school education, instead of students choosing between civic education and religious instruction, which is the current situation. Also, as many as 59% of young people believe that civic education should be mandatory.^{liv}

48. Over 77% of young people do not trust any politician¹ and 71.9% of young people think that the elections are not fair and free². During the monitoring of the election campaign, out of a total of 19 analyzed election lists and 2912 candidates, a total of 418 were young, only 14.35%³. All this additionally affects the growth of youth distrust in institutions, the demotivation of youth to participate politically in the Republic of Serbia.^{lv}

49. **Introduction of youth perspective.** A big obstacle in creating an encouraging environment for the participation of young people in decision-making processes is insufficient funds allocated from the budget for the implementation of the Youth Strategy. From the budget of the Republic of Serbia, only 0.08% is allocated to the ministry responsible for youth, while the distribution within the two sectors is also uneven (for the youth sector 22,07% and for the sports sector 77,93%)^{lvi} On the other hand, funds from the budget are channeled through various ministries and institutions, depending on the area, aimed at improving the position of young people. However, we do not have data on how many budget resources go to youth and in which areas. This is important so that we can monitor how much funds are invested in which area for young people and what effects are achieved in proportion to that, as well as where it is necessary to reallocate funds depending on the needs of young people. By collecting data on allocated funds from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, autonomous provinces and local self-government units, for youth and the youth sector, we could determine the mandatory percentage allocation of funds for the youth sector at all levels of government.

50. Recommendations:

- **Emergency continuation of process of drafting Law on youth started in June 2021 through establishment of Working Group and ensure its proper implementation.**
- **Implementation of programme financing for youth organizations through changes in Law on Youth and Rulebook on financing and co-financing of programs and projects of public interest in the field of the youth sector.**
- **Enabling the appeal procedure on the competition results through changes in Rulebook on financing and co-financing of programs and projects of public interest in the field of the youth sector.**

- **Continuation of process of adoption of Law on Volunteering and Law on Internships and revision of the draft documents.**
- **Adoption of Strategy on Youth and emergency continuation of process of drafting Action plan for Strategy on Youth.**
- **Establishment of a Youth Caucus in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia.**
- **Encourage continuous youth participation and civic education in schools and universities.**
- **Encouraging intersectoral cooperation in the field of youth policy through the Youth Council of the Government of the Republic of Serbia.**
- **Establish the mandatory existence of local youth councils through the Law on Youth.**
- **Implementation of youth-gender responsible budgeting based on gender responsible budgeting as a way of monitoring funds allocated to young people.**

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ⁱ More at: [The position of young people in Serbia topic for the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#).

ⁱⁱ Youth Rights Report 2021, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, May 2022, p. 16. Available in Serbian: <https://online.fliphtml5.com/ykoso/kxgf/#p=16>

ⁱⁱⁱ Mario Reljanović *Alternative labour legislation o*, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Southeast Europe and Center for Dignified Work, Belgrade, 2019. Available: https://rosalux.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/157_alternativno_radno_zakonodavstvo_mario_reljanovic_rls_i_cdr_2019.pdf

^{iv} “Open Letter to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans’ and Social Affairs, the Prime Minister and Members of the Working Group for Drafting the Law on Volunteering”, Civic Initiatives, 2021, available at: <https://www.gradjanske.org/en/open-letter-to-the-ministry-of-labor-employment-veterans-and-social-affairs-the-prime-minister-and-members-of-the-working-group-for-drafting-the-law-on-volunteering/>.

^v “The fact is that we do not know what the legal basis of this decree is, nor by what kind of contract these people will be engaged in practice. It is a contract between the NES, the employer, and that person, but the problem is that this type of contract does not exist in the Labor Law (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, 24/2005, 61/2005, 54/2009, 32/2013, 75/2014, 13/2017 – decision CCR, 113/2017 i 95/2018 – authentic interpretation). The decree cannot change the law, just as the technical government should not pass decrees,” the expert opinion stated in its response. Source: <https://www.paragraf.rs/dnevnevesti/200820/200820-vest1.html>

^{vi} Reljanović, M., “My First Salary,” Peščanik.net, 2020, available at: <https://pescanik.net/moja-prva-nadnica/>

^{vii} Youth Rights Report 2021, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, May 2021. Available at: <https://online.fliphtml5.com/ykoso/kxgf/#p=1>

^{viii} Data forwarded by NES in February 2022 in response to BCHR’s request for access to information of public information.

