



Child Rights Centre Info Bulletin for 2013

In 2013 the amendments to the National Plan of Action for Children for the period 2010-2015 have not yet been made, and the overall score as in previous years is that implementation of strategic plans and action plans are usually not approached as an instrument of development. The budget is still not transparent enough when it comes to the visibility of the allocations that are intended to improve the situation of children, nor the budgetary allocations for children were increased.

The Republic of Serbia still hasn't finalised the Draft Second and Third Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, within the highest legislative body of Serbia, in the new parliamentary structure, for the first time, in 2013 established is the Parliamentary Steering Committee on the Rights of the Child as a special permanent working body. Steering Committee on the Rights of the Child has been operational since its inception and it is continually active.

Significant fact is that the date of the start of European Union accession talks with Serbia is set to 21 January 2014.

The Ministries relevant for the topic of child rights individually make efforts in improving the situation of the child rights in Serbia through gatherings, meetings, conferences related to the subject, but the comprehensive joint strategy or action incepted or organised by the state does not exist.

In 2013 the Child Rights Centre realised 12 projects (7 independently and 5 in partnership).

1. „Prevention and protection of children from violence in sport“

Implementation: April 2013 – April 2014

Implemented by Child Rights Centre, funded by the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia under EIDHR program

This project aims at empowering sports associations for implementation and promotion of human rights through setting up a mechanism of prevention and protection of children and youth from violence in sports. The focus of the project is in preparation of the **Model Protocol for prevention and protection of children and youth from violence in sports** through which there will be formulated comprehensive measures and mechanisms for prevention and protection of youth athletes from violent forms of behavior occurring in this environment.

2. „Situation testing of discrimination”

Implementation: January – June 2013

Project was implemented in partnership and with financial support of the Commissioner for protection of equality.

It was realized through conducting a situation testing as one of the models to suppress discrimination, which implies direct test whether there is discrimination in certain situations. Three situation tests were conducted with the aim to determine existence of the discrimination in situations where there is a doubt but could not be easily proven.

3. „Institutional support for developing organisational capacities of Child rights centre“

Implementation: 2013 – 2015

Project is being implemented in partnership and with financial support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency through Save the Children International

This project is a continuation of projects of the same title implemented in 2011 and 2012 and supported by the Save the Children Sweden. The project should contribute to the Child Rights Centre's development into leading organisation for monitoring child rights in Serbia and Western Balkans. During 2013 the project was focused on broadening cooperation and networking with other organisations at national and European level, improving the mechanisms for full implementation of legislative solutions in the field of child rights, developing relevant thematical resources and materials both for Child Rights Centre and other organisations in Serbia, increasing child participation in the process of monitoring and reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Universal periodic review, improving the system of informing wider public, especially children and relevant social actors about Centre's activities, as well as strengthening internal structure and achieving more efficient performance of the organisation.

4. „Place for me - children in foster care in Serbia”

Implementation: July - December 2013

Project was implemented in partnership with National Institute for Social Protection and with financial support of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and social policies of Republic of Serbia

The focus of this project was on conducting a research of the position of children with functioning problems who are placed in foster families, with the aim to improve the system and implementation of the rights of the child. The research results were the basis for formulating recommendations to increase competencies of the professionals working in the field of foster care as well as foster parents, creation of new and improvement of existing services for foster parents.

5. Operationalisation of the General protocol for protection of children from abuse and neglect: „Strengthening the roles of centres for social work and intersectoral cooperation in belgrade, Nis, Novi Sad and Kragujevac“

Implementation: July 2012 - October 2013

Project was implemented in partnership and with financial support of the UNICEF office in Belgrade.

The project aimed at improving protection of children from violence through strengthening capacities of professionals from the system of social protection, improving the efficiency of intersectoral cooperation for implementation of the General protocol for protection of children from abuse and neglect and strengthening mechanisms for its full implementation in practice in Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac and Belgrade. Beside coordinating the project Child Rights Centre's representatives participated in the work of intersector team of Belgrade as its members.

6. „Towards child friendly justice“

Implementation: July 2013 – May 2014

Project was implemented in partnership and with financial support of the UNICEF office in Belgrade. Partners on the projects are Judiciary Academy and National Institute for Social Protection

This project should contribute to the development of child-friendly justice as an important step towards implementation, improvement and protection of child rights in the Republic of Serbia. The focus of the project lies on conducting the research with the aim to formulate recommendations for promotion of the judiciary practice with the aim to provide decision making in the best interest of the child and fully respecting child rights to participation in civil and criminal proceedings.

