FOURTH AND FIFTH PERIODIC REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION CONVENTIONS ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

# **Annex III**

# A. General implementation measures (Articles 4, 41, 42 and 44, paragraph 6) A1. Legislation (Articles 4 and 41 of the Convention)

The rights of the child in strategic documents:

- ✓ Strategy for the Development of Education and Preschool Education in the Republic of Serbia to 2030;
- ✓ Strategy for Deinstitutionalization and the Development of Community Social Protection Services for the Period 2022 to 2026;
- ✓ Strategy for Creating a Stimulating Environment for the Development of Civil Society in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2022 to 2030;
- ✓ Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma Men and Women in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2022 to 2030;
- ✓ Strategy for Preventing and Protecting against Discrimination for the Period 2022 to 2030;
- ✓ Strategy for Preventing and Combating Gender-based Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for the Period 2021 to 2025;
- ✓ Strategy for Gender Equality for the Period 2021 to 2030;
- ✓ Strategy for the Development of an Information Society in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2017 to 2020 and the new Strategy for the Period 2021 to 2026;
- ✓ Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2020 to 2025, with the Action Plan for the Period 2020-2022;
- ✓ National Strategy for the Exercising of the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Crimes in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2020 to 2025;
- ✓ Strategy for Judicial Development for the Period 2020 to 2025;
- ✓ Strategy for Improving the Position of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia for the Period from 2020 to 2024, with the Action Plan for the Period 2020-2022;
- ✓ Strategy for the Development of Digital Skills in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2020 to 2024;
- ✓ Strategy for the Prevention of and Protection of Children from Violence for the Period 2020 to 2023, with an Action Plan for its implementation;
- ✓ Strategy for the Fight against High-tech Crime for the Period from 2019 to 2023 with an Action Plan;
- ✓ Public Health Strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2018 to 2026;
- ✓ Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children and the Protection of Victims for the Period 2017 to 2022 with the Action Plan 2019-2020; Strategy for the Encouragement of Childbirth from 2018;
- ✓ National Youth Strategy for the Period from 2015 to 2025 with the Action Plan for its Implementation 2018-2020;
- ✓ Program on Mental Health Protection in the Republic of Serbia for the Period from 2019 to 2026;
- ✓ Program for Rare Diseases in the Republic of Serbia for the Period from 2020 to 2022.

#### The rights of the child in law:

- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 52/21);
- ✓ Law on Gender Equality ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 52/21);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Financial Support to Families with Children ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 113/17, 50/18, ... 53/21 and 66/21);
- ✓ Law on the Rights of Users of Temporary Accommodation Services in Social Protection ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 126/21);
- ✓ Law on the Social Card ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 14/21);
- ✓ Law on the Rights of Veterans, Military Invalids, Civilian Invalids, and Members of Their Families ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 18/20);
- ✓ Law on Enforcement and Security ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 106/15, 106/16, 113/17 authentic interpretation and 54/19);
- ✓ Law on Health Care Protection ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 25/19);
- ✓ Law on Health Insurance ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 25/19);
- ✓ Law on Patients' Rights ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 45/213 and 25/19 other law);
- ✓ Law on Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 87/18);
- ✓ Law on Free Legal Aid ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 87/18);
- ✓ Law on Textbooks ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 27/18);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on the Foundations of the Education System ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 129/21);
- ✓ Law on Preschool Education ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 18/10, 101/17, ... and 129/21);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Primary Education ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 129/21);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Secondary Education and Upbringing ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 129/21);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Higher Education ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 67/21);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Pupil and Student Standards ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 10/19);
- ✓ Law on Foreigners ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 24/18);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Foreigners ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 31/19);
- ✓ Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 24/18);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Travel Documents ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 81/19);
- ✓ Law on Personal Data Protection ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 87/18);
- ✓ Law on Consumer Protection ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 88/21);
- ✓ Law on the Protector of Citizens ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 105/21);
- ✓ Law on Games of Chance ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 18/20);

- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on the National Councils of National Minorities ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 47/18);
- ✓ Law on Amendments to the Law on Registry Books ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 47/18);
- ✓ Law on Out-of-Court Procedure ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 25/82 and 48/88 and "Official Gazette of RS," No. 46/95 – state law, 18/05 - state law, ... and 14/22);
- ✓ Law on Civil Procedure and Amendments ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 72/11, 49/13
  decision of the Constitutional Court, ... and 18/20);
- ✓ Criminal Code ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 85/05, 88/05 corrigendum, ... and 35/19);
- ✓ Law on the Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 36/09, 32/13 and 14/22 - state law);
- ✓ Law on Pension and Disability Insurance ("Official Gazette of RS" No. 34/03, 64/04 USRS decision, ... and 62/21);
- ✓ Law on the Budget System ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 54/09, 73/10, ... and 118/21);
- ✓ Law on the Financing of Local Self-Government ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 62/06, 47/11, ... and 111/21 - state law);
- ✓ Law on Misdemeanours ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 65/13, 13/16, ... and 91/19 state law);
- ✓ Law on Associations ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 51/09, 99/11 state law and 44/18 state law);
- ✓ □ Law on Information Security ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 6/16, 94/17, and 77/19);
- ✓ Law on Personal Data Protection ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 87/18);
- ✓ Law on General Administrative Procedure ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 18/16 and 95/18 - authentic interpretation);
- ✓ Law on Police ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 6/16, 24/18 and 87/18);
- ✓ Law on Road Traffic Safety ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 41/09, 53/10, ... and 128/20 state law);
- ✓ Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of the RS," No. 135/04, 90/2007 and 24/18);
- ✓ Law on the Identity Card ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 62/06, 36/11 and 53/21);
- ✓ Law on Border Control ("Official Gazette of RS," No. 24/18).

### A3. Coordination

*The National Assembly* has been implementing its activities in the field of the protection of children's rights since 2010 through the Committee for Children Rghts, chaired by the President of the National Assembly. In cooperation with the Government public hearings in the field of children's rights were organized in the reporting period on the topic of presenting the Concluding Observations of the CRC (2018) and on the protection of children from violence (2019).

During the reporting period, some of the sectoral competencies in the field of rights of the child were amended. The Law on Ministries<sup>1</sup> established the *Ministry of Family Care and Demography* in 2020. The *Office for Human and Minority Rights* and the *Office for Cooperation with Civil Society* ceased to operate, while the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue was established. The *Ministry for the Care of the Village* was formed, while the *Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team* also ceased its activities.

At the sessions of the *Council for Monitoring the Implementation of UN Human Rights Recommendations* held during the reporting period, the Concluding Observations of CRC (2017) were presented, while the Council organized workshops for his members and civil society organizations to develop indicators to monitor the implementation of recommendations of the CRC (2017 and 2018). One special session of the Council in February 2022 was dedicated to children in residential institutions.

In the *Youth Council*, youth representatives account for one third of the members, with the remaining membership comprised of: representatives of relevant state bodies whose scope of work involves youth; experts; and representatives of national minorities. From January 1, 2017 until the date of the writing of this report, 12 sessions had been held. Approximately 80 local youth councils have been formed. There are local councils for children's rights and local youth offices in municipalities and cities. The impacts of the work of these bodies largely depend on the support of the authorities at the local level, the resources available to the bodies, and the degree of coordination in the work between the bodies at the state and local levels.

Other mechanisms in the executive branch important for the coordination of activities in the field of children's rights: Council for Monitoring and Improving the Work of Criminal Procedure Bodies and the Execution of Criminal Sanctions against Juveniles (2009),Council for Persons with Disabilities (2013), Council for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2019).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Official Gazette of RS," No. 128/20

# E1. Protection of children from all forms of violence

	COMMISSION OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES WITH AN ELEMENT OF VIOLENCE, ABUSE, EXPLOITATION, OR NEGLIGENCE IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES COMMITTED TO THE DETRIMENT OF MINORS									
Year	The total number of criminal offenses committed to the detriment of minors under the age of 18	Number of criminal offenses committed with an element of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect of minors	%							
2017	3,358	1,917	57.1							
2018	3,200	1,744	54.5							
2019	3,291	1,863	56.6							
2020	2,756	1,572	57.0							
2021	3,079	1,772	57.6							
TOTAL	15,648	8,868	56.5							

Table 1, source: MIA

Year	The total number of minors under the age of 18 injured by a criminal offense	Rate per 10,000 minors	Number of minors injured by criminal offenses with an element of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect	Rate per 10,000 minors
2017	3,492	28.61	2,005	16.42
2018	3,448	28.33	1,882	15.46
2019	3,461	28.54	1,970	16.24
2020	2,857	23.72	1,637	13.59
2021	3,094	25.92	1,716	14.38
УКУПНО	16.352		9,210	

Table 2, source MIA

Number of particular criminal offenses committed to the detriment of minors	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017 - 2021
Criminal offense with an element of violence or neglect (with a fatal consequence)	7	11	10	5	3	36
Criminal offense against sexual freedom and other crimes with an element of sexual exploitation	362	414	485	412	621	2,294
Criminal offense against marriage and family committed by a parent or other legal representative of a minor	522	446	404	425	368	2,165
Criminal offense against property with an element of violence Table 3. source: MIA	193	103	106	92	80	574

able 3, source: MIA

Number of minors under the age of 18 killed in criminal offenses, traffic accidents, fires, and suicides in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)							
	2017.	2018.	2019.	2020.	2021.	2017 - 2021	
Criminal offenses with an element of violence or neglect	7	11	10	5	3	36	
Traffic accidents	25	24	21	31	22	123	
Fires	5	1	1	2	2	11	
Suicides	9	8	6	2	11	36	
Total number of minors killed in these events	46	44	38	40	38	206	

Table 4, source: MIA

Number of minors killed in criminal offenses with an element of violence or neglect (by type of criminal offense) in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - December 2021)

Criminal offense	2017.	2018.	2019.	2020.	2021.	2017 - 2021
Murder (Article 113 of the Criminal Code - CC)	1	1	3			5
Aggravated Murder (Article 114 CC)	1	2	4	1	1	9
Murder of a child at birth (Article 116 CC)	3		1	3	1	8
Inadvertent deprivation of life (Article 118 CC)				1		1
Participation in a physical dispute (Article 123 CC)		1				1
Abandonment of a helpless person (Article 126 CC)		1				1
Violation of family obligations (Article 196 CC)					1	1
Enabling the use of narcotics (Article 247 of CC)		1				1
Serious acts against human health (Article 259 CC)		2				2
Serious acts against general security (Article 288 CC)		1				1
AGE AND GENDER	STRUC	CTURE (	OF MIN	ORS		
Minors up to 14 years of age	5	7	5	5	1	64%
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	2	4	5		2	36%
Male	5	5	7	2	1	56%
Female	2	6	3	3	2	44%

Number of minors killed or injured in traffic accidents in the Republic of Serbia (2017-2021)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017 - 2021		
Total number of minors killed	25	24	21	31	22	123		
Rate per 10,000 minors	0.20	0.20	0.17	0.26	0.18			
Total number of minors injured	2,263	2,255	2,225	1,825	2,118	10,686		
Rate per 10,000 minors	18.54	18.53	18.35	15.15	17.74			
AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE OF KILLED MINORS								
Minors up to 14 years of age	14	10	9	12	8	43%		
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	11	14	12	19	14	57%		
Male	16	18	12	18	18	67%		
Female	9	6	9	13	4	33%		
POSITION OF THE MIN	NORS KI	LLED II	N TRAFF	FIC ACC	IDENTS			
Driver	4	3	5	6	5	19%		
Pedestrian	6	8	2	8	7	25%		
Passenger	15	13	14	17	10	56%		
Of the total number of persons killed in traffic	accidents	in the E	opublic	of Sarbia	minore acco	unted for 4 6% of		

Of the total number of persons killed in traffic accidents in the Republic of Serbia, minors accounted for 4.6% of those killed and 10.7% of the injured. Minors were injured fatally most prominently as passengers - 56%, then as pedestrians - 25%, and lastly as drivers - 19%.

Table 6, source: MIA

Number of minors killed in fires in the Republic of Serbia (2017-2021)									
2017     2018     2019     2020     2021     2017-2021									
Total number of minors killed	5	1	1	2	2	11			
AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE OF KILLED MINORS									
Minors up to 14 years of age	5	1	1	2	2	100%			
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age									
Male	2		1	1		36%			
Female	3	1		1	2	64%			
Table 7, Source: MIA									

Number of minors who committed suicide in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)

	2017.	2018.	2019.	2020.	2021.	2017 - 2021
Total number of minors	9	8	6	2	11	36
Rate per 10,000 minors	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.02	0.09	
AGE AND GENDER	R STRUC	CTURE	OF KILI	LED MI	NORS	
Minors up to 14 years of age		2	3	1	2	22%
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	9	6	3	1	9	78%
Male	7	7	5	2	7	78%
Female	2	1	1		4	22%
	Method	of suicid	le			
Hanging	1	6	3	2	6	50%
Jump from a height	4		1		4	25%
Drowning					1	3%
By non-firearm weapons						
By firearm	4	2	2			22%
Poisoning						
Table 8, source MIA						

# E1. Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of minors

Number of minors against whom criminal offenses against sexual freedom and other criminal offenses with an element of sexual exploitation were committed in the Republic of Serbia (2017-2021)

CRIMINAL OFFENSE	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021			
Rape (Article 178 CC)	30	26	31	19	25	131			
Sexual act with a helpless person (Article 179 CC)	2	4	5	2	1	14			
Sexual act with a child (Article 180 CC)	39	50	46	39	54	228			
Sexual act through abuse of position (Article 181 CC)	2	1	2	4	9	18			
Illegal sexual acts (Article 182 CC)	91	107	93	97	105	493			
Sexual harassment (Article 182a CC)	35	100	152	123	213	623			
Inducing and enabling sexual intercourse (Article 183 of the Criminal Code)	7	4	3		2	16			
Mediation in prostitution (Article 184 CC)	2	2		1	2	7			
Showing, acquiring, and owning pornographic material and exploitation of minors for pornography (Article 185 CC)	35	39	68	54	60	256			
Compelling a minor to attend sexual activities (Article 185a of the Criminal Code)	5	2	6	2	4	19			
Use of a computer network or communication by technical means for the execution of criminal offense against the sexual freedom of a minor (Article 185b of the CC)	4	8	3	5	8	28			
Extramarital union with a minor (Article 190 CC)	104	84	108	90	67	453			
Incest (Article 197 of the CC)			1	1	1	3			
Trafficking in human beings - for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced marriage (Article 388 CC)	13	15	10	8	5	51			
TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS	369	442	528	445	556	2,340			
AGE AND GENDER	STRUC			RS					
Minors up to 14 years of age	169	223	237	194	278	47%			
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	200	219	291	251	278	53%			
Male	24	43	43	55	54	9%			
Female Table 9. source: MIA	345	399	485	390	502	91%			

Table 9, source: MIA

# E2. Protection against abuse and neglect

Number of minors against whom particular criminal offenses against marriage and family were committed by a parent or other legal representative of a minor in the Republic of Serbia (2017-2021)

CRIMINAL OFFENSE	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021
	2017	2010	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021
Change in marital status (Article 192 CC)	1			2		3
Neglect and abuse of a minor (Article 193 CC)	64	72	51	54	60	301
Domestic violence (Article 194 CC)	512	424	400	391	326	2,053
Neglect (Article 195 CC		1	1	11	4	17
Violation of family obligations (Article 196 of the Criminal Code)	3	15	24	14	16	72
TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS	580	512	476	472	406	2,446
AGE AND GENDER	STRUC	CTURE (	OF MIN	ORS		
Minors up to 14 years of age	305	281	265	257	222	54%
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	275	231	211	215	184	46%
Male	275	245	210	187	176	45%
Female	305	267	266	285	230	55%

Minors accounted for approximately 7% of the total number of victims of domestic violence in the Republic of Serbia.

Table 10, source: MIA

Number of criminal offenses of the seizure of a minor committed to the detriment of parents / guardians in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)

Criminal Offense	2017.	2018.	2019.	2020.	2021.	2017-2021
Seizure of a minor (Article 191 CC)	90	72	90	81	65	398
Number of injured parents/guardians	80	69	87	80	58	374

In the case of the criminal offense of seizure of a minor, there is a seizure of the child/children from the spouse or extramarital partner with disrespect of the court decision on the custody and manner of maintaining personal relations of the child with a parent.

Table 11, source: MIA

# E3. Prohibition of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including corporal punishment (Art. 28, para. 2, and 37 (a))

Number of criminal offenses of Domestic Violence under Article 194 of the Criminal Code in the Republic of Serbia								
Person involved in the criminal offense of Domestic Violence (Article 194 CC)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021			
Number of registered persons	11,167	10,836	9,763	8,858	7,839			
Number of injured persons	8,929	7,364	6,400	5,943	8,124			
Number of injured minors out of the total number of injured persons Table 12. source: Republic Prosecutor's Office	350	266	521	293	498			

12, source: Republic Public Prosecutor's Office

## **E4. Harmful Practices Prohibition of child marriages**

ų –	Number of extramarital crimes involving a minor committed to the detriment of minors in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)											
CRIMINAL OFFENSE     2017     2018     2019     2020     I-XI 2021     2017- 2021												

Extramarital union with a minor (Article 190 CC)	109	88	118	94	75	484
Number of injured minors	104	84	108	90	67	453
AGE AND GENDER	R STRUC	CTURE C	OF MINO	RS		
Minors up to 14 years of age	8	7	4	7	3	6%
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	96	77	104	83	64	94%
Male	3	1	3	1	1	2%
Female	101	83	105	89	66	98%

Table 13, Source MIA

# F6. Children deprived of family environment (Article 20)

Number of court proceedings initiated by the CSW in 2019 in connection with the exercise of parental rights during the year and the number of children against whose parents court proceedings were initiated

Type of procedure	Number of procedures	Number of children
Proposal for deprivation / exercise of parental rights	339	524
Proposal of temporary measure in disputes involving the exercising parental rights	128	208
Initiation of criminal proceedings in cases of neglect in the exercise of parental rights	43	67
Initiation of proceedings for protection of children's rights	92	121
Total	602	920

Table 14, source: Republic Institute for Social Protection

Number of court proceedings initiated by t during the year and the number of childre		in connection with the exercise of parental rights parents court proceedings were initiated
Type of procedure	Number of Procedures	Number of children
Proposal for deprivation / exercise of parental rights	367	524
Proposal of temporary measure in disputes involving the exercising parental rights	152	230
Initiation of criminal proceedings in cases of neglect in the exercise of parental rights	48	73
Initiation of proceedings for protection of children's rights	80	93
Total	647	920

Table 15, source: Republic Institute for Social Protection

#### G8. Abuse of narcotics, tobacco, alcohol and other substances

Number of criminal offenses related to narcotics	s committ	ed by min	ors in the	Republic	of Serbia (2	017 - 2021)
Criminal Offense	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017 - 2021

Unauthorized production and distribution of narcotics (Article 246 CC)	78	99	91	92	62	422
Unauthorized possession of narcotics (Article 246a CC)	481	647	690	567	419	2,804
TOTAL NUMBER OF CRIMES	559	746	781	659	481	3,226
Unauthorized production and distribution of narcotics (Article 246 CC)	79	97	93	89	63	421
Unauthorized possession of narcotics (Article 246a CC)	455	619	644	525	392	2,635
TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS	534	716	737	614	455	3,056
AGE AND GEND	DER STRU	JCTURE	OF MINO	ORS		
Minors up to 14 years of age	2	6	7	4	5	1%
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	532	710	730	610	450	99%
Male	488	674	677	546	414	92%
Female	46	42	60	68	41	8%

In regard to persons under the age of 18, it is mostly older juveniles aged 16 to 18 that have been involved in the unauthorized production and distribution of narcotics, but make up no more than 5% of the total reported perpetrators of this crime, while their representation, at about 7%, is slightly higher among reported offenses for the unauthorized possession of narcotics. It is characteristic of the narcotics related offenses committed by minors that for the prominent crime of unauthorized possession of narcotics, the minors are found with a small amount of drugs for personal use (in terms of the type of drug, marijuana is present in over 80% of cases).

Table 16, source: MIA

Number of criminal offenses and juveniles to whose detriment the criminal offense of enabling the use of narcotic drugs was committed in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - November 2021)

Enabling the use of narcotics (Article 247 of the Criminal Code)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017- 2021							
TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFENSES	17	27	22	23	11	100							
TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS	23	29	31	26	12	121							
AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE OF MINORS													
Minors up to 14 years of age	1	2	2	2		6%							
Minor from 14 to 18 years of age	22	27	29	24	12	94%							
Male	17	14	21	15	5	60%							
Female	6	15	10	11	7	40%							
In the reporting period, to the detriment of 121 minors, 100 (or about 20 per year) criminal offenses of enabling the use of narcotics													

were committed (which is 20% of the total number of these offenses). In the case of two criminal acts, two minors died. Criminal charges were filed against 100 perpetrators (out of this number, five people were arrested) due to transferring, enabling, or giving narcotics to a minor for use.

Table 17, source: MIA

### **I4. Abductions of minors**

Number of minors a	Number of minors against whom the crime of kidnapping was committed in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)															1)
CRIMINAL	Age/		201'	7		2018	8		201	9		202	0		2021	
OFFENSE	Sex	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т
Kidnapping (Article 134 CC)	Up to 14 years of age					2	2	2	2	4						
	14 to 18 years of age	1		1	1		1								1	1

	Total	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	4					1	1
Reason for															
abduction															
sexual exploitation								1						1	
monetary debts					1			2							
extortion of money		1						1							
extortion of					1										
intangible benefits					1										
Unknown					1										
Minors make up about 1 of Serbia. Nine minors were carried out with th gain in about 56% of ca of other intangible ben	(five femal ne threat of ses (34% du	e (569 firear ue to 1	%) four male ms). In the reprint the money debts, 2	(44%) porting 22% f	), age g perio or exto	d 3 to 1 od, kidn ortion),	7, we appin for se	re regi gs of r xual ez	stered a ninors v xploitat	as victi were co ion - 22	ms o ommi 2%, i	f eight tted for n one c	abduc illega ase foi	tions ( il mate extor	(two erial tion

sufficiently known. Table18, source: MIA

# I4. Sexual exploitation and human trafficking

Number of criminal acts of trafficking in human beings and kidnappings committed to the detriment of minors in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)												
CRIMINAL OFFENSE	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021						
Trafficking in human beings (Article 388 CC)	13	20	17	13	8	71						
Trafficking in minors for adoption (Article 389 CC)			1			1						
Kidnapping (Article 134 CC)	1	3	3		1	8						
Table 19, source: MIA												

						of Ser 017- 2		-		-					-	
Criminal Offense	Age/	2017				2018	8	2019				2020	2021			
	Sex	М	F	Т	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т	Μ	F	Т
Trafficking in human beings	Up to 14 years of age		9	9	2	8	10	2	2	4	1	4	5	3	3	6
	14 to 18 years of age		4	4		13	13		10	10	3	5	8	1	5	6
	TOTAL		13	13	2	21	23	2	12	14	4	9	13	4	8	12
Type of exploitation																
Prostitution		2				13		8			7			5		
forced marriage		3				2		2			1					
pornography		8														
Begging						2			3			2			3	
forced labour						4			1			2				
commission of a criminal act												1				
slavery or a similar relationship						1										
Unknown					1								4			

out of a total of 75 injured minors, one minor and two female children were taken out of the Republic of Serbia and sexually exploited in Belgium, Austria, and Switzerland. Police activities prevented the taking of four children (two males and two females) and a minor abroad (Hungary, Germany), recruited for sexual and other forms of exploitation. In one case, the victim was an unaccompanied migrant child.

Table 20, source: MIA

Number of minors a	Number of minors against whom the criminal offense of trafficking in minors was committed for the purpose of adoption in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)															of	
Criminal Offense	Age /		2017	7		2018	3		2019	)		2020	)		2021		
	Sex	М	F	Т	М	F	Т	М	F	Т	М	F	Т	М	F	Т	
Trafficking in minors for adoption (Article 389 CC	Up to 1 month old								1	1							
	Total								1	1							
Change of previous res	Change of previous residence after illegal adoption: the child remained in the Republic of Serbia, in the same city (Novi Sad)													Sad)			

where he was born, but his municipality of residence was changed. Table 21, source: MIA

Type of exploitation	Up to 18 years of age				
2017	F	М			
Sexual exploitation	12				
Multiple forms of exploitation	3				
Forced begging	2	1			
Labour exploitation					
Forced marriage	3				
Coercion to commit crimes					
Subtotal by gender/sex	20	1			
TOTAL	21				

Table 22, source: Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking

Type of exploitation 2018	Up to 18 ye	Up to 18 years of age				
	F	М				
Sexual exploitation	16	1				
Forced marriage	6					
Coercion to commit crimes		1				
Multiple forms of exploitation	7					
Labour exploitation						
Forced begging	1					
Subtotal by gender/sex	30	2				
TOTAL Table 22 communication for the Distortion of Visitian of Teofficience	32	32				

Table 23, source: Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking

<b>F</b> 15	М			
15				
1.2				
2	1			
	2			
1				
	1			
1	2			
19	6			
25				
	1			

Type of exploitation	Up to 18 years of age

2020	F	М			
Sexual exploitation	7				
Multiple forms of exploitation	2	3			
Labour exploitation	1	2			
Forced marriage	6				
Coercion to commit crimes					
Illegal adoptions	1				
Forced begging	1	1			
Subtotal by gender/sex	18	6			
TOTAL	24				

Table 25, source: Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking

Type of exploitation	Up to 18 years of age					
2021	F	М				
Sexual exploitation	6					
Forced marriage	3					
Labour exploitation	3					
Forced begging	2					
Multiple forms of exploitation	1	1				
Coercion to commit crimes	1					
Economic						
Subtotal by gender/sex	16	1				
TOTAL		17				

Table 26, source: Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking

# **I5. Application of juvenile justice**

Juvenile delinquency in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)						
	2017.	2018.	2019.	2020.	2021.	2017 - 2021
Number of crimes committed by juvenile offenders	6,190	5,995	6,176	4,576	4,200	27,137
Number of juvenile offenders	3,724	3,614	3,917	3,136	2,773	17,164
Rate per 10,000 minors	30.51	29.69	32.30	26.04	23.23	
Male	3,328	3,214	3,448	2,798	2,453	89%
Female	396	400	469	338	320	11%
Juvenile offenders arrested	122	95	120	87	78	2,9%

Table 27, source: MIA

Number of criminal offenses committed by persons under 19 years of age against their peers* in the Republic of Serbia (2017 - 2021)								
<b>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2017 - 2021</b>								
Number of crimes committed among peers1,013864914705798						4,294		
Number of perpetrators	1,114	987	1,054	793	884	4,832		
Male	1,019	900	941	736	802	91%		
Female	95	87	113	57	82	9%		
Number of victims	1,030	891	918	718	809	4,366		
Male	783	656	654	526	563	73%		
Female	247	235	264	192	246	27%		
NOTE: This review covers the age up to 19 years, i.e., until the typical age at the end of high school.								

Table 28, source: MIA covers the age up to 19 years, i.e., until the typical age at the end of high school.

