



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States
parties under article 18 of the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Combined second and third periodic reports of States parties

Serbia*, **

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

** Annexes can be consulted in the files of the secretariat.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction.....	1–5	3
II. Report on the implementation of the Convention (arts. 1–16).....	6–316	5
Article 1: Discrimination against women – definition.....	6–11	5
Article 2: Legislative-legal regulations.....	12–14	7
Article 3: Measures to ensure full development and progress of women and guarantees to accomplish and enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms equally with men.....	15–94	7
Article 4: Special provisional measures.....	95–99	22
Article 5: Elimination of stereotypes.....	100–113	23
Article 6: Women trafficking.....	114–131	26
Article 7: Improvement of the status of women in political and public life.....	132–143	30
Article 8: Participation of women in diplomatic service.....	144–145	32
Article 9: Citizenship.....	146–153	33
Article 10: Improvement of the status of women in the field of education.....	154–172	34
Article 11: Improvement of the status of women in the field of labour and employment.....	173–214	38
Article 12: Improvement of health care of women and girls.....	215–243	48
Article 13: Improvement of the status of women in economic and social life.....	244–253	54
Article 14: Status of women in rural areas.....	254–270	56
Article 15: Equality before law, legal and business capacities, freedom of movement, temporary and permanent residence.....	271–281	59
Article 16: Equality in marital and family relations.....	282–316	60
 Annexes		
1. Statistical data		
2. Implementation of the Convention in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija		

I. Introduction

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee (CEDAW/C/SCG/CO/1), paragraphs 12, 39, 44 and 45

1. The second and third periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as a compilation refers to the period from 2007 to 2009. The report consists of three parts: information on the implementation of individual Articles of the Convention (1–16); statistical data; and the Report of the Ministry of Kosovo and Metohija concerning the status of women in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija.

2. The report has been prepared by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and as for the line ministries, the following ministries have taken part in its preparation: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources, the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Kosovo and Metohija, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Science and Technological Development, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality and the Refugee Commissioner Office.

3. The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights has also invited non-governmental organizations to participate in the preparation of these reports. The supplements to the reports have been submitted by the Grupa 484, the Belgrade Centre of Human Rights, the Iz Kruga, Srbija and the SeConS. The Autonomni ženski centar, the Ministry has been cooperating with extremely well explained their absence by the fact that it has been itself the main party in the preparation of the alternative report.

4. In order to inform the civil servants, politicians, members of the National Assembly, non-governmental organizations and the entire public about the steps that need to be undertaken in order to secure de jure and de facto equality of women, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – the Directorate of Gender Equality had undertaken in the previous period the following:

(a) After the transmission of concluding observations by the Committee for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as the Committee), a letter was sent to all competent ministries and boards of the National Assembly including detailed information on the submission of the initial report and the translation of the received concluding observations of the Committee;

(b) Twelve seminars were held in the course of 2008, which were attended by 250 civil servants with the aim that they learn about the international obligations of the Republic of Serbia as well as to train them to include gender aspects in the state policy and practice. The education of civil servants was continued in the course of 2009 – two days' seminars for 120 labour inspectors were arranged and a handbook for their activities under the title of Discrimination of Women at Work¹ was also published;

¹ Author: Nataša Perišić – Pavlović, published by the Directorate of Gender Equality, 2009.

(c) Two round tables were held, which gathered the representatives of relevant institutional mechanisms in order to establish mutual cooperation in the implementation of the Convention;

(d) The publication under the title of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women² was also printed, which in the first part contains the text of the Convention, Optional Protocol and 25 general recommendations, and in the second part it contains the text of the initial report, the speech of the head of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia, additional questions of the Committee, replies to those questions and the concluding comments of the Committee including recommendations. This publication was addressed to all ministries and relevant state institutions and it has also been promoted in public on several occasions;

(e) The Working Group to monitor the implementation of the Convention and the concluding observations was formed in the course of 2009, which consisted of the representatives of the relevant ministries and state institutions (the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the National Employment Agency, the European Union Integration Office, the Refugee Commissioner Office). A handbook including guidelines for the activities related to monitoring of the implementation of the principles and recommendations have been prepared for the requirements of the Working Group. The handbook refers to the concluding observations of the Committee, indicating the measures that need to be undertaken in order to accomplish the most efficient implementation of the Convention (e. g. data about competences, statistical data, concrete replies to be contained in each periodic report). The results of the activities of the Working Group are the analyses of activities of the institutions related to their competences in the implementation and monitoring of implementation of the Convention. Sensitization and training of the members of the Working Group in charge of issues of gender equality and of the Convention in the first place has also been carried out, thus establishing informal focal points, namely gender equality commissioners with the institutions concerned;

(f) Within the framework of cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a tender has been issued, intended for non-governmental organizations, to prepare reports on the supervision of implementation of the recommendations of the Committee in respect of violence towards women. Three relevant non-governmental organizations have been selected through the tender – the *Autonomni ženski centar*, the *Viktimološko društvo* and the *...Iz kruga, Srbija*, in cooperation with the Monitoring and Evaluation Centre.

5. The Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality, in cooperation with the Provincial Secretariat of Administration, Regulations and National Minorities, submitted the concluding observations to all secretariats of the Executive Council of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, as well as to local self-governments in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The concluding observations were printed and published within the *Ženski rokovnik 2008*, which was forwarded to all members of the Parliament and the members of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, as well as to those who adopt decisions at the Executive Council of the Autonomous Province Vojvodina and the institutions founded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

² The Directorate of Gender Equality, November 2008.

II. Report on the implementation of the Convention (arts. 1–16)

Article 1

Discrimination against women – definition

6. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination,³ which was adopted on 26 March 2009, presents a framework law in the field of combat against discrimination and prescribes general prohibition of discrimination, forms and cases of discrimination, as well as the procedures for the protection against discrimination (Article 1). All expressions used in this law in male gender include the same expressions in female gender (Article 2, paragraph 5). The second chapter of this law, under the title of General Prohibition and Forms of Discrimination, includes the definition of the principle of equality (Article 4) and certain forms of discrimination (Articles 6–13) as well as special measures that are not considered discrimination as affirmative ones (Article 14). In the third chapter this Law governs special cases of discrimination: discrimination in procedures before the public bodies (Article 15); in the field of labour (Article 16); in rendering public services and use of buildings and spaces (Article 17); prohibition of religious discrimination (Article 18); in the field of education and professional training (Article 19); discrimination based on sexual orientation (Article 21); discrimination of children (Article 22); age-based discrimination (Article 23); discrimination of national minorities (Article 24); discrimination based on political or syndicate affiliation (Article 24); discrimination of disabled persons (Article 26); discrimination in respect of health conditions (Article 27). Such a method of registration of special cases of discrimination is also frequent in legal solutions of other countries and it meets the requirements of efficient protection in respect of clear guidelines and lack of ambiguities concerning the application in certain cases.

7. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prescribes that gender-based discrimination shall exist if certain actions are undertaken contrary to the principle of gender equality, namely contrary to the principle of respect for equal rights and freedoms of women and men in political, economic, cultural and other aspects of public, professional, private and family life (Article 20, paragraph 1) prohibits deprivation of the right to public or concealed acknowledgement of advantages in respect of gender or because of the change of gender, physical and other violence, exploitation, expression of hate, humiliation, blackmail and harassment based on gender, as well as public advocacy, support and acting in accordance with prejudices, customs and other social forms of behaviour based on the idea of subordination or superiority of genders, namely on stereotype roles of genders (Article 20, paragraph 2).

8. The Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment⁴ and the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons⁵, which entered into force on 23 May 2009, are based on the principles against discrimination and gender equality. The principles of the Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment are prohibition of discrimination; impartiality in performing employment jobs; gender equality; affirmative actions directed towards unemployed persons who cannot get a job easily; freedom to select profession and job position and free of charge performance of employment related affairs in respect of unemployed persons (Article 5). The principles of the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons are respect for human rights and dignity of disabled persons; inclusion of disabled persons in all

³ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 22/09.

⁴ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 36/09.

⁵ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 36/09.

spheres of social life on equal grounds – in accordance with professional capacities; encouragement of employment of disabled persons in adequate positions and under adequate working conditions; prohibition of discrimination of disabled persons; equal rights and obligations and gender equality of disabled persons (Article 2).

9. The Law on Fundamentals of Education⁶ prescribes prohibition of discrimination and governs that the activities jeopardizing, humiliating, discriminating or separating persons or groups of persons are prohibited at an institution if they are based on: racial, national, ethnic, linguistic, religious or gender affiliation, physical and psychical properties, difficulties in growth and disability, health conditions, age, social and cultural origin, property status, namely on political beliefs and encouragement or non-prevention of such activities, as well as on other grounds established by law prescribing prohibition of discrimination; discrimination of persons or group of persons means any direct or indirect, whether open or concealed, exclusion or limitation of rights and freedoms, unequal treatment or failure to act, namely unjustified making of differences by acclamation or by giving advantages; discrimination does not mean special measures introduced in order to accomplish full equality, protection and progress of persons, namely of a group of persons being in an unequal position; more detailed criteria on how to recognize the forms of discrimination by an employee, a pupil or a third person at an institution, are mutually prescribed by the minister and the minister in charge of affairs of human rights (Article 44).

10. On 11 December 2009, after many years of preparations and long-term parliamentary procedure, the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law on Gender Equality.⁷ This is the key law in the field of gender equality governing the establishment of equal opportunities to accomplish rights and obligations, undertaking of special measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination based on sex and gender and the procedure of legal protection of persons exposed to discrimination (Article 1). According to this law, gender equality implies equal participation of women and men in all fields of public and private sectors in compliance with generally accepted rules of international law, recognized international treaties, the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia and laws (Article 2) and the public bodies develop the active policy of equal opportunities in all fields of social life (Article 3).

11. According to the Law on Gender Equality, discrimination is any unjustified making of difference or unequal treatment, namely neglect (exclusion, limitation or giving priorities) with the aim or consequence to make it more difficult, jeopardize, disable or disclaim to a person or a group of persons the recognition, enjoyment or achievement of human rights and freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural, civil, family and other fields or if a person is unjustifiably treated worse than some other person, explicitly or mainly because he/she had asked for or intends to ask for legal protection against discrimination or if he/she had offered or intends to offer evidence of discriminatory treatment (Article 4).

⁶ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 72/09.

⁷ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 104/09.

Article 2

Legislative-legal regulations

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 14–16

12. In the previous period the Republic of Serbia had voluminous legislative activities and the framework laws in the field of anti-discrimination were adopted in 2009. Since the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination and the Law on Gender Equality were adopted in the course of 2009, namely at its end, their practical application shall only be visible in the forthcoming period. It is expected that there would be considerable improvement of the status of women and more efficient protection of their rights.

13. The largest achievement of the above mentioned laws, within this period, is the high outcome the very campaign had made during the passing and adoption of the laws concerned with raising awareness at all levels, in respect of both the definition of expressions and the need to provide legal regulations on prohibition of discrimination of women and improvement of gender equality.

14. The laws adopted in the previous period are listed in the core document, and the relevant legal provisions governing the issues related to the status of women are given in the form of tables in the report, within the framework of individual articles of the Convention, as in the previous article and as follows.

Article 3

Measures to ensure full development and progress of women and guarantees to accomplish and enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms equally with men

1. Strategic frameworks

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, recommendation 22

15. Within the previous period, a whole series of national strategies was adopted making the concrete application of the principle of equality guaranteed by the Constitution. The National Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality⁸ was adopted on 13 February 2009. This document prescribes a comprehensive and coordinated policy of the state aimed at the elimination of discrimination against women, improvement of their status and integration of the principle of gender equality in all fields of activities to be performed by the system institutions, as one of the elements of modernization, democratization of the society and faster, more balanced and efficient social development, in accordance with the policy of equal opportunities proclaimed by the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (Article 15).

16. This strategy covers six fields that have been assessed, through a wide and democratic debate, to be of key importance for the improvement of the status of women and promotion of gender equality: the accomplishment of the right of women to participate in decision making equally with men; eradication of economic non-equality between men and women; accomplishment of gender equality in education; improvement of health of women and promotion of gender equality in health policy; prevention and suppression of all forms

⁸ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 15/09.

of violence against women and provision of a comprehensive system of protection for women victims of violence; establishment of gender equality in public media, elimination of gender stereotypes and elimination of hate speech (misogyny). Those six national priorities are in compliance with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

17. The planned activities are for the period from 2009 to 2015, and their implementation should make it possible that the long-term accumulation of up to now positive changes would lead to in-depth and lasting transformation of gender relations in the Republic of Serbia. These activities have also been incorporated in the National Programme of Integration of the Republic of Serbia to the European Union and they are an integral part of overall efforts of the Republic of Serbia on its way to the membership in the European Union.

18. The strategy is an integral part of overall changes in the society and is consolidated with other strategic documents, especially with the Poverty Reduction Strategy in Serbia and the Millennium Development Goals. It follows the courses of social changes and is realistic in respect of financial capabilities of the state.

19. The associations aimed at elimination of discrimination of women have been included in the preparation of the document (33), which have contributed and continue to contribute to democratization and modernization of the society in Republic of Serbia, promoting peace, human rights and democratic values and human rights of women in particular.

20. The Directorate for Gender Equality has prepared the Action Plan covering all six strategic fields and prescribing long-term and individual goals, concrete activities, with expected results, measurable indicators and holders of activities, terms and projection of required funds. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the resolution of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and recommendations for further activities and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In addition to experts, the representatives of the line ministries also took part in the preparation of the Plan and consultations have been made with the representatives of local self-governments and interested associations. The draft of the Action Plan has been in the process of coordination with the line ministries and it is expected to be adopted in the first quarter of 2010. A part of planned activities shall be financed from the budget. (Note: The Action Plan was adopted on August 2010).

21. Other national strategic documents, the Strategy of Sustainable Development, the National Ageing Strategy, the Strategy on Improvement of the Status of Disabled Persons and the Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of the Roma are also gender sensitive, namely they recognize a gender dimension.

2. Mechanisms to improve the status of women

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 17 and 18

22. Within the previous period the Gender Equality Council held no meetings and while the new institutional and administrative mechanisms have been created, there was further stagnation in the activities and letting many jobs to the Directorate for Gender Equality. The new constitutive meeting of the Council was held on 8 December 2009. It was noted that it was necessary to find a new, more adequate role of the Council, to strengthen the cooperation with the Directorate for Gender Equality, to increase options for actions among sectors and to stress the inciting and criticizing role of this body.

23. Within the previous period, the formation of the Directorate for Gender Equality and the appointment of the Deputy Ombudsman for Gender Equality caused the strengthening of institutional mechanisms for gender equality.

24. The Sector for Gender Equality was founded within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2007, which was by the Law of Ministries⁹ transformed into the Directorate for Gender Equality in 2008, thus transferring this field from a sector organization to the scope of activities of a special body, within the Ministry, recognizing without any doubt the importance of gender equality issues and expressing the readiness of the state to work on their promotion.

25. The competences of the Directorate for Gender Equality, as the first executive body in this field are: analysis of conditions and proposal of measures in the field of promotion of gender equality; preparation and implementation of the National Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality; preparation of drafts of laws and other regulations in this field; cooperation with the state authorities, the authorities of the autonomous provinces and bodies of local self-government in this field; international cooperation; coordination of activities and rendering professional and administrative-technical assistance to the Gender Equality Council; improvement of the status of women and promotion of gender equality and policy of equal opportunities; integration of the principle of gender equality in all fields of activities of the system institutions; monitoring of implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, as well as other jobs in accordance with law.

26. Within the previous period there was also a considerable improvement of the mechanisms at the local level. Pursuant to the Law on Gender Equality, the bodies of local self-government units, within their competences, provide gender equality and accomplishment of equal opportunities; encourage and improve gender equality; in the process of adoption of the development plans and other documents, they consider measures and activities in the function of gender equality and accomplishment of equal opportunities, organize within the bodies of local self-government units, within the framework of the existing organization and documents on internal organization and systematization, a permanent working body or appoint employees in charge of gender equality and perform jobs to achieve equal opportunities, in compliance with this law (Article 39). Since there is now an explicit legal obligation, it is expected that the process of establishment of the bodies will be continued in places where they do not still exist, but that the activities of the existing bodies will be improved as well.

27. This process has started in 2002, when the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, in cooperation with the National Assembly and under the support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) initiated a pilot project under the title of Gender Focal Points, in 15 towns in Serbia, establishing the first institutional forms for the improvement of the status of women at the local level. Before the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality, under the support of the Directorate for Gender Equality, provincial institutions, international donors and local organizations of civil society, in 40% of municipalities in Serbia such bodies had been established or they were in the process of establishment (councils, commissions, offices, commissioners).

28. The Directorate for Gender Equality shall undertake a series of activities to improve their establishment and activities: permanent contacts of the Directorate with their representatives, rendering assistance in making links between each other, support and

⁹ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 65/08, 36/09 and 73/10.

attendance at activities, dissemination of printed matter, education, improvement of cooperation with the organizations of the civil society and donors, etc. With this in mind, the production of the website (www.gendernet.rs) intended for all interested parties has started, the website primarily intended for local bodies for gender equality in order to facilitate their access to information on relevant legal and strategic documents, projects and tenders, as well as to exchanges of experience and good practice. The website has been in the process of preparation.

29. The Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities also supports the strengthening of local bodies in charge of gender equality, which started to promote the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, which was presented at the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Council of Europe. In the course of 2010 this Charter shall be offered for signing to local self-governments thus obliging them to prepare the local action plan for the improvement of this field, but also offering them a possibility of international and regional cooperation.

30. The Directorate for Gender Equality has established the Forum for Dialogue with the organizations of the civil society in the field of gender equality. The objective of this Forum is to establish the dialogue and the system of more efficient and direct transfer and exchange of information, views and prospects between mechