

# INCEPTION REPORT

## Republic of Serbia

### 1. General information

Republic of Serbia is a country located at the crossroads of Central and Southeastern Europe, covering the southern part of the Pannonia Plain and the central Balkans. Serbia's borders with Hungary from the north, Romania and Bulgaria from the east, Macedonia from the south and Croatia, Bosnia and Montenegro from the west. It also borders with Albania through the disputed territory of Kosovo. Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, is among Europe's oldest cities and one of the largest in Southeastern Europe.

If we take a look in the historical past of Serbia, we can easily notice that during only one century Serbia changed many forms of the governing – from the monarchy to the democratic republic.

Today, Republic of Serbia is a democratic state of all of its citizens. Its history and achievements make it an integral part of modern civilization and the international community.

#### **Territory**

88,499 km<sup>2</sup>

**Length of border:** 2,361.7 km

**Location (according to Greenwich):** Between 41°53' and 46°11' of North latitude and 18°49' and 23°00' of East longitude

**Life expectancy in Serbia - 75.3 years (life expectancy for women - 77.9 years and for men - 72.8 years)**

**Infant mortality rate:** 5.7 deaths/1,000 live births, **male:** 6.8 deaths/1,000 live births and **female:** 5 deaths/1,000 live births

**Maternal mortality rate:** 17 deaths/100,000 live births

**Literacy rate:** 98.1% **male:** 99.1% **female:** 97.2%

**Population:** The final data from the 2011 census put the population of Serbia (excluding Kosovo-Metohija) at 7,186,682

According to latest indicator - 1st January 2017. (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia) – estimated population 7 040 272, natural increase in 2016 was minus - 36 100.

The majority of the population of Serbia are Serbs, with another 21 ethnicities. All citizens have equal rights and responsibilities and enjoy full ethnic equality. The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia guarantees rights to minorities, in accordance with the highest international standards. The official language in Serbia is Serbian and the script in official use is Cyrillic, while the Latin script is also used. In the areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, the languages and scripts of the minorities are in official use, as provided by law.

The main religion of Serbia is Christian Orthodox.

In terms of administrative and territorial division, the Republic of Serbia is divided into provinces, regions, administrative areas, the City of Belgrade, cities and municipalities.

The Republic of Serbia has two territorial autonomies, AP Vojvodina and AP Kosovo-Metohija

**The territorial organization of Serbia includes five regions:**

1. Belgrade region,
2. Vojvodina region,
3. Šumadija and Western Serbia region,
4. Eastern and Southern Serbia region and

## 5. Kosovo-Metohija region

They include the City of Belgrade as a separate territorial unit established by the Constitution and law, and 30 administrative areas, 24 cities, 30 urban municipalities, 150 municipalities, 6,158 villages and 193 urban settlements.

The territorial order of the Republic of Serbia is regulated by the Law on Territorial Organization and Local Self-Government. Under the Law, the municipalities, cities and settlements make the bases of the territorial organization.

The Republic of Serbia is divided into 29 districts:

No	District	Population
1.	Bačka North	205 401
2.	Central Banat	221 253
3.	North Banat	179 783
4.	South Banat	328 428
5.	West Bačka	215 916
6.	Bačka South	553 270
7.	Srem	309 981
8.	Mačva	339 644
9.	Kolubara	200 560
10.	Podunavlje	226 589
11.	Braničevo	253 492
12.	Šumadija	312 160
13.	Pomoravlje	312 160
14.	Bor	178 718
15.	Zaječar	158 131
16.	Zlatibor	335 826
17.	Morava	230 748
18.	Raška	300 274
19.	Rasina	296 690
20.	Nišava	382 461
21.	Toplica	111 831
22.	Pirot	116 926
23.	Jablanica	255 011
24.	Pčinja	243 529
25.	Kosovo	672 292
26.	Peć	414 187
27.	Prizren	376 085
28.	Kosovska Mitrovica	275 904
29.	Kosovsko pomoravlje	217 726

### Population broken down by age (10 years):

**Republic of Serbia 6.761.061**, male 3.267.118/female 3.493.943

**Central Serbia 4.929.487** male 2.385.133/female 2.544.354

**Vojvodina 1.831.574** male 881.986/female 949.589

### Population broken down by income level:

The Government of the Republic of Serbia is committed to monitoring and promoting poverty reduction and social inclusion. With the prospect of joining the European Union (EU), Serbia began in 2013

to implement the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), one of the main sources of data used in the EU to monitor poverty and social inclusion.