Number of investigations launched (by number of persons)	Number of indictments (by number of persons)	Number of convictions (by number of persons)
n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a
1	/	/
10	7	/
	investigations launched (by number of persons) n/a 1	investigations launched (by number of persons)indictments (by number of persons)n/an/an/an/a1/1/

Table 29, source; Republic Public Prosecutor's Office

REPORT ON THE ACTION OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES ACCORDING TO	Number of investigations	Number of ind (by number of	Number of convictions	
CRIMINAL OFFENSES COMMITTED TO THE INJURY OF MINORS IN THE PERIOD FROM 01.01. TO 31.12.2018	launched (by number of persons)	Unresolved accusations from previous years	Accused in 2018	(by number of persons)
Mediation in prostitution - Art. 184 para. 2 CC (committed against a minor)			3	3
Neglect and abuse of a minor - Art. 193 para. 2 CC	5	3	15	16
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for labour exploitation of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for forced labour of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of committing criminal offenses by a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for prostitution, sexual exploitation, or the use of a minor for pornographic purposes)	21	5	10	6
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for begging by a minor)	1			
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of establishing a slave or similar relationship to the detriment of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for removal of organs or body parts of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the use of a minor in armed conflict) able 30. source: Republic Public Prosecutor's Office				

Table 30, source; Republic Public Prosecutor's Office

REPORT ON THE ACTION OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES ACCORDING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES COMMITTED TO THE INJURY OF MINORS IN THE PERIOD FROM 01.01. TO 31.12.2019	Number of registered persons	Number of investigations launched (by number of persons)	Number of indictments (by number of persons)	Number of convictions (by number of persons)
Mediation in prostitution - Art. 184 para. 2 CC (committed against a minor)	5	3	3	2
Neglect and abuse of a minor - Art. 193 para. 2 CC	51	1	9	9
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for labour exploitation of a minor)	4	4	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for forced labour of a minor)	0	0	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of committing criminal offenses by a minor)	0	0	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for prostitution, sexual exploitation, or the use of a minor for pornographic purposes)	18	16	9	3
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for begging by a minor)	0	0	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of establishing a slave or similar relationship to the detriment of a minor)	3	3	3	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for removal of organs or body parts of a minor)	0	0	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the use of a minor in armed conflict)	0	0	0	0

Table 31, source; Republic Public Prosecutor's Office

REPORT ON THE ACTION OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES ACCORDING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES COMMITTED TO THE INJURY OF MINORS IN THE PERIOD FROM 01.01. TO 31.12.2020	Number of investigations launched (by number of persons)	Number of indictments (by number of persons)	Number of convictions (by number of persons)
Mediation in prostitution - Art. 184 para. 2 CC (committed against a minor)	3	2	0
Neglect and abuse of a minor - Art. 193 para. 2 CC	0	10	11
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for labour exploitation of a minor)	1	1	1
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for forced labour of a minor)	0	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of committing criminal offenses by a minor)	1	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for prostitution, sexual exploitation, or the use of a minor for pornographic purposes)	18	18	10
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for begging by a minor)	3	2	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of establishing a slave or similar relationship to the detriment of a minor)	1	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for removal of organs or body parts of a minor)	0	0	0
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the use of a minor in armed conflict)	0	0	0

Table 32, source; Republic Public Prosecutor's Office

REPORT ON THE ACTION OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES ACCORDING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES COMMITTED TO THE INJURY OF MINORS IN THE PERIOD FROM 01.01. TO 31.12.2021	Number of registered persons	Number of investigations launched (by number of persons)	Number of indictments (by number of persons)	Number of convictions (by number of persons)
Mediation in prostitution - Art. 184 para. 2 CC (committed against a minor)	27	8	2	
Neglect and abuse of a minor - Art. 193 para. 2 CC	22	1	2	
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for labour exploitation of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for forced labour of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of committing criminal offenses by a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for prostitution, sexual exploitation, or the use of a minor for pornographic purposes)	8	8		
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for begging by a minor)	4	4	3	1
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the purpose of establishing a slave or similar relationship to the detriment of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for removal of organs or body parts of a minor)				
Trafficking in human beings - Art. 388 CC (for the use of a minor in armed conflict)				

Table 33, source; Republic Public Prosecutor's Office

#### MEANING OF ABBREVIATIONS

- **CC**: Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of the RS," No. 85/05, 88/05 - correction, 107/05 -correction, 72/09, 111/09, 121/12, 104/13, 108/14, 94/16 and 35/19)

- CO: Criminal offense

# Additional information accompanying the Report on the implementation of the Convention

# A7. Application of the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 42 and 44, paragraph 6)

The General Training Program for Employees in Local Self-Government Units for 2020 includes the accredited training *"The Exercising of the Rights of the Child."* In the field of social protection, accredited trainings are aimed at sensitizing professionals regarding the implementation of CRC.

The training "Alternative care and children's rights in Serbia" has been accredited within the social protection system. In the period from 2017 to the end of 2021, the following programs were implemented:

- $\sqrt{}$  "Planning of continuity in the centres for social work" (realized 22 times, a total of 425 participants);
- $\sqrt{}$  "The best interests of the child in the divorce proceedings of the parents" (realized four times, a total of 77 participants);
- $\sqrt{}$  "Preventive and corrective supervision in the protection of children's rights in primary families" (realized eight times, a total of 163 participants);
- $\sqrt{}$  "Interventions of the Centre for Social Work in the protection of children in situations of high-conflict parental divorce" (realized three times, a total of 80 participants).

Regulations on continuing professional development of professional groups working with and for children in all relevant sectors prescribe mandatory training on the rights of the child. Two faculties of teachers/pedagogues in Belgrade and Jagodina, through the accreditation process, have officially included elements of education for the rights of the child for their students - future educators.

In December 2020, the *Handbook on Media Literacy in Pre-University Education* was published for educators, teachers, and professional associates. There is also a digital version of the manual.<sup>2</sup> A pedagogical resource, the Luedu application for the media literacy of teachers, has been translated into Albanian and Hungarian, with the support of the OSCE. Based on the relevant Handbook, the series *Heroes of Media Literacy*, comprised of 18 episodes, was prepared for broadcast on RTS and RTV in the languages of national minorities. Launched a series of webinars in April 2020 for targeted groups, including four webinars for parents and teachers entitled *Digital Immunity - from Digital Pacifier to Digital Rebel*, as well as three webinars *Information Pandemic - Protected or Infected*. The Media Literacy Handbook for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> www.medijskapismenost.com

Public Administration and Training, available since June 2021, represents a part of the official NAJU program. A Handbook on Media Literacy for Parents has also been published. MCI has started the process of initiating innovative topics into the field of media and information literacy with UNESCO at the global level. A new updated edition of the Media Literacy Handbook was promoted in Belgrade in April 2021.

Since 2017 MYS has supported 207 projects of youth associations and youth associations to implement the goals of the National Youth Strategy. The *"Educational package for strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations for youth and young persons and the office for youth for social inclusion of young people from vulnerable groups"* was also created. As a member of the Partial Agreement of the North-South Centre Council of Europe MYS since 2015on every November organized a media campaign on the occasion of Global Education Week, with the aim of promoting the rights of children and youth.

30th anniversary of the adoption CRC was marked on International Children's Day with a series of events throughout the country, a dedicatory session of the Council for the Rights of the Child, a program in the National Assembly with the accompaniment of children, and the conference "*The Rights of the Child in Serbia - where we are now and what lies ahead*," as well as a diverse program within "Children's Week ".

MHMRSD announced a series of social dialogues in 2022 in order to encourage the creation of a friendly environment for children under the slogan "*How to be happy children in Serbia*."

#### C2. The best interests of the child (Article 3)

In accordance with the Family Law, everyone is obliged to be guided by the best interests of the child in all activities concerning the child. The best interests of the child is the principle that guides the centres for social work - the guardianship authorities, when deciding on the rights and interests of children.

The Law on the Foundations of the Education System prescribes conditions that give primary importance to the interests of the child.

According to Patient Rights Law, a child over 15 years of age, capable of reasoning and independent decision-making, has the right to inspect his/her medical records, to self-determination, and to consent, and can independently make decisions on medical measures applied to him/her, as well as possesses the right to confidentiality.

In the course of the enforcement procedures, income on the basis of child allowance is excluded, as is income on the basis of scholarships and assistance to pupils and students. The law stipulates that during the execution of its duties, the court pays special attention to the need to protect the best interests of the child.

The Rulebook on the Manner and Conditions of Exercising Police Powers regarding Juveniles,<sup>3</sup> prescribes the obligation of police officers to apply the principle of the best interests of the child when dealing with minors. Information, assistance, and support to a minor shall be provided in the presence of a parent or guardian, except in the case when the parent or guardian is prevented from attending, whereby the presence of a representative of the guardianship authority or of juvenile accommodation shall be provided instead. Also, this bylaw regulates the obligation to inform minors orally and in writing about their rights and obligations in contact with the police, during which forms that were prepared with the participation of children and youth are to be utilized, available not only in Serbian but also in English and in the languages of national minorities.

The Centre for the Rights of the Child has developed a Manual on the application of the principles of the best interests of the child for judges and experts of the centres for social work in civil court proceedings.

In 2018, the Protector of Citizens published a *Special Report on the State of the Rights of the Child*,<sup>4</sup> with one part of the report dedicated to the application of the principle of respect for the best interests of the child. Virtually 50% of the complaints to the Protector of Citizens in the field of children's rights relate to the violation of the right to respect the best interests of the child. In this regard, the Protector of Citizens sent a recommendation to the competent authorities that it is necessary to develop guidelines and procedures for determining the best interests of the child in deciding on the rights, obligations, and interests of the child in all domains. In addition, in 2020, the Protector of Citizens sent an opinion to the MJ regarding changes and amendments to the court rules of procedure in order to improve the exercise and protection of the rights of the child.

#### C4. Respect for views of the child (Article 12)

In the field of family law relations, a child who has reached the age of 10 may freely and directly express his / her opinion in every judicial and administrative procedure in which his / her rights are decided, and the child's opinion is given due attention in all matters concerning his/her interests; this also applies to all proceedings in which his/her rights are decided, all in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

According to the Law on Social Protection, a child has the right to participate and freely express his/her opinion in all proceedings in which his/her rights are decided. Children's opinions are to always be taken into account when adopting documents that are directly related to children. The law prescribes the service user's right to complain.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Official Gazette of RS" No. 83/19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> <u>https://www.ombudsman.rs</u>

Respecting the principle of children's participation in decision-making concerning them, the competent state authorities consult children when drafting regulations. As an example of this principle in action, children were included and given the opportunity to express their opinion at a public debate held in several cities in Serbia during the development of a Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence for the period 2020 to 2023. The strategy envisages the inclusion of children in the creation of programs for the prevention of violence against children from the earliest age, as well as their participation in the work of international networks, forums, groups, and other relevant bodies dealing with the protection of children's rights, as well as in their reporting to the Working Group for monitoring the implementation of this Strategy.

The process of drafting the Law on Amendments to the Law on Youth is underway, as is the revision of the National Youth Strategy 402 youth representatives were involved in the consultation process for the drafting the document. The participation of young people in society is ensured through the work of relevant associations, youth associations, associations for youth, and youth offices. These represent a network of over 1,800 actors working with ministries, local governments, and actors in the civil and private sectors continuously working on its sustainability. Youth Councilexists at the national, provincial, and local levels. Every year, a survey of the position and needs of young people is conducted, which serves as a basis for the adoption of all strategic and normative documents.

Trainings and campaigns on protection against discrimination conducted by the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality refer to the right of the child to express his or her opinion and views in proceedings concerning his/her rights. In 2018, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, with the support of UNICEF in Serbia, began work on a new platform for organizing Youth Panels, which signifies that part of the activities shall take place through social networks, following up on educational workshops and the digital networking of relevant panellists. During 2019, the Protector of Citizens and the Panel of Young Counsellors launched a joint initiative "*Participation in Action*," which aims to contribute to strengthening student participation and greater student involvement in decision-making processes in schools and communities, as well as to, through the concrete results achieved through children's participation, raise public awareness about children and youth as an important resource of every community and about the vital role of the participation of children and youth.

#### **D1. Registration of birth, name, and citizenship (Article 7)** *Recommendation from paragraph 31. CRC / C / SRB / CO / 2-3*

#### D1. Registration of birth, name and citizenship (Article 7)

# Instruction for dealing with cases of the birth of a child whose parents do not have personal documents in order to enable registration in the birth register

The instruction is based on the principles of the best interests of the child, urgency, and the mutual cooperation of all participants. One of its goals is to establish the identity of the mother

before she is discharged from the health institution where the child has been born, as well as to solve a possible generational problem (through more widely identifying and solving the problem - not only by enabling the exercising of the child's right to birth registration, but also resolving the legal invisibility of the mother; by determining whether the legally invisible mother has additional children who are not registered in the birth register, to that these cased can be identified and resolved).

The instruction is to be applied by health workers in maternity hospitals working on birth registration, registrars, police officers, and employees in social work centres so as to enable efficient and coordinated action in cases of the birth of a child whose mother does not have personal documents (regardless of whether the child has been born in health institutions or outside of them), thereby ensuring legal certainty and identification of the parents in order to register the child in the birth register. In 2021, four round tables were held on the implementation of the Instruction, which were attended by over 300 participants from 64 municipalities/cities. It is planned that round tables will be continued to be held in 2022.

# **D7.** Access to information from various sources and protection from materials harmful to their well-being (Article 17)

From the beginning of 2017 to December 15, 2021, the total number of communications registered in the National Contact Centre via phone calls to free and anonymous service numbers, via e-mails, via registration on sites, and via social networks (since the establishment of their presence on these sites) totals 25,523. As part of the work of the National Contact Centre for Child Safety on the Internet, which was initiated on February 27, 2017, and through 12/06/2021, a total of 445 presentations of programs for preventing and protecting against internet violence were held in educational institutions, which were attended by 16,005 students, 302 educators, and 300 teachers. In 27 health centres, presentations were realized for 110 health workers. Also, 110 sports camps were held within which aspects of the program of preventing and protecting from internet violence affecting child victims, reaching 300 children and six sports coaches. 5,189 parents participated in educational presentations on the topic of preventing violence and discrimination. During 2021, it was anticipated that the National Contact Centre and the Ministry of the Interior would further expand cooperation, as part of which the Ministry of the Interior would organize trainings for employees of the contact centre in the field of combating human trafficking.

The Ministry in charge of telecommunications forwarded 81 cases related to reported peer violence to the competent Ministry of Education. Regarding cases in which children were victims of sexual internet abuse, blackmail, and/or threats, 105 cases were forwarded to the Ministry of the Interior, 131 to the Prosecutor's Office for High-Tech Crime, 9 to health centres, and 9 to centres for social work.

### E1. Freedom from all forms of violence

<u>Programs and projects dedicated to the development of safety culture among children and</u> youth, implemented by the Ministry of the Interior:

- √ The program "Fundamentals of Child Safety" is intended to inform first, fourth, and sixth grade elementary school students about security topics related to the role of the police in the service of citizens, child safety in traffic, emergencies, and the Internet, as well as about prevention and protection of children of all forms of violence, human trafficking, and drug and alcohol abuse. In all primary schools in the Republic of Serbia, from the beginning of the implementation of the program in 2017 until 2020, a total of 158,112 lectures were held on eight topics related to child safety. With the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, posters with messages on child safety were created and displayed, a "Guide to Child Safety" (117,557 copies in Serbian and 6,430 copies in national minority languages) were produced and distributed to schools, and an electronic application of the guide was developed. Also, 192,300 colouring books entitled "Alphabet of Security for High School Champions" (180,000 in Serbian and 12,300 in the languages of national minorities) were distributed to first grade students.
- $\sqrt{}$  The project "*Graduation*" is intended to raise awareness about safety and security for high school students during graduation events. In 2018 and 2019, 2,483 lectures were held for 73,453 students, while as a result of preventive control actions taken during graduation celebrations, 39 criminal and 741 misdemeanour charges were filed. Two videos for the safe celebration of graduation were broadcast on national and local television stations as well as on social networks, where over 100,000 views were registered.
- $\sqrt{}$  The pilot project "*Preventing peer violence*," intended to prevent and reduce the manifestation of violent forms of behaviour among children and youth was implemented in 2017 and 2018 in cooperation with the City of Belgrade and representatives of the peer team of the Medical School Belgrade in four Belgrade municipalities, reaching over 600 students, parents, and teaching staff of primary and secondary schools and about 600 young students of the camp "Summer on Olympus 2018."
- ✓ The project "Capacity Development for the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education in Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia - Laying the Foundations," organized by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, was implemented in 2019, involving 41 teachers and professional associates and 24 representatives of student parliaments from 17 secondary schools in Serbia. The aims of the trainings were disseminating general information on the process of radicalization and the phenomenon of violent extremism and on factors of "attraction" and "pressuring" and phases of radicalization and the improvement of intersectoral cooperation in the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism, with reference to preventive roles, actions, and relevant educational resources.
- $\sqrt{}$  The pilot project "Empowering the family a program to support families and young people aged 10 to 14," was implemented in 2018 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in order to develop family skills and better communication between parents and children and to prevent developmental problems in children's behaviour. The project is intended for

children of older primary school age, from fifth to eighth grade, within which children are taught through play, conversations, and educational films how to resist negative peer pressure, while parents are taught how to show love and set boundaries at the same time. As part of the project, training was organized for 15 criminal police officers, who held six sessions for 100 families (children and parents) in 10 primary schools in Belgrade. The Ministry in charge of education pays special attention to improving the cooperation between the school and the family. Cooperation between school and family is a prerequisite for the successful development of every child. In order to strengthen the cooperation between the family and the school, the Ministry, in cooperation with the UNODC and with the support of the OSCE, is implementing the "Strong Families" program. During the 2021/22 school year, a total of 60 professional associates were trained to carry out this program in schools in the Republic of Serbia.

√ The project "Supporting preventive action of the police in schools in order to protect students from psychoactive substances," organized by the Ministry of Interior with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, has been implemented since December 2018. From 2018 to 2021, a total of 10 trainings were held for 250 police officers.

#### Project realized in the field of education:

The "Safe Internet for the Whole Family" project, launched by UNICEF and Telenor in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Uzice Centre for Children's Rights, aims to empower parents, educators and teachers to use digital technologies and the Internet safely and reduce children's online exposure to risk. Trainings for educators and teachers have been developed and implemented and a guide for safe and constructive use of digital technologies and the Internet has been developed, based on which an e-version of trainings has been developed and is available to all parents, teachers, and educators. A special resource is the Digital Guide.<sup>5</sup> Four cartoons about children's safety on the Internet have been created for children. The National Conference on the Prevention of Digital Violence and Online Risks was also organized, involving 150 parents and employees in education.

#### Statistics data MIA

According to the Ministry of the Interior, in the period from the beginning of 2017 to the end of 2021, 3% of murders and 4.5% of aggravated murders were committed against minors out of the total number of these acts committed in the Republic of Serbia, resulting in the life of 23 minors being taken (13 males and 10 females). Among juvenile victims of murder, newborns were the most prominent age group - 35%, followed by infants and young children - 26%. Correspondingly, the representation of children of primary school age (ages 7 to 14) was 9%, and for children of secondary school age (14 to 18 years) 30%. Juvenile homicides were recorded in both urban (57%) and rural areas (43%). Children were most often deprived of their lives by their own parents - 64% (mothers - 50%,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://digitalni-vodic.ucpd.rs

father/stepfather - 14%), followed by their peers - 23%. In one case the perpetrator was the stepfather's son (he committed four murders of family members); one case involved a migrant (where the motive for aggravated murder to the detriment of a minor migrant was related to unresolved relations regarding smuggling of persons); and in one case the parents of the mother who killed the newborn were registered as co-perpetrators in the murder.

In the reporting period, there were additional cases that resulted in fatal consequences for children due to the non-fulfilment of parental obligations (lack of feeding, hygiene, health care, supervision): one case of "Abandonment of a helpless person" (criminal charges filed against mother); and one criminal offense of a "Breach of family obligations" (criminal charges were filed against both parents). Additional children lost their lives in serious offenses against public safety (six individuals), as well as in other offenses (enabling the use of narcotics - 2, domestic violence - 1, participation in fights – 1, and in serious offenses against human health - 1). In total, 36 minors died in crimes with an element of violence or neglect during the reporting period.