7. „Creation of the second shadow (supplementary) periodic report on the rights of the child in Serbia for the Committee on the Rights of the Child – Watching Child Rights“

Implementation: October 2013 – January 2014

Project was implemented in partnership and with financial support of the Pestalozzi Children's Foundation

The project aim is to prepare second alternative (supplementary) periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Serbia, submitting and presenting the report before the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Project activities cover empowerment of the Coalition for monitoring child rights in Serbia for the process of reporting, and organization of Coalition meetings in order to prepare the report. One of the planned project activities implies participation of three groups of children and youth from Belgrade, Uzice and Nis (which were involved in the preparation of the Report on Implementation of the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Serbia from the Perspective of Children and Youth) in celebration of the Convention on the Rights of the Child anniversary.

Partnership in other projects

1. “Taking Words into Action” – support to adopting and implementation of the National plan of action for children with developmental impairments

Implementation: March 2012 – February 2013

The Child Rights Centre was a local partner organisation in the project implemented by LUMOS, funded by the European Commission Fund for social innovation

The aim of the project was to support the implementation of the European Declaration on Health of Children and Young People with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families “Better health, better life” in Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Serbia, through preparation of the National action plans of implementation. The project was also aimed at collecting experiences in these three countries in order to provide other countries with recommendations for implementation.

2. „Creation of material on rights and obligations of children in institutions (Institutes for Education and Uprising, Correctional institution and Juvenile prison)”

Implementation: September – November 2013

Project was implemented by the Judiciary Academy with financial support of International Management Group and in partnership with the Child Rights Centre

During September 2013, under the project implemented by the Judiciary Academy, the Child Rights Centre realised 5 workshops with the aim to prepare materials adjusted to juveniles on their rights and obligations in correctional institutions and juvenile prison. Based on the workshops there were adjusted materials prepared and adopted by the Council for monitoring and improvement of work of criminal procedure bodies and execution of criminal sanctions against minors.

3. “Empowering the Coalition for monitoring child rights in Serbia to prepare second and third periodic shadow report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Optional Protocols to the Convention,,

Implementation: 15 August – 15 October 2013

The Child Rights Centre organised and realised a training in cooperation and with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia

Having in mind the fact that the Republic of Serbia currently works on preparation of the second and third periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, it was planned that the Coalition for monitoring child rights in Serbia starts working on the preparation of the Periodic alternative report. As it is the first time organisations of the Coalition are facing the process of periodic reporting before the Committee, it was necessary to introduce them to this process, strengthen their capacities and empower them for further work in this field. Therefore, the Child Rights Centre, in cooperation and with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, developed the training package for civil society organisations gathered in the Coalition for monitoring child rights in Serbia.

4. „Consultative meeting related to the necessity of developing new strategic framework for child rights implementation in the Republic of Serbia”

Implementation: December 2013

The Child Rights Centre organised and realised a consultative meeting in cooperation and with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia

Child Rights Centre has launched an initiative on the necessity of developing a new strategic framework for the realization of child rights, bearing in mind that the existing National Plan of Action for Children is expiring in 2015 and it is necessary to draft a new strategic framework that will be in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and which will comprehensively and

clearly define policy of the Republic of Serbia towards children. To consider the steps necessary to prepare future strategy document the Child Rights Centre organised a joint consultative meeting with representatives of relevant ministries, institutions, professionals and organisations relevant to the field of child rights. The meeting also discussed issues related to the form of the future strategic document, the holder of the document development, methodology by which the document is prepared, the interest of stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the document and the inclusion of children and parents / guardians in the process of preparing the document.

5. „Education for child rights”

Implementation: May – November 2013

The project is implemented by Uzice Child Rights Centre with the support of Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation. The Child Rights Centre is involved in development of two handbooks intended for professionals employed in education system.

This project was implemented by the Uzice Child Rights Centre with the support of Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation. The project started as a response to the need to provide efficient and systematic education on child rights to professionals working with children, especially those in education. During 2013 the Child Rights Centre was involved in the project implementation through preparation of two handbooks: *Child Rights in Education - Training Manual for Employees in Education* and *Guide for Teachers to Work with Children in Upper Primary School - Child Rights in the Educational System*.

In 2014 there is an education of partner organisations and professionals in education planned.