Serbia uses standard SILC surveys to monitor relative poverty in the country. The data are collected by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and are comparable with data from other countries that use SILC - style surveys (primarily EU countries). SILC surveys provide a) cross-sectional data pertaining to a certain time period with variables on income, poverty, social exclusion and other living conditions, and b) longitudinal data, pertaining to individual - level changes over time, observed periodically over a four - year period. For the purposes of the poverty map, only the cross - sectional dimension is used. For Serbia, the 2013 SILC data include 20,069 individuals in 6,501 households (out of 8,008 initially sampled). The data are weighted for national representativeness, with about 19.5 percent of the unweighted sample located in Belgrade, about 27.1 percent of the unweighted sample in Vojvodina, about 30.1 percent in Šumadija and Western Serbia, and about 23.3 percent in Southern and Eastern Serbia. Official poverty estimates for Serbia are defined using a relative poverty line set at 60 percent of median income per adult equivalent. **In 2013, the official poverty rate – referred to as the “at risk of poverty” rate in Serbia – was 24.5% at the 13,680 RSD poverty line per month, by equivalent adult. The relative at-risk-of-poverty gap stood at 36.6%.**

### **Educational system of Serbia**

Education in Serbia is inclusive and is administered by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia. It is split up into following levels:

- Preschool education
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher education

Education in Serbia started in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century with the formation of schools at Roman Catholic monasteries in Titel and Bač, now Vojvodina. Serbian primary school Norma was set up in Sombor in 1778. In 1791, the oldest Serbian gymnasium- Gymnasium of Karlovci was set up. In 1808, Belgrade higher school was formed. Liceum of Serbian Principality was set up in Kragujevac in 1838, which was later in 1841 shifted to Belgrade. In 1863, it merged into the Belgrade higher school. Later in 1905, it formed as the University of Belgrade.

#### **Preschool Education**

Preschool education of 6 months is compulsory and is the first part of compulsory studies in Serbia. The preschool education is offered by kindergartens in Serbia. Children at the age of 5 or 6 may attend pre-school education.

#### **Primary Education**

Primary education in Serbia is compulsory and lasts for 8 years. At the age of 6 or 7 children go to the primary schools in Serbia. The primary education is split up into two levels:

- Lower grades: Comprising grades 1 to 4
- Higher grades Comprising grades 5 to 8

Number of students in school year 2016/17

#### **Primary education in 1.185 schools**

<b>Republic of Serbia 544.632</b>	
<b>North Serbia</b> 271.557/female132.330	<b>Serbia South</b> 273.075/female 132.119

<b>Belgrade region</b> 125.808/female 61.226	<b>Vojvodina region</b> 145.749/female 71.104	<b>Sumadija and West Serbia region</b> 156.717/female 75.779	<b>South and East Serbia region</b> 116.358/female 56.340
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### Secondary Education

Secondary education in Serbia is not compulsory and generally last for 4 years. Secondary schools in Serbia are of following types:

- Gymnasiums (107)
- Secondary vocational (310)

**Gymnasiums:** This type of secondary school provides general and professional education. Studies at gymnasiums last for 4 years. Upon successful completion of the gymnasium studies, students are awarded a high school diploma.

*There are 2 special gymnasiums:*

- Mathematical high schools: Pupils at the age of 12 or above may attend this high school
- Philology gymnasiums: These high schools provide language courses.

**Secondary vocational education:** Secondary vocational education is offered by vocational schools. These schools provide education in specific fields and upon successful completion of the course, a vocational qualification is awarded. In Serbia, there are two kinds of professional secondary school courses:

- 4 - year course: This course provides broad education and allows students to go for further studies
- 3 - year courses: Students who do a 3-year course are not eligible for further studies.

Number of students in school year 2016/17

#### Secondary education in 417 schools

<b>Republic of Serbia 250.011</b>			
<b>North Serbia</b> 123.450 / female 60.585		<b>Serbia South</b> 126.561 / female 62.699	
<b>Belgrade region</b> 60.527 / female 29.633	<b>Vojvodina region</b> 62.923 / female 30.952	<b>Sumadija and West Serbia region</b> 72.407/female 36.090	<b>South and East Serbia region</b> 54.154/female 26.609

### Higher Education

Higher education in Serbia comprises of 2 types of studies:

- Academic studies: These studies are conducted at the universities in Serbia
- Applied profession-oriented studies: These studies are conducted at the universities as well as colleges of applied studies in Serbia

## Higher Education Institutions

Higher education in Serbia is offered by the following types of higher education institutions: university, college of academic studies and college of vocational/applied studies. Also, there are faculties and art academies, but they are a constituent part of the universities in Serbia.

The universities are independent higher education institutions in Serbia that provide many study programmes at all levels of study. Universities in Serbia carry out educational, artistic, technical and scientific work. Many of the study programmes of the universities in Serbia are provided by the faculties that are part of the university.

### List of Higher Education Institutions in Serbia:

**Public Universities in** Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Kragujevac, Pristina, Novi Pazar, University of Defense, and University of Arts

**Private Higher Education Institutions in** Belgrade (Alpha, European, Metropolitan, Megatrend, Singidunum, Union, Nikola Tesla, Academy of Fine Arts), Sremska Kamenica (Educon University), Novi Sad (Economics Academy)

## Special Education (48 special primary and secondary schools)

Serbia is implementing inclusive education from 2009 (Inclusive education is a legal obligation in Serbia and the landmark 2009 Law on Education requires the full inclusion of children), which encourages education of children with disabilities, learning difficulties and disadvantages in mainstream schools and classes. In this context the role of special education schools and classes is also expected to change – downsizing, preparing students for re-entering into regular classes... Special schools and classes have a decreasing trend in respect of the number of students starting from 2009.

## Health system in Serbia

Health care system is a Bismarck model with social insurance based on universal health coverage from the National Health Insurance Fund. Private health insurance exists in supplementary form. In Serbia, 2011, compulsory health insurance had 6,786,333 people. Insured in the health care system can be divided into two groups. First group are those citizens who have income and those have legal obligation to pay contribution and second group are people who don't have income or their income is less than the established threshold, whose insurance is funded from the budget of the Republic of Serbia from the contributions of employees. Health care of the population is directly provided through a network of health care institutions and divided to three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary health care.

### Health care institutions in the Republic of Serbia

Health Care Institutions	Numbers of institutions
Pharmacy	35
Primary Health Care Centre	157
Institute	22
General Hospital	40
Special Hospital	37
Clinical – Hospital Centre	4
Hospital Centre	4
Clinic	6
Institute	16
Public Health Institute	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>344</b>

### Health care institutions in the Republic of Serbia

District	Health care institution
North Backi	6
Middle Banatski	10
North Banatski	13
South Banatski	16
West Backi	8
South Backi	27
Sremski	12
Macvanski	14
Kolubarski	9
Podunavski	8
Branicevski	12
Sumadijski	15
Pomoravski	12
Borski	7
Zajecarski	10
Zlatiborski	16
Moravicki	10
Raski	15
Rasinski	10
Nisavski	21
Toplicki	6
Pirotski	7
Jablanicki	9
Pcinjski	13
Grad Beograd	54
Kosovskomitrovacki	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>344</b>

#### Mayor industry

Serbia industry sectors contribute about a quarter of the nation's GDP. The sector, particularly the mineral fertilizer industry, is responsible for the growth of agricultural industry in Serbia as well. Serbia industry sectors are predominantly dominated by base metals, furniture, chemicals, mining, food processing and textiles.

Other significant contributors to Serbia economy are **Energy Industry**. Serbian energy industry is instrumental to the development of the nation's economy. The sector is crucial for supporting operations of other Serbian industries. Besides, electrical energy produced by the sector has been one of the principal exports of Serbia. Serbia exports almost half of its total electricity production.

**Pharmaceutical Industry**, according to estimates of the Balkans News, the Serbian pharmaceutical industry was valued at US\$1.17 billion in 2008. Besides, Serbia ranks number 14<sup>th</sup> on the list of top 20 key markets in Eastern and Central Europe.

**Machine and Construction Industry**, Serbian machine and construction industry is principally located in the nation's capital, Belgrade. The industry has been expanding rapidly, particularly as a result of modernization of the nation's three largest cities - Belgrade, Niš and Novi Sad. The refurbishing of European Corridor 10, from the Bulgarian to the Hungarian border, has also resulted in heightened activities in the sector. The Serbian machine and construction industry was, however, adversely impacted by the global financial crisis of 2007. The sector nonetheless continues to employ over 100.000 workers.

## Number of employees in industry in Republic of Serbia

<b>Republic of Serbia 603.600</b>			
<b>North Serbia</b> 299.600		<b>Serbia South</b> 304.000	
<b>Belgrade region</b> 103.600	<b>Vojvodina region</b> 196.000	<b>Sumadija and West Serbia region</b> 173.000	<b>South and East Serbia region</b> 131.000

**Unemployment rate in Republic of Serbia** according to the latest date is 13.5% (15 -64 years old)

## 2. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

### Laws concerned with persons with Intellectual Disabilities

- The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- Law on Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Law on Prevention of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities
- Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination
- Law on Fundamentals of the Education System
- Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities
- Law on Social Protection
- Law on Teachings and Other Teaching Materials
- Law on the Protection of Persons with Mental Disorders
- Law on Health Care
- Family Law
- Law on financial support to families with children

### Financial Assistance for persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Persons with disabilities in the Republic of Serbia are, just like in the EU, among the most vulnerable population groups if observed by the poverty rate and by the risk from poverty.