Nine juveniles (five females and four males), aged 3 to 17, were abducted in a total of eight offenses (two with firearms). The motives for committing the offenses were: sexual abuse (2 criminal offenses), repayment of money debt (3), extortion of money (2), and extortion of intangible benefits (1), while in one case the motive is not sufficiently known. All the kidnapping crimes have been solved.

In the context of juvenile victims, in addition to murder and kidnapping, it is important to single out domestic crimes, the sexual abuse of children, and trafficking in minors; more detailed information is provided below in the thematic clusters related to these areas.

In the period from 2017 to the end of 2021, 123 minors were killed in traffic accidents (or 4.6% of the total number of people killed in such incidents). Suicides were committed by 36 minors.

Annual records indicate an average of between 900 and 1000 "peer crimes." The establishment of teams for young offenders in four cities in the Republic of Serbia (Belgrade, Kragujevac, Nis and Novi Sad) and piloting applications for corrective measures and alternative sanctions against juvenile offenders have yielded positive results in working with juvenile offenders. These models were applied in cases involving more than 1,000 children, resulting in the implementation of alternative sanctions

#### **E4. Harmful Practices**

During the campaign "Childhood, not marriage", 4 videos promoting examples of good practice were shown 637,000 times. Also, according to the campaign's assessment, the campaign reached 530,000 users of social networks. It was shown to all local self-government units, with an invitation to actors at the national and international level to join in and contribute to raising awareness about the problem of child marriages. The National

Coalition for the End of Child Marriages will continue to contribute to the end of child marriages in Serbia through the activities of its members and through joint action, by strengthening the system to adequately respond to the problem of child marriages and initiating campaigns aimed at raising awareness of this phenomenon.

Based on the Instruction on the manner of work of centres for social work guardianship bodies in the protection of children from child marriages, the Republic Institute for Social Protection prepares annual reports. According to the report for the preceding year, during 2021, the centres for social work identified 235 children victims of child marriage, of which 16 were boys and 219 girls. 72.8% of these children were aged 16-17, 27.2% were children aged 10-15, and 7.3% of children did not have a regulated civil status. Most prominent among these cases were Roma children - 55.3%, while 30.2% of the children were of Serbian nationality. Bearing in mind that certain municipalities did not submit data, it is reasonable to assume that the total number of child victims of child marriage is higher, especially as among them are municipalities known to have child marriage as a phenomenon in their territory. Therefore, it is necessary to further strengthen local self-government units to recognize the problem of child marriage and the importance of monitoring this phenomenon in order to plan adequate and timely activities to prevent and respond to such incidents. In 2021, the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Being identified 4 children as victims of trafficking who were also victims of child marriage; one boy aged 16-17 and 3 girls - one aged 10-15 and two aged 16-17 years old. All the children were RS citizens. of the Republic of Serbia.

In the last three years, there have been 43 accredited professional development programs for teachers related to the prevention of dropping out of education. In the reporting period, 309 trainings were realized, which included 7,983 participants. Also, 123 trainings from the list of trainings of public interest were attended by 3030 participants. The development of a methodology that would collect data on persons at risk of child marriage, as indicated by civil society, would enable the prevention of this harmful practice in the future.

# F2. Joint responsibility of parents, assistance to parents, provision of child protection services (Article 18)

Amendments to the Law on Financial Support to Families with Children aim to: improve the conditions for meeting the basic needs of children; help families create a work-life balance; support parents to achieve the desired number of children; and improve the financial situation of families with children, families with children with disabilities, and families with children lacking parental care.

#### Realization of rights and protections since January 1, 2022

For a child born on January 1, 2022 or later, the following parental allowances are in effect: for a first child, a one-time payment 300,000 dinars (representing a new, significantly higher

amount for a child born on January 1, 2022 or later); for a second child, an endowment of 266,117.46 dinars in 24 equal monthly instalments of 11,088.23 dinars; for a third child an endowment of 1,596,704.79 dinars in 120 equal monthly instalments of 13,305.87 dinars; for a fourth child, an endowment of 2,395,057.19 dinars in 120 equal monthly instalments of 19,958.81 dinars. Also provided are: a lump sum for the purchase of equipment for a child (coinciding with the one-time amount of parental allowance for the first child, or the first instalment of the parental allowance for the second, third, and fourth child) of 5,544.12 dinars; and a one-time assistance endowment for the birth of the second and third child (representing a new protection for the birth of the second and third child born on January 1, 2022 or later) of 100,000 dinars.

Also recently initiated is the access to funds for the construction or participation in the purchase of a residential building or apartment based on the birth of a child, of up to 20,000 euros (representing a new right of a mother who acquires an apartment or house for the first time for a child born on January 1, 2022 or later).

The child allowance is administered as follows: the standard amount is 3,326.47 dinars: this amount is 30% higher for single-parent families and guardians - 4,324.40 dinars; a 50% higher amount applies to parents of a child with developmental issues or a child with disabilities, based on an opinion issued by the relevant interdepartmental commission, and for a child who receives an allowance for assistance and care of another person, if not accommodated in an institution for accommodation - 4,989.71 dinars; an 80% higher amount may apply if the conditions for increasing on several bases are met - 5,987.64 dinars.

Number of beneficiaries, children and amount of funds as of December 2021:

Parent allowances were distributed to 81,556 beneficiaries, with disbursed funds applied to 85,144 children at a total of 1,293,165,106.95 dinars; child allowances were distributed to 111,697 beneficiaries, disbursed funds applied to 223,293 children at total amount of paid funds of 761,183,093.95 dinars; salary compensation during maternity leave, for leave from work for child care, and for leave from work for special child care was distributed to 55,655 users, with amount of paid funds totalling 3,658,123,037.07 dinars; other payments based on birth and child care and special child care were distributed to 4,847 beneficiaries, with the amount of paid funds totalling 67,712,894.52 dinars

#### F6. Children deprived of a family environment (Article 20)

In the field of social protection, there are several accredited training programs for professionals that are thematically related to support for children released from institutions:

- $\sqrt{}$  "Supported housing theoretical and practical aspects of service provision" was realized 4 times, involving a total of 75 participants;
- $\sqrt{}$  "Training for initiating a housing service with support for young people in the social system" was implemented twice, involving a total of 41 participants;

- $\sqrt{}$  "The reintegration of minors into the social environment" was realized 2 times with a total of 44 participants;
- $\sqrt{}$  "Providing supported housing services for people with disabilities" was implemented once, with a total of 14 participants;
- $\sqrt{}$  "Supported housing general principles of service and specifics in working with people with autism" was not realized in any specific instances;
- $\sqrt{}$  "Social inclusion and economic empowerment of young people at risk" was not realized;
- $\sqrt{}$  "Efficient provision of housing services in sheltered conditions, i.e., housing support services for vulnerable groups" was not realized.

Within the project "Improvement of the social protection system in order to empower vulnerable families with children" and with the support of UNICEF, the Republic Institute for Social Protection coordinated the activity of reviewing the need for accommodation of children under five years of age in the Centre for the Protection of Infants, Children, and Youth, as well as in the Home "Kolevka" from Subotica. The activity was realized in cooperation with the relevant Ministry and the Provincial Institute for Social Protection. During and immediately after carrying out the field work, the representatives of the Ministry issued orders to the competent centres for social work on the necessary additions, as well as on the further course of protection for each child. After the orders were issued, the institutes monitored and provided support to the competent centres in the implementation of the orders. Data on the results achieved through a pre-created instrument were then collected and processed by the representatives of the institute on the basis of written and oral reports of the centres for each child. The result of these activities was the return of a number of children to a biological family or being transferred to different, less restrictive form of protection.

At the beginning of 2022, the competent ministry prepared a *Needs analysis for the development of services for young people who leave the social protection system and become independent*. Based on the results of the analysis, the competent ministry will apply for an IPA-funded (the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) project which will support young people in becoming independent in terms of housing, employment, psychosocial support, etc.

Activities of the Provincial Institute for Social Protection to support children deprived of a family environment were related to planning and implementing visits to centres for social work in order to assess the quality of professional work and the need for professional support and make recommendations for improving practice in direct work with users - children without parental care under the age of 10 who are separated from biological families and use the services of family or home accommodation.

In order to strengthen the capacities of experts in social protection to prevent the relocation of children from families of origin, the Institute also realized several working visits to centres for social work and centres for family accommodation and adoption, as well as homes for children. As part of its regular activities, the Institute reviewed the justification of cases for children staying in the Centre for Protection of Children and Youth in Belgrade and in the Kolevka home for children in Subotica (for children under 5), as well as evaluated the

possibility of their accommodation in less restrictive conditions. Professional support in individual cases and the professional support of supervisors contributed to increasing the quality of services provided to children deprived of parental care.

### G1. Children with disabilities (Article 23)

### Education of children with disabilities

In the period of 2017-2021, over 7,500 requests for assessment of the need for additional support were submitted to inter-ministerial commissions (in 2011 there were 1,300). Support in education was provided by more than 1000 personal companions and 280 pedagogical assistants (at the beginning of 2018, this number was 175) in preschool institutions and primary and secondary schools. Over 2,000 students educated according to an individual education plan (IEP) received support from employees of schools for the education of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities, students with learning disabilities, and students from other vulnerable groups have the right to an individual educational plan.