CHILD RIGHTS CENTRE’S PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES

During 2013 the Child Rights Centre published a total number of 6 titles.¹

1. Policy paper **“Child Friendly Justice in the Republic of Serbia”** (Prepared by Milena Banić). The document is published with the aim of lobbying and advocacy related to recognizing and improving the child friendly justice in legislation and practice in Serbia.
http://cpd.org.rs/Data/Files/Pravosudje_po_meri_deteta_en.pdf
2. **“Report on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Serbia from the perspective of children and youth.”** (Prepared by: Milena Golić Ružić, Aleksandar Gubaš). The report was prepared by three groups of children and youth from Belgrade, Uzice and Nis (DX – Children informative and cultural service, Youth Club at Uzice Centre for Child Rights and Activists of the Development Association for Children and Youth - Open Club). The report was created within

¹ In cooperation with Uzice Centre for Child Rights, the Child Rights Centre has prepared two manuals: *Child Rights in Education - Training Manual for Employees in Education* (Authors: Jelena Zunic Cicvaric, Milena Golic Ruzic, Aleksandra Jovanovic Djukic) and a *Guide for Teachers to Work with Children in Upper Primary School - Child Rights in the Educational System* (Prepared by: Milena Golic Ruzic, Jelena Zunic Cicvarić, Marija Petrovic). Manuals have been prepared in electronic form, and their printing is planned in 2014. Uzice Centre for Child Rights will be a publisher of the handbooks with the financial support of the Pestalozzi Foundation.

the project "Living Child Rights" which was carried out by the Child Rights Centre in cooperation with Save the Children.

http://cpd.org.rs/Data/Files/Izvestaj_o_ostvarivanju_prava_deteta_u_Republici_Srbiji_iz_ugla_dece%20i_mladih_en.pdf

3. **„Report on General Measures of Implementation of the Convention for the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Serbia“** (Authors: Marija Petrović, Milena Banić, Milena Golić Ružić, Jasmina Ivanović, Gorica Čolić). The report is the result of a process that was implemented to test and analyse how these measures are implemented in the Republic of Serbia. The process of drafting the report was conducted in the period from July to December 2012, in accordance with the methodology developed by Save the Children and which is used to create a similar report in five EU member states (Italy, Romania, Lithuania, United Kingdom, and Sweden).
http://cpd.org.rs/Data/Files/izvestaj_o_ostvarivanju_opstih_mera_primene_konvencije_2013.pdf
4. In June 2013 translated into English and printed/published was the text earlier published in electronic form – **“Living Child Rights – Activities of Children and Youth in the Implementation of the Rights of the Child”** (prepared by: Dragana Ćuk Milankov, Milena Golić Ružić). The report shows the activities of children and youth carried out under the project “Living Child Rights” in cooperation with Save the Children. Printing of the material was financed by SIDA, the Swedish International Development Authority through Save the Children International.
http://cpd.org.rs/Data/Files/ziveti_prava_deteta_eng.pdf
5. Within the project “Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence in Sports” an informative brochure entitled **“Score in the spirit of sport”** was published. Preparation and publishing of the brochure was funded by the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).
http://cpd.org.rs/Data/Files/brosura_poentiraj_u_sportskom_duhu_sr-latin.pdf
6. **„A place for me - children in foster care in Serbia”** (Authors: Aleksandar Jugović, Ljubomir Pejaković, Ivana Stevanović; Prepared by: Slađana Radulović). This is a publication that presents the results of the research implemented by the Child Rights Centre in cooperation with the National Institute of Social Welfare, with support from the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social policy during the period July - December 2013 within the project with the same name. The situation of children with functioning problems in the foster placement - current situation and challenges faced by professionals, foster parents, and by children in foster care were investigated and recommendations were given.
http://cpd.org.rs/Data/Files/mesto_za_mene.pdf

Conferences that the Child Rights Centre organised in 2013 independently or in cooperation with other institutions and organisations

1. Child Rights Centre, together with the Council for monitoring and improving the work of bodies of criminal procedure and criminal sanctions against minors, the Ministry of Justice, Judicial Academy, International Management Group, Institute of Social Protection of Republic of Serbia and UNICEF office in Belgrade organised a conference entitled "**Days of Juvenile Justice**" which was held from 12 to 14 June 2013 in Nis.

The aim of the conference was to exchange experiences between experts from different systems involved in the juvenile justice system, capacity building and defining recommendations for further improvement of the juvenile justice system in Serbia.

The conference was attended by prominent experts in the field of juvenile justice, and discussed were the following topics: the state of juvenile crime, the criminal proceedings against juveniles in practice, alternative measures of juvenile justice of the Republic of Serbia and enforcement of sanctions against minors.