Social protection and social security are provided for the citizens in the Republic of Serbia through social insurance and different services and monetary allowances from the system of social, family, child, veteran and disability protection. Social insurance includes the pension and invalidity insurance, medical insurance and insurance in the case of unemployment and it includes monetary compensations on the basis of such insurance. Reduction of extreme poverty and the part of social protection that is not provided by the social insurance are realized through social and child protection, which is regulated by legislation on social welfare and financial support to families with children, and it includes monetary allowances such as: social welfare, child and parental allowance, care allowance, increased care allowance, right to allowance for employment training, rights to monetary allowances for veteran and disability protection, etc.

Lower participation rates in general education and in the labour market result in inequalities in income earned and in poverty among persons with disabilities, which leads to social exclusion and isolation.

Monetary allowances in the field of social protection, i.e. the cares allowance and the increased care allowance, are intended for the beneficiaries who, due to their diseases or disabilities, cannot independently perform the basic everyday activities, irrespective of their financial standing. Monthly amount of the increased care allowance of approximately RSD 26,000 is higher than the amount of net minimum salary, and can, based on such comparison, be assessed as adequate.

Families of poorer financial status with children with intellectual disabilities are entitled to child benefit under more favorable terms and in a higher amount. The right to the child allowance in 2017 has made 4,949 children with disabilities, in the amount of RSD 3,589.23.

A special measure of direct support to parents of children with developmental disorders who are taking care of their children in family environment has been established as well, and thus, one parent who is not employed and who is directly taking care of his/her child for a minimum of 15 continuous years is entitled to the specific monetary allowance in the form of a life-time monthly allowance amounting to the lowest pension amount, in cases where the child is entitled to the increased care allowance.

According to the latest data of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Policy from October 2017, the total of 15,639 beneficiaries received the increased care allowance, the total of 34,429 beneficiaries of full age used the basic care allowance, and the total of 524 received specific monetary allowance in the form of a life-time monthly allowance amounting to the lowest pension amount. The number of beneficiaries entitled to this type of allowance is constantly rising.

### **Services including CBR available for persons with Intellectual Disabilities**

With respect to the services, the reform of the social protection system in the Republic of Serbia that was initiated in the beginning of the last decade is focused on the development of integral social protection through development and standardization of different types of services for persons with intellectual disabilities (day care centres, supported living service, home care, personalized assistant service, associates for families with children with developmental disorders, family counsel, periodical family placement...), pluralism of service providers (institutions for social protection, civil society organizations, other physical and legal persons and centres for social work), and improvement of quality of living and quality of professional work. In that sense, efforts are made to achieve the transition from the model that is predominantly relying on the residential care institutions to the model of community-based services for individuals and families, where the placing in institutions is a service that is resorted to only where support cannot be provided in a less restrictive manner. This model implies increased social inclusion and contributes to achieving independence and improvement of the quality of life for individuals.

Social services for the persons with intellectual disabilities that are the responsibility of local governments are classified into four groups:

1. The daily services in the community, which include the following services: living room, home assistance and personal escort the child. Within this group of services the local governments can provide other services that are also intended to support users to stay in the family and their natural environment.

2. Support services for independent living include service of support necessary for active and independent participation of users in the society, such as: personal assistance for adults with intellectual disabilities, supported housing people with intellectual disabilities. To this group belong to the services and programs of training / education, enabling users independence and improvement of skills for independent living.

3. The advisory-therapeutic and social-educational services are: intensive support services to the family in crisis through counseling and support for parents of persons with intellectual disabilities, foster parents and adoptive parents, maintaining family relationships and reunification of the family, counseling and support in cases of violence, family therapy and mediation, SOS phones, activation and other advisory and educational activities.

Data for the period by 2015 was showed that of the total of 145 local governments that submitted their data, the predominant services for persons with intellectual disabilities are: home assistance and care services, day care service and the service comprising support for independent living. Concerning services intended for children and young persons, the most frequently organized services are: day care for children and youth with intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders, personal assistant and supported housing for the young persons who are getting trained for independent living.

On the other hand, in the beginning of 2016, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs allocated dedicated funding for the implementation of social welfare services on the local level, and specifically, funding was allocated to 123 local government units that additionally provided own contributions and that are categorized into 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> group of underdeveloped local governments, so

that in the future it can be expected that the availability of services and their coverage of beneficiaries will be expanded.

### **Number of services and those beneficiaries in each district (province)**

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, as part of the Family Care and Social Welfare Department, carries out activities at three levels of operation in order to improve living conditions of persons with intellectual disabilities:

- Supporting local governments in establishing and sustaining social protection services at the local level, and developing PWD services;
- Improving living conditions and treatment of users of institutional accommodation in social care facilities;
- Developing and training professional staff.

Social protection services for persons with intellectual disabilities are divided into the following groups: assessment and planning services; daily services in the community; support services for independent living; advisory-therapeutic and socio-educational services; and accommodation services.

The research Mapping Social Care Services within the Mandate of Local Governments in the Republic of Serbia was conducted between October 2015 and March 2016. The initiative to conduct this comprehensive research again after three years was launched by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The research was carried out by the Centre for Social Policy.

The mapping of social care services was conducted in 145 local governments. All local governments and/or local service providers provided the data on social care services for 2015. Following the same methodology applied in 2012, data were collected on the social care services provided in each local government, their prevalence, availability, efficiency and quality.

The data on social care services for 2015 are disaggregated by service types, as defined by the Law on Social Protection and the Rulebook on Detailed Conditions and Standards of Provision of Social Care Services.

Social care services within the mandate of local governments are classified into four groups:

1. **Day care community-based services**, including the following services: day care, home care, child personal attendant and drop-in centre. Within this group, local governments may provide other services also aimed at supporting clients to remain with their families and in their natural immediate environment.

2. **Services for independent living** are the type of services, i.e. the type of support, needed for clients' active and independent participation in society, such as: personal assistance for adult persons with disabilities, supportive housing for youth who start living independently and supportive housing for persons with disabilities<sup>11</sup>. This group of services also includes training/ education programmes to facilitate clients' transition to independence and enhancement of independent living skills.

3. **Emergency and temporary accommodation services** include: placement in a shelter (for various target groups), respite care and other similar types of accommodation.

4. **Counselling/therapy and social/educational services** comprise: intensive support services for families in crises through counselling and support to parents, foster parents and adoptive parents, families caring for their children or adult members with developmental disabilities; fostering family relations and family reunification; counselling and support in cases of violence; family therapy and mediation; helplines; activation and other counselling and education activities.

Through the mapping exercise, data were collected on **18 social care services** within the mandate of local governments. The services were pre-defined in terms of target groups, as the experience of the 2012 mapping exercise had shown that this yielded more credible data.

The findings on social care services are presented below by service groups, and comprise service prevalence, clients, providers and funding in 2015, as well as a comparison to the situation in 2012. Elderly home care and day care for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the most prevalent social care services.

Day care services were provided in a total of 77 municipalities and cities, and day care for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities – in 68 local governments. The child personal attendant

service was provided in 30, and the drop-in center service – in 3 local governments. The child personal attendant service featured more prominently in the previous 2-3 years. In 2015, it was provided in as many as 30 local governments, but not in all cases continuously throughout the (school) year. The emergence of this service resulted from the development of inclusive education, as well as the work of *inter-sectoral committees*, established in almost all local governments in Serbia between 2010 and 2012. The personal attendant service is primarily aimed at enabling children's inclusion in mainstream education, as well as achieving a higher level of independence.

In 2015, services for independent living were provided in a total of 36 cities and municipalities. A significant increase in the number of local governments in 2015 compared to 2012, almost threefold, was recorded in the prevalence of the service “supportive housing for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities” as a result of the legal changes creating the possibility for its funding from the national level in all except the highest developed municipalities and cities. The increased prevalence may have been affected by the presence of the EU - funded programme *Open Arms* as well.

Prevalence of counselling/therapy and social/educational services - in 2015, the services in this group were provided in a total of 33 local governments. They included a new service – family outreach worker, delivered in 7 local governments. Although the number of local governments providing counselling centre services grew by almost one third relative to 2012, the prevalence of these services was still insufficient.

According to the mapping data, the number of clients covered by all service groups for persons with intellectual disabilities totaled somewhat over 25 thousand in 2015. The number of clients of counselling services (counselling centre and family outreach worker) cannot be added up, owing to the specific nature of the counselling centre service. In 2015, counselling centres were used by an average of 798 clients per month, while the pilot service of family outreach worker covered 1,152 clients.

Day care services - 20,474 clients and Services for independent living -372 clients.

The total expenditures on social care services within the mandate of local governments amounted to RSD 2.6 billion (approximately 0.065 % of the GDP) in 2015. By level of expenditures, the City of Belgrade held a distinctly dominant position among the local governments, being by far the largest territorial unit, with the largest population and the highest local budget, as well as a longstanding tradition in the provision of social care services. In 2015, Belgrade's expenditures amounted to almost RSD 1.1 billion, or 42 % of the total expenditures by all local governments in Serbia on social care services.

Of the total expenditures on social care services within the mandate of local governments in 2015, day care community-based services accounted for by far the highest proportion of funds, at 80 %, while the expenditures on all other social care services within the mandate of local governments amounted to 20 %. The expenditures on home care and day care in 2015 accounted for 66 % of the total expenditures on social care services, and the expenditures on all other services – for 34 %.

These results are not surprising, as the expenditures on the two most prevalent services – (a) adult and elderly home care and (b) day care for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, totaling RSD 1.7 billion, accounted for 83% of the total expenditures on day care community-based services.

Day care for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, at somewhat over RSD 700 million, Day care for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities RSD 82 million, Child personal attendant RSD 160 million, Child home care RSD 30 million, Supportive housing for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities RSD 48 million, Counselling Centre and Family outreach worker RSD 94 million.

Looking at the funding sources for all groups, all except counseling services are characterized by substantial shares of local budget allocations (with co-payment). The share of national budget allocations through projects of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, public works, projects funded from the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina budget etc. ranges from 1% for counselling services to 5.5 % for services for Supportive housing for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### **3. Outline of your organization**

**The Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs** performs state administration relating to: system in the field of labor relations and labor rights in all forms of work except for state

authorities and local self-government and autonomous provinces, public agencies and public services; Safety and Health at Work; inspection in the field of labor relations and occupational safety and health at work; trade unions; strike; exercise and protection of labor rights of workers temporarily employed abroad; concluding agreements on sending employees to work abroad and sending employees on temporary work abroad; records in the field of work; cooperation with international organizations in the field of labor and employment; international conventions in the field of labor, health and safety at work; anti-discrimination policy; social protection system; system of family care; marriage; gender equality; population policy; family planning, family and children; the rights and integration of refugees and displaced persons, returnees under readmission agreements, the Roma population and other vulnerable groups; pension and disability insurance; social security and welfare of the military insured; participation in the preparation, conclusion and implementation of international agreements on social security; veteran-disability protection, protection of civilian war veterans and family members of persons in military service; preserving tradition of Serbia liberation wars; protection of monuments and memorials of liberation wars in Serbia, war graves and cemeteries fighters in the country and abroad; veterans and disabled veterans and disabled people's organizations and associations, as well as other duties specified by law.

**Department for protection of persons with disabilities** perform tasks related to the preparation of draft laws and other regulations in the field of supporting people with disabilities and companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, supervise their implementation, as well as giving expert opinions regarding the implementation of the above regulations and their harmonization with EU regulations; preparation of a Strategy for improving the status of the disabled and its application, as well as the preparation and monitoring Action Plans for the Strategy; monitoring the implementation of International Conventions and parallel legislation in the field of supporting people with disabilities and vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; monitoring and improving the field of vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities in companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, development of individual administrative acts in the process of establishing, or licensing and development of individual administrative acts in the licensing procedure for the implementation of measures and activities of professional rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; preparation of expert opinions, explanations and instructions regarding the work of associations of persons with disabilities; distribution of the budget of the Republic of Serbia intended to encourage programs of public interest in the protection of persons with disabilities and the disbursement of expenditure of these funds and the allocation of the budget of the Republic of Serbia intended for the company for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities; making plans and projections of the necessary financial resources for the implementation of policies in the field of supporting people with disabilities and companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, monitoring implementation and reporting; inspection of the affairs entrusted to professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities in companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities; exercising the right to exemption from import duties on imports of motor vehicles and refund of value added tax paid on importation of motor vehicles by persons with disabilities; maintaining databases on actual rights on imports of motor vehicles by persons with disabilities, the database on the right to privileged ride and a database of companies for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities; making analyzes, reports and information on the results achieved in respect of persons with disabilities and other activities in this field.

**My position and duty-** Preparation of draft laws, proposals of other regulations and the Strategy for Improving the Status of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia; prepare and conduct public bids for financing projects for the advancement of persons with disabilities, to participate in the work of the Commission for consideration of projects of associations of persons with disabilities and other social and humanitarian organizations, monitors the implementation and control of expenditure of funds dedicated to approved projects after calls for proposals; monitors and analyzes the effect of applying the application of laws and other regulations in the part relating to the improvement of the status and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, prepare a report and propose measures for improving the situation; makes operating and provides professional assistance to associations and organizations of persons with disabilities in all aspects of exercising the right, prepares and monitors the implementation of educational seminars on the

rights of persons with disabilities; coordinate the preparation of the decision on the refund of value added tax paid on importation of motor vehicles by persons with disabilities and monitor the realization of the right to a privileged ride in domestic passenger traffic by persons with disabilities; participate in the working bodies of the Government dealing with persons with disabilities; participate in monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities other international conventions and parallel legislation in the field of protection of persons with disabilities.

#### **4. Community Development program which include Intellectual Disability issues as one of the activities**

##### **Day care for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities**

Day care for children (and youth) with developmental and other disabilities was the second most prevalent social care service within the mandate of local governments. It targeted the group of “children and youth with physical disabilities or intellectual difficulties who need daily care and supervision, as well as support in sustaining and developing their potentials so as not to hinder their schooling”.

The data on the prevalence, availability, funding and quality of day care for children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities obtained through mapping social care services in 2015.

<b>Key figures for day care service for children and youth with developmental and other disabilities in 2015</b>
Provided in 68 local governments
Covered a total of 2,111 individuals
1,507 clients were aged up to 26, with a 71 % share in the total number of clients
The share of clients aged 0-25 in the total population aged up to 26 in Serbia at 0.08% (availability indicator)
Males accounted for the majority of the clients, with a 57 % share
The clients were predominantly from urban areas, with a 67 % share in the total number
State service providers prevailed, with the coverage of 1,481 clients aged up to 26 or 70 % of all clients
Funded predominantly from local budgets (with co-payment), which had a 96 % share in total expenditures

All the precise information are provided at Annex 1

#### **5. Situation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities**

##### **Diagnosis (professional responsible for diagnosis)**

The health care system ensures the level of health protection for citizens and families through health preservation and promotion measures, prevention and early detection of diseases and injuries and timely and efficient treatment and rehabilitation, which is governed by regulations in the field of health care. Within the promotion of primary healthcare level, sensitization of healthcare workers and local self-governments is regulated for the purpose of improving their knowledge and communication skills with persons with intellectual disabilities, along with improving and strengthening of home treatment and care services and visiting home care services that are key in assisting persons with intellectual disabilities. Other regulations in this field are also related to the position of persons with intellectual disabilities, and specifically: regulations on the protection of persons with mental disorders, on the rights of the patients, on medical and technical aids, medication lists, etc.

On the basis of the provisions of the Law on the Protection of Persons with Mental Disorders, specialized hospitals for psychiatric disorders initiated the process of deinstitutionalization, so that the occupancy rate is constantly decreasing since 2012.

Implementation of legal regulation in this field alone, however, can lead to a limited access to healthcare services for persons with disabilities, due to various reasons – architectural, communications, technical inaccessibility of healthcare services and the lack of staff sensitized to work with persons with disabilities, which may lead to inequality in the realization of rights to healthcare protection that are not directly linked to their condition. Thus, for example, one of the substantial challenges in this field is also

harmonization of terminology used both in the legal texts and in practice; thus, there are mentions of mentally insufficiently developed persons, or alternatively persons with disabilities are named according to the type of their diagnosis, etc. Thus, the need to review individual provisions of the by-laws regulating this subject matter was mentioned among the conclusions from the First Strategy Implementation Report.

The analysis of the monitoring of individual experiences of persons with disabilities has showed that the field of health and rehabilitation is among the most important issues for the persons with disabilities interviewed. Restrictions in use of healthcare services and rehabilitation due to inaccessibility or restrictive criteria for realization of individual rights in the field of healthcare were experienced by as much as 45% interviewees. 28.33% of interviewees experienced discrimination in this field, and as much as 43.33% experienced disrespect for differences, for example in the field of exercising the rights to protection of reproductive health. It was also noted that the general practice healthcare workers are not acquainted with the characteristics of individual types of disabilities, and that they use inadequate terminology.

The system of early detection and treatment of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities and children with rare diseases presents a special segment and a specific challenge in the field of health protection.

### **Education (Special Education and/or Integrated Education)**

The framework for the development of educational system in the Republic of Serbia is provided for in the strategic and legal documents in this field, whereby the inclusive approach, equal opportunities, tailored individual approach and individual curriculum, options for adjustments in the educational outcomes, existence of professional teams for additional support and introduction of pedagogical assistants, establishing of intersectoral commissions for the assessment of individual needs of pupils for additional support, affirmative measures for enrolment in secondary schools and faculties, textbooks with adjusted formats, adjusted teaching and didactical tools, the use of assistive technology, etc. are introduced and upheld. Thus, for example, according to data provided by the Ministry in charge of education, the total of 174 pedagogical assistants are employed in schools, whose role is to act as intermediaries between the parents and the schools and to provide additional pedagogical support to children; this kind of support is also provided by the personal assistants/attendants in schools, who are providing support in the domain of social protection.

In practice, however, such an advanced and comprehensive legislative framework needs to be confirmed through an adequate level of implementation, especially bearing in mind that the needs for support exceed the available resources, and in particular those financed on the level of local self-government units. Due to the above mentioned, work will commence on drafting of the Action Plan for Inclusive Education, with the following objectives: to improve regulations in the field of inclusive education and social inclusion; develop a system of support for children and the young; improve competencies of staff; create inclusive environment for development, learning and participation; develop and apply mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education.

Data obtained from the 2011 Census supports the importance of this field for the improvement of position of persons with disabilities; according to this data, of the total number of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Serbia, 12.2% (69,043) of them were reported to have never attended primary education, which is a highly alarming piece of information, despite the fact that 65% of this group belong to the category of persons older than 75 years. In addition to that, according to the results of the 2011 Census, 52.7% of persons with disabilities aged 15+ have completed primary education or incomplete primary schooling, while only 6.5% have completed higher or high education. These differences are even more pronounced if data on the regional level is taken into account as well. In addition to that, since neither primary, nor secondary education is adjusted to respond to the needs of economy and labour market, which is impairing its social relevance, in particular in respect of the persons with disabilities. Primary and secondary education (except in the case of a small number of experimental programs in secondary vocational education) are primarily focused on acquiring academic and expert knowledge, and are lacking sufficient focus on the development of key competencies and practical professional skills required for employment.

In addition to the typical schools, there are schools for education of children with disabilities in our country. Some of these schools are schools with students' dormitories and there is a smaller number of

schools for children with a specific type of disorder (visual, hearing, motor) or those that are organized as “multifunctional” schools that provide education for children with different developmental disorders. Both primary and secondary education is provided in these schools, along with continuous education and rehabilitation of children with developmental disorders and persons with disabilities until their further inclusion in society. 6,217 pupils and students attended primary schools for education of children with developmental disorders in the school year of 2015/16.

### **Vocational training and Job Opportunity**

The issue of inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market is of substantial importance as a precondition for their inclusion in all areas of social life and it is therefore necessary to look at it in a context that is broader than the context of social policy issues. Legislation in the Republic of Serbia mandates full equality of persons with disabilities in respect of the employment in an open market or under special conditions, labour, rights and obligations from employment, professional rehabilitation, etc. In addition to that, various incentives have been envisaged as well – active employment policy measures concerning employment of persons with disabilities, which should assist the employer both financially and in the non-financial respects in employment of this particularly vulnerable category.

Following an overview of the labour market in the Republic of Serbia in the previous period, especially since the introduction of obligation to employ persons with disabilities, it can be concluded that some progress has been made in looking at and promoting the position of this category in the labour market. An active employment policy for the persons with disabilities is being implemented within the National Employment Service, which includes various measures aimed at professional rehabilitation, employment and self-employment of persons with disabilities, along with the financial incentives, but the overall results so far are not yet completely satisfactory and a significant number of persons with disabilities still remains outside of the labour market. The generally faced obstacles for their better integration have remained, and overcoming of such obstacles requires stronger economic and investment activity focused on opening of new jobs, harmonization of educational system with the requirements of the labour market, acquiring of knowledge and competencies required for improved competitiveness in employment and retaining of employment in the open labour market and in special forms of employment, etc. Certain specific causes with a negative impact on the level of inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market, on their motivation levels to get officially registered in the unemployment records, to actively seek employment and to ask for mediation in employment are the results of both the insufficiently developed system of support and of their continuing dependence on the welfare allowances from the system of social protection, etc.

The following was stated in the analysis of data obtained from the 2011 Census: “of the total number of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Serbia, 71,107 persons comprise the economically active population, which is 12.4% share in the total number, and at the time of the Census 9% of all the persons with disabilities is employed”; according to this, almost 90% of persons with disabilities comprise economically inactive population. This data is to a substantial degree different from data for the EU Member States, where the employment rate of the persons with disabilities reaches approximately 50%. The fact is that quality jobs provide for economic independence, promote personal realization and provide the best protection from poverty, from which persons with disabilities are at great risk.

### **Support Organizations**

- Protector of Citizens- Ombudsman of Serbia
- Commissioner for Protection of Equality
- National Organization of Persons with Disabilities of Serbia (NOOIS) is umbrella organization of 13 Serbia’s national disability organizations, representing more than half a million of citizens of Serbia with disabilities
- Union of Associations for Assistance to Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (92.000 members and their family members in 53 local NGO’s)
- Association for Assistance to Persons with Down syndrome (1.000 members in 13 local NGO’s)

**6. Based on the information above, what are the issues to solve to conduct effective supports for persons with Intellectual Disabilities**

Notwithstanding the positive results of the reform that were achieved in some areas, the position of persons with intellectual and mental disabilities has not changed to a significant degree. Capacities of the care homes have practically remained unchanged, waiting lists are still made, community-based services that are preventing the beneficiaries from entering, i.e. allowing them to leave the institutions, are insufficiently developed, children with disabilities are still placed in residential care homes.

It can be concluded from all the above stated that it is necessary to make further efforts in the following period towards the development of all the welfare services and of the capacities of providers of such services on all the levels, as well as efforts towards an increased coverage of persons with individual services in accordance with the needs, towards the implementation of deinstitutionalization process to the fullest extent possible and on inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.