School year	Number of students educated according to an IOP1		Number of students educated according to an IOP2	
	Elementary School			
2020/21	8.721		6.565	
	Secondary School			
2020/21	509		1.817	
	Primary and secondary schools for students with disabilities			
2020/21	308		4.613	

Source: Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development

In the reporting period, 309 relevant trainings were realized, which included 7,983 participants. Also, 123 trainings from the list of trainings of public interest were attended by 3,030 participants; included among these were trainings for regular school teachers who have students who use Braille. In June 2021, the implementation of the IPA 2020 project "Improved equal access and completion of pre-university education for children in need of additional educational support" was initiated. The project will last for three years with a budget of 4.7 million euros. Adopted relevant regulations include:

### G8. Abuse of narcotics, tobacco, alcohol and other substances

Since 2020, the Ministry of the Interior has been implementing the project "*Empowering Youth and Police Representatives in the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency*," with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. One part of the project is aimed at informing youth representatives from high school parliaments about preventing and protecting against high-tech crime, drug abuse, and peer violence, in accordance with the recommendations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The pilot project "Empowering the family - a program to support families and young people aged 10 to 14," was implemented in 2018, in cooperation with the Ministry of

Education, Science and Technological Development and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, to develop family skills and better communication between parents and children and to prevent developmental problems in children's behaviour. As part of the project, training was held for 15 criminal police officers, who held six sessions involving 100 families (children and parents) in 10 primary schools in Belgrade.

In order to strengthen cooperation between the family and the school, the Ministry in charge of education, in cooperation with the UNODC and with the support of the OSCE, is regularly implementing the "*Strong Families*" program. During the school year 2021/22 year, a total of 60 professional associates were trained to apply this program in schools in the Republic of Serbia.

The project "Support for preventive police action in schools to protect students from psychoactive substances" has been implemented since December 2018, with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, in order to improve the knowledge of school police officers in the field of drug prevention in schools.

Within the concept of community policing in the Police Administration in Jagodina and Kragujevac, the project "Choose life, drugs are a failure" was realized with the aim of preventing drug abuse and reducing risky behaviours and symptoms through early intervention.

#### E1. Freedom from all forms of violence

#### Criminal acts committed to the detriment of persons under the age of 18

According to the data of MIA the average annual share of criminal acts committed to the detriment of persons under the age of 18 is about 5-6% of the total number of criminal acts involving injury to natural persons. Yearly, about 3,400 juveniles are registered as having been injured by criminal acts. General observations indicate that children are most endangered in traffic environments, followed by on the street / in open public spaces, and thirdly in the context of dysfunctional families, or other places/venues for entertainment, hospitality, and gathering for young people, including schools, which represents an unfavourable sign for the safety or proper development of children.

Although on average just 5% of victims of crime are persons under the age of 18, juveniles are much more likely to be victims of crimes against sexual freedom (57%), with one third of rapes committed against minors and almost half of trafficking offenses. Juveniles also account for a large percentage of victims of family relationships (87%), as well as victims of abuse and torture (36%).

Crimes committed against minors with an element of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect account for 57% of the total number of crimes committed against minors. This means that the number of the crimes in which minors have been harmed is approximately 1,800 a year, or an average of about 150 violent crimes per month.

The analysis of the gender structure of juvenile victims of violent crimes shows a slight dominance of males (52%) in relation to females (48%), with juveniles aged 14 to 18 (63%) represented more prominently in the age structure than children under 14 (37%).

In the context of violent crime, the most common individual offenses committed against minors are: domestic violence, violent behaviour, endangerment of safety, minor bodily injury, and grievous bodily harm.

# E3. Prohibition of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including corporal punishment (Art. 28, para. 2, and 37 (a))

According to the results of the MIKS-6 survey from 2019, half of children aged 1 to 14 living in households in Serbia experienced exclusively non-violent methods of discipline by an adult member of the household during the month preceding the survey, while in the same period 40% reported having experienced some kind of psychological aggression. Physical punishment was experienced by 20% of children, and 1% by severe form of physical punishment (slapping or hitting a child on the face, head or ears, beating, or inflicting multiple blows with full strength). Psychological aggression (shouting, calling a child derogatory names) and some form of physical discipline of children were documented as most common in the region of Vojvodina. Only 10% of respondents (mothers or guardians) in Serbia indicated believing that corporal punishment is necessary for the proper upbringing and education of children. In regard to Roma settlements, a total of 67% of children from materially deprived households indicated having significantly more experience with physical methods of discipline (42%) than those from households that were not materially deprived or were deprived in one item (27%).

#### X1 Equal opportunities in education (Article 28)

# <u>Free Textbook Program – the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological</u> <u>Development</u>

For the school years 2019/20 and 2020/21, through the Program of Free Textbook Program, a total of 7,710 textbook units were adapted for students with developmental disabilities, and in the 2021/22 school year, another 2,622 textbook units were adopted, representing a total of 10,332 adapted textbook units over the last three school years. The right to free transportation has been extended to high school students. Affirmative measures of enrolment in secondary schools and higher education institutions have been applied and final and entrance exams for students with disabilities have been adapted accordingly. 43 professional development programs for teachers related to the preventing students from dropping out of education were accredited and 309 trainings on this issue were implemented, involving 7,983 participants, while another 123 trainings from the list of trainings of public interest were held, attended by 3,030 participants. Additionally, trainings were organized for members of interdepartmental commissions (reaching 400 students from 136 municipalities). The program *"Transitional model for the inclusion of students older than seven and a half years* 

*in education*" is also being implemented. The results of these measures are an increase in the coverage of children and students in education, an increase in the number of students from vulnerable groups at higher levels of education, and an increase in IOP students in regular schools (over 21,000 students), with a corresponding decline in the number of students enrolled in special schools for students with development issues and disabilities.

The project "Improved equal access and completion of pre-university education for children in need of additional educational support," whose implementation began in June 2021, envisages the strengthening of the capacities of 4,000 teachers and professional associates and 1,000 other actors in the process of educational and social inclusion for children and students who need additional educational support. The goal of establishing resource centres within this project is to provide a sufficient number of qualified experts of various profiles who will provide additional support to such students enrolled in standard schools.

The project "Inclusive preschool education" is being realized with the help of a loan from the World Bank. The goal of the project is to improve the accessibility, quality, and fairness of preschool education for every child from birth to 6.5 years, especially for children from socially and economically vulnerable social groups. It is estimated that over 4,400 children aged 0 to 6.5 years old from materially at-risk families, as well as their parents, will have direct support through the grant program. The direct results of this project and the project "Bridging the Digital Gap for the Most Vulnerable Children" are presented here in Annex III. The research conducted by the Permanent Conference of Towns and Municipalities shows that the services and rights most often financed from the budgets of local self-governments are: the service of a personal companion for children; transportation and accommodation of students with disabilities; and the reimbursement of the costs of staying in a preschool institution for children from socially vulnerable groups, including financing the lunch of students in primary schools and day care services.

Within the project "Inclusive preschool education," a total of 48 new study rooms were adapted and equipped for educational work in remote rural areas (rooms in kindergartens, in rural schools, and in local communities, reading corners in hospitals and health centres, etc.). Over 2,800 children from vulnerable groups have been included in the Preschool Education System either through a half-day daily program or through attending flexible programs (2-3 times a week). Over 3200 parents from vulnerable groups participated in project activities (workshops on parenting, early development, excursions, sports workshops, open doors in preschools and kindergartens, etc.). 10 vehicles were purchased to transport children from remote areas, while cooperation between 159 partner institutions at the local level was strengthened (municipal administrations, preschools, health centres, social work centres, and NGOs). More than 1300 male family members from vulnerable groups participated with their children in project activities (workshops with children and fathers, trainings by centres for social work and doctors from health centres, open days in kindergartens, sports activities, excursions, etc.)

Within the project "Bridging the Digital Gap for the Most Vulnerable Children," implemented by the Ministry in charge of education and UNICEF and with the support of the EU, over 2,000 devices were provided for the 30 most vulnerable schools in which Roma

students are educated, including the provision of 1,890 tablets to schools for the use of students, as well as at least 1 to 3 laptops for each of the selected 30 schools. 250 computers for pedagogical assistants were provided and allocated with the aim of improving access to distance learning for Roma students. Funds have also been provided for schools (5,000 euros) to establish a Learning Club in which students have the conditions for online learning. Another key area of activities is psycho-social support in selected schools, with training planned for 900 teachers from 30 schools. Mobile internet has been provided for both teachers and students accessing digital libraries, thus enabling the smooth implementation of distance learning. During June and August 2021, and based on the submitted reports, a total of 12 schools in the project implemented summer school activities. The activities of the summer school programs included 360 students, mostly students from 5th to 8th grade, who had insufficient grades or for students who the class teachers and educators thought had finished courses with a lot of missed material (due to not attending online or regular classes), but also involving students with better achievements - as peers who could provide support in learning. Additionally, in a small number of schools, summer school activities were realized for students from 1st to 4th grade coming from socially impoverished backgrounds and/or attending classes according to the IEP, as well as for all 4th grade students, with the purpose of acquainting them with the subject teachers (who are not part of the education system prior to 5<sup>th</sup> grade) who were to teach them in the school year 2021/2022 school year.

#### X2. Objectives of education in regard to the quality of education (Article 29)

Within the European Union and Council of Europe Support Program for the Western Balkans and Turkey, a reference framework of 20 competencies for democratic culture has been adopted, which schools apply in their work. The result of the project is the incorporation of Guidelines, opinions and recommendations into the teaching and learning programs for the second grade of high school with contents that support and encourage respect for diversity, the active application of tolerance, and protection against discrimination within the education system. Human rights education is also provided through the application of a reference framework for competencies for fostering democratic culture. Within the project "Quality Education for All," which is supported by the Council of Europe, democratic culture in schools is being promoted, and new project activities include 60 schools, while a Handbook with examples of good practice in the application of competencies has been developed and published.<sup>6</sup>

In support of non-formal education and programs that are important for the development of education, MESTD annually announces public competitions for associations in the field of education. In the last five years, more than 200 civil society organizations have been supported, to which about 70,000 euros of budget funds have been allocated.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/priru%C4%8Dnik-primera-dobreprakseDemokratska-kultura-u-%C5%A1kolama.pdf and in the Serbian and English language at: http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wpcontent/uploads/2019/03/Fostering-a-Democratic-School-Culture-MOESTD-and-COE.pdf.

#### X3. Rights to education of children belonging to minority groups (Article 30)

Support measures for children returned under a readmission agreement from Western European countries

Given that primary schools affirmatively address the issue of returnees after readmission, these students in most cases are not registered separately, but rather simplified procedures are applied for enrolment and/or return to school, with a team provided for their prior testing and which follows the inclusion of students in regular teaching. In addition, if a student returns during the same school year, the school does not treat him/her as a newly enrolled student the student remains in the original class/grade. Amendments were made to the Law on the Education System for Children and Students Returned to the Country on the Basis of a Readmission Agreement allow for students who do not know the language in which educational work is performed or in which certain program content important for continuing education to be provided with Serbian language learning as a foreign language. There is a growing interest of young parents of returnees to enrol their children in preschool institutions from the earliest ages after readmission, especially regarding the interest of Roma mothers to include female children in the educational process as soon as possible. In primary schools, it has been observed that the longer the parents have stayed in EU countries, the greater their interest is in including children in the education system. Most problems occur with students who move to higher grades of primary school, from the 5th grade onwards. The most common form of support is the organization of extra classes at school and peer-assisted learning.

#### Education of Roma

The course Roma Language with Elements of National Culture was attended in the 2019/2020 school year by 2,467 students (1,163 girls and 1,304 boys) in 68 schools. In order to enable students to continue their education, scholarships and a mentoring system are provided for students enrolled in affirmative action measures.

Over the last five school years, 55,419 scholarships from the budget and donor funds for Roma students (65% girls) have been awarded in secondary schools. Amendments to the Rulebook on Pupil and Student Loans and Scholarships made in 2017 enabled Roma students, in addition to persons with disabilities and students without both parents, to be entitled to loans and scholarships without success criteria.

200 mentors have been hired to provide support to students of the Roma national minority. In the 2020/21 school year, a total of 281 pedagogical assistants were hired - 250 in primary schools, 30 in preschool institutions, and one in secondary school. These professionals contribute to the inclusion and achievement of better results of Roma students in education. *The Rulebook on Pedagogical and Andragogical Assistants* has created conditions for continuing the work to expand the network of pedagogical assistants. A solution is currently being developed for the hiring of 15 new pedagogical assistants. The implementation of support measures for children who have returned under the readmission agreement from Western European countries has also continued.

During the 2019/20 school year, a total of 77 students enrolled in primary schools in the territory of the Republic of Serbia as returnees by readmission (32 girls and 45 boys).

# **I1.** Children of refugees and internally displaced children, unaccompanied children / asylum seekers, children of migrants (Article 22)

More than 4,000 educators, teachers, principals and professional associates have improved their knowledge and skills for work in the field of education of migrants / asylum seekers. More than 3,000 individual support plans have been developed for migrant students and 115 school-level support plans for the inclusion of migrant students in education. 500 books and textbooks, 650 sets of school supplies, and 550 sets of equipment for physical education were provided. Teachers and professional associates realized more than 150 visits to reception and asylum centres in order to motivate migrants (children and parents) to enrol children in school, with more than 50 parent meetings held. Also realized were 500 workshops for all students on the following topics: interculturality, tolerance, friendship, introduction to the culture of migrant students, anti-discrimination, non-violent communication, developing empathy and providing support to migrant students. Migrant students were involved in 700 sports and 800 cultural activities. 150 public events were held featuring the authentic music, cuisine, customs, and dances of migrants with the aim of getting students acquainted with the culture and tradition of migrants. International Migrants' Day, Mother Language Day, School Day, New Year's celebrations, and national holidays for migrant students are regularly marked. Examples of good practice in the field of migrant education were published in three bilingual brochures.

#### I2. Children belonging to minorities or indigenous groups (Article 30)

Results of the Analysis "Availability of services and support measures for Roma children at the local level"

The analysis indicated that local self-government units (LGUs) still do not have separate data on ethnicity, which makes it difficult to monitor the measures and access of Roma children to social integration programs. In a number of local self-government units, social protection services are not sufficiently developed and do not respond to the needs of Roma families and children. This applies in particular to counselling and socio-therapeutic services and shelter-type housing services.

In the previous period, significant mechanisms were established to promote and support Roma families - coordinators for Roma issues, pedagogical assistants, health mediators, mobile teams for Roma inclusion<sup>7</sup> (in 56 LGUs – local self-government units), with the aim of facilitating access to services for Roma citizens, including children. The analysis also pointed to the need to further build the capacities of existing social protection service providers and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The mobile team consists of Coordinators for Roma Issues, pedagogical assistants, health mediators, representatives of the Centre for Social Work, and representatives of the National Employment Service, as well as, if necessary, other representatives of local self-government.

new potential providers, primarily from the ranks of CSOs. The employment of Coordinators for Roma Issues in cities and municipalities has proven to be a local mechanism that contributes most to the involvement of the Roma community, as it communicates and mediates between the community and local administration. A "Guide for Coordinators for Roma and LS (Local Self-government) officials who monitor Roma inclusion at the local level" has also been developed. In addition to social protection services, LGUs provide other specific programs and support measures for Roma children which cannot be considered social protection services because they are not standardized. These include various programs/actions for providing social inclusion and material support for socially at-risk Roma children, legal and humanitarian aid, sports and cultural activities, development of life skills, etc.

#### **I3.** Economic exploitation including child labour (Article 32)

Data collected from the centres for social work (CSW) for 2021 show that there were 39 children victims of child labour on the CSW records overall, 25 boys and 14 girls, predominantly (61.5%) of primary school age. Most of them were Roma children (30 children or 76.9%), with 35 out of the 39 children involved in begging. The perpetrators of abuse were mostly parents (26) and relatives (10). The new Instruction on the manner of work of social protection institutions and social protection organizations in providing social protection services to children in the protection service providers, such as Family Accommodation and Adoption Centres. According to their records, in 2021, there was not a single documented instance of a child victim of child labour abuse. Data on child victims of child labour abuse are also collected from the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking. In 2021 this centre registered 6 children - one boy, 15-17 years old, and five girls, two aged 6-14 and three aged 15-17. A training program entitled "Street children - development of foster care for children living and/or working on the streets" has been accredited at the Republic Institute for Social Protection.

As part of the continuation of the cooperation with the International Labour Organization in Serbia initiated in June 2019, the project "Measuring, raising awareness, and engaging policies to improve the fight against child labour and forced labour (MAP 16)" is being implemented within the draft amendments to the Decree on Determining Dangerous Work for Children. Additionally, seven trainings have been held on "Identification and Prevention of Child Abuse, including the Worst Forms of Child Abuse," completed by 112 representatives of the police, the prosecutor's office, the labour inspectorate, and social protection institutions. Also, on the occasion of marking the World Day against Child Abuse, a consultative workshop was held on the implementation of the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour No. 182.

#### I4. Sexual exploitation and human trafficking

Projects - the Ministry of the Interior

The project "Stopping Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children on the Internet" was implemented by the Department of Children's Rights of the Council of Europe in cooperation with the Office for Combating Crime in Cyberspace in Romania (the Republic of Serbia was the beneficiary of the project as a focus country) with the aim of combating and reducing the sexual exploitation and abuse of children through information and communication technologies.

The project "Strengthening the capacity of practitioners in the criminal justice system in the fight against high-tech crime and computer-enabled crime in Southeast Europe" was implemented with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. Within the project, trainings with practical work on computers were realized for 58 police officers from 19 police administrations in order to train them to work on cases of high-tech crime with an emphasis on combating the exploitation of minors for pornographic purposes via the Internet.

The project "Preventing and Combating Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children on the Internet in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina" was implemented by the organization Save the Children in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Trade, Tourism, and Telecommunications, and the Judicial Academy in Belgrade. Within the project, in 2019 and 2020, 10 trainings on "Protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation on the Internet" were conducted for 117 police officers and over 30 public prosecutors and judges in order to improve competencies for dealing with these areas of crime. In accordance with the Memorandum of Cooperation within the said project, 50,000 stickers for books and notebooks for primary school students were printed with a message related to security on the Internet and social networks.

The project "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings" (IPA 2014) was carried out in order to jointly meet the criteria for EU accession and realize the implementation of the Action Plan for Chapters 23 and 24 by strengthening the capacity of relevant institutions to combat all forms of trafficking in accordance with EU best practices. Within the project, 15 trainings were conducted with a focus on particular types of exploitation and protecting victims of trafficking, involving 156 police officers and representatives of the prosecutor's office, the labour inspectorate, the Centre for Protection of Victims of Trafficking, and civil society organizations. During 2019 and 2020, within the project *"Program for the Fight against Human Trafficking,"* a network of peer educators and trainers held 1,695 information workshops in cities and municipalities throughout the Republic of Serbia, in which 63,770 children participated (41,677 primary school students, 21,655 high school students, and 438 children lacking parental care), who were informed about how to recognize the risks of human trafficking. During the program of child recovery from socially at-risk families, in eight shifts of the Red Cross Summer School, 500 children aged 7-14 attended ten-day workshops to raise awareness of the need for protection from human trafficking.