^{ix} Publication “The Legal and social position and vulnerability of families and children living in informal settlements in Belgrade”, Centre for youth integration 2019., pages 11 and 12

^x It does, however, identify categories of hard-to-employ persons, from whom young people who work on the street face several factors of complex employability: young people under 30 with/without low qualifications, Roma, beneficiaries of social assistance, and long-term unemployed.

^{xi} Action Plan for the Implementation of the 2019-2026 Mental Health Protection Program in the Republic of Serbia, available in Serbian at: https://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/view_file.php?file_id=1200&cache=sr.

^{xii} 2019-2026 Mental Health Protection Program in the Republic of Serbia, 2.3 Services and Staff, available in Serbian at: www.zdravlje.gov.rs/view_file.php?file_id=1199&cache=sr.

^{xiii} EU for the development of statistics in Serbia: The 2019 Serbian National Health Survey. Institute for Public Health of Serbia, Dr. Milan Jovanović Batut, 2021.

^{xiv} Results of research on behaviour related to the health of school-aged children in the Republic of Serbia in 2018, Institute for Public Health of Serbia, Dr. Milan Jovanović Batut, 2019.

^{xv} Research on the position and needs of young people in the Republic of Serbia, Ninamedia, 2021.

^{xvi} Decree on the National Program for the Prevention of Harmful Use of Alcohol and Alcohol-Caused Disorders in the Republic of Serbia (Službeni glasnik br. 115/2017)

^{xvii} Additionally, it is especially worrying that there are no publicly available reports on the implementation and evaluation of the National Program as the only document that deals with this aspect of youth health.

^{xviii} The Law on Misdemeanours against the Public Order sets the limit at 16 years for a license to consume alcohol, while the Law on Consumer Protection sets it at 18 years. In both cases, for a misdemeanour or criminal offense to be recorded, a competent inspector must be present on the spot, which is impossible in practice; additionally, due to current regulations, sellers do not have the legitimacy to check the personal documents of customers. Thus, despite legal prohibitions, there were only five applications for the illegal sale or serving of alcohol for the year 2021 in Serbia. At the same time, data on alcohol consumption show that a quarter of young people aged 15–19 consume alcohol when going out (data from the first paragraph).

^{xix} Ex Post Analysis of the 2015-2025 National Youth Strategy,” MYS, October 2021, p. 23, available in Serbian at: www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2022/02/ex-post-analiza-nsm.pdf.

^{xx} “Rights of the Child to a Healthy Environment in the Republic of Serbia,” Center for the Rights of the Child, 2021, p. 12, available at: <https://cpd.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Rights-of-the-child-to-a-Healthy-Environment-in-the-Republic-of-Serbia.pdf>.

^{xxi} Annual Report on Air Quality in 2020, Serbian Environmental Protection Agency, 2021, available in Serbian at: http://www.sepa.gov.rs/download/izv/Vazduh_2020.pdf. Urban agglomerations with excessive air pollution

include Belgrade, Niš, Smederevo, Pančevo, Užice, Kosjerić and Bor; cities with excessive air pollution include Valjevo, Kraljevo, Novi Pazar, Kragujevac, Zaječar, Popovac, Zrenjanin and Subotica.

^{xxiii} <https://cpd.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Summary-of-the-Analysis-of-the-RS-Legislation-from-the-Perspective-of-Childs-Right-to-a-Healthy-Environment-3.pdf>

^{xxiii} “NHIF: Free vaccine against HPV as of April,” *RTS*, January 19, 2022, available in Serbian at: <https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/125/drustvo/4670596/vakcina-hpv.html>.

^{xxiv} Rulebook on Goods and Services Taxed under a Special VAT Rate,” *Sl. glasnik RS* 108/04, 130/04-corr., 140/04, 65/05, 63/07, 29/11, 95/12 and 113/13.