Two representatives of the Child Rights Centre took part in the conference. At the conference one representative of the Centre presented to the participants a research conducted by the Centre during last year, which refers to the execution of the educational measure of specific obligation (both individually and with the educational measure of intensified supervision), which imposition is regulated by the Law on Juvenile Offenders and Criminal Protection of Juveniles. Also, on this occasion the representatives of the Centre with the aim of advocating and lobbying for recognising and improving of child friendly justice in Serbian legislation have presented to the participants of the event the policy paper created by the Child Rights Centre – Child Friendly Justice in the Republic of Serbia.

At the conference participants jointly defined recommendations for further improving juvenile justice in the Republic of Serbia, which the Council for monitoring and improving the work of bodies of criminal procedure and criminal sanctions against minors will forward to all relevant institutions and experts in the field of juvenile justice.

2. On 7 and 8 November 2013 UNICEF Office in Serbia, the Republic Institute for Social Protection and Child Rights Centre organised the conference which presents the activities carried out and the results of the project "**Protection of children from violence in South East Europe**". One of the aims of the conference was directed towards perception of the state of the response of systems of social protection, education, health and intersectoral collaboration to protect children from abuse and neglect.
3. On 8 November 2013, Office of Human and Minority Rights, in cooperation with the Child Rights Centre and the Council for improving the work of the criminal proceedings and the enforcement of criminal sanctions against juveniles organised the conference entitled "**How to prevent violence among children**".

A support to this event was provided by a large number of representatives of state institutions, international organisations, embassies and local governments.

The number of conference participants indicated that the issues of prevention of violence against children, prevention of violence among children, working on emphasising family values, areas

that attract attention present an important task and demand the accountability of all relevant representatives in the struggle and efforts provide a safe growing up of all children in Serbia.

The conference is intended to encourage the relevant institutions in their efforts to break the cycle of violence against children and to create awareness of a common, social responsibility which will provide stable conditions for children's growing up.

They exchanged a professional experience from different sectors with a focus on children and youth, and made joint plans for further work on the issue of prevention of violence against children.

4. As a coordinating organization of the Balkan network for monitoring child rights, on 23 December 2013 the CRC has organised a **Regional conference with the aim to present and discuss General Measures of Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Serbia**. Other aims of the conference were to exchange information, positive practices and developed materials of the organisations that deal with the issues of child rights in the region.
5. On 27 December 2013 in Belgrade the Child Rights Centre organised a conference entitled "**A place for me - children in foster care in Serbia**." At the conference, representatives of the Child Rights Centre and associates presented the results of the research "A place for me - children in foster care in Serbia" implemented by the Child Rights Centre in cooperation with the National Institute of Social Welfare, with support from the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social policy during the period July - December 2013 within the project with the same name. The situation of children with functioning problems in the foster placement - current situation and challenges faced by professionals, foster parents, and by children in foster care were investigated.

Participation of the Child Rights Centre's representatives in public gatherings

During 2013 representatives of the Child Rights Centre attended **55** public and professional gatherings related to the theme of the child rights (51 in the country and 4 abroad).

Child Rights Centre in the media

In 2013 the representatives of the Child Rights Centre continuously addressed to the general public through various forms of presence in the media. Depending on specific topics or issues, the Centre addressed through press releases, interviews, and guest appearances on television and radio. During the 2013 there were issued and published a total of 29 contents in which the representatives of the Centre participated.

Participation of the Child Rights Centre in campaigns

At the initiative of the Board on the Rights of the Child and National Assembly Chairman Nebojsa Stefanovic, on 15 June 2013, at 12.30, in the Knez Mihailova Street marked was the beginning of the campaign "The priority for children and pregnant women."

The initiative should encourage and remind that we are facing with a declining birth rate and that more attention should be paid to that target group and highlight the importance of motherhood and the family in our society. At the same time, it is necessary to awaken the moral conscience and point out that pregnant women, mothers, and caregivers, must be respected, honoured and privileged, and that at all times and in all places must be given priority.

The initiative "A priority for children and pregnant women" was supported by the Steering Committee on the Rights of the Child of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, the Commissioner for Protection of Equality Ombudsman, UNICEF, Child Rights Centre, MODS, Parents Associations, Friends of Children of Serbia, Telekom, Post of Serbia, JAT Airways, Belgrade Airport, GSP, EPS, Serbian Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Transport, RFZO, Serbian Railways and many others.