^{xxv} “Janković: Violence in reality shows is horrible, I hope REM takes measures,” *NI*, June 4, 2021, available in Serbian at: <https://rs.n1info.com/vesti/jankovic-nasilje-u-rijalitiijima-je-strasno-nadam-se-da-ce-rem-preduzeti-mere/>; “No reaction to violence in reality shows for years now,” *Direktno*, January 5, 2022, available in Serbian at: <https://direktno.rs/vesti/drustvo-i-ekonomija/391489/rijaliti-tv-pink-institucije-nasilje.html>.

^{xxvi} Younger women are more afraid of rape than older women. Women in the age categories 15–17 and 18–29, schoolgirls and students, are more numerous among the respondents who are very afraid of rape. There are no differences in the level of fear of rape between women in the city and women in the countryside. From a regional point of view, the fear of rape is significantly more pronounced among women from Western Serbia and Šumadija. Unmarried women are considerably more numerous among women who are very afraid of rape. http://femplatz.org/library/publications/2022-09_Nasilje_u_javnim_prostorima.pdf

^{xxvii} Research contacted by FemPlatz, available: http://femplatz.org/library/publications/2021-02_Sigurne_kuce.pdf

^{xxviii} Article 99, Rulebook on Social Protection Service Provision Requirements and Standards, *Sl. glasnik RS*, 42/13, 89/18 and 73/19.

^{xxix} Orla, K., “Myth Buster Independent Living,” European Network on Independent Living, 2014.

^{xxx} Indications, based on which beneficiaries exercise their rights to these aids are set out in the Rulebook on Budget-Funded Medical and Technical Aids, are fully based on medical diagnoses, wherefore there is no individualized needs assessment system based on human rights and aiming to ensure the achievement of the greatest possible degree of independence of persons with disabilities.

^{xxxi} Radoš Keravica, Milica Veljković and Marina Mijatović, “Youth with Disabilities Fighting for Freedom and the Right to Independent Living: Report on the Availability of Medical-Technical Aids for Persons with Disabilities in Serbia” (IM-PACT 21 2022). Although the data are not disaggregated by age, they lead to the conclusion that applications by youth with disabilities are dismissed as often as those filed by all persons with disabilities.

^{xxxii} Concluding observations on the initial report of Serbia, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016, para. 10, available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/831042?ln=en>.

^{xxxiii} Radoš Keravica, “Disabled Children’s Participation in Healthcare Decision-Making,” (University of Leeds, 2023 forthcoming).

^{xxxiv} Position of persons with disabilities in Serbia – Zero Report, page 85, July 2022.

^{xxxv} “The first decade of the Youth Act”, Quality research for the needs of ex-post analysis of the Law on Youth of the RS, KOMS, February 2021, Marko Stojanović and Marija Bulat, https://koms.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/1-FINAL_PRVA-DECENIJA-ZOM-izvestaj-sa-preporukama.pdf

^{xxxvi} Law on Youth 2011, MYS, August 1, 2016, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/ck/uploads/files/Dokumenta/Omladina/zakoni-i-strateska-dokumenta/The%20Law%20on%20Youth.pdf>

^{xxxvii} Program of the Government of the Republic of Serbia candidate for president of the Government Ana Brnabić 2022, page 26, The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia, October 28, 2020, <https://rsjp.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/APSPV-2020-2022.pdf>

^{xxxviii} Decision on the establishment of a special Working group to Draft the Law on Youth, No 119-01-82/2021-04, of July 27, 2021, MYS, available in Serbian at <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/08/resenje-zom.pdf>

^{xxxix} Decision on the establishment of a special Working group to Draft the National Youth Strategy, No 119-01-85/2021-04, of July 27, 2021, MYS, available in Serbian at <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/08/resenje-nsm.pdf>

^{xl} <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/ministarstva/pravilnik/2018/30/1/reg>

^{xli} „Analysis of the competition of the Ministry of Youth and Sports 2022.“, KOMS, May 31, 2022, available in Serbian at <https://koms.rs/2022/05/31/analiza-konkursaministarstva-omladine-i-sporta-2022/>

^{xlii} Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET).

^{xliii} “Draft Law on Volunteering - after public discussion”, page 5, Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr/dokumenti/predlozi-i-nacrti/sector-za-rad-i-zaposljavanje/javna-rasprava-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-volontiranju>

^{xliv} Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships, March 10, 2014, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014H0327\(01\)&from=en](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014H0327(01)&from=en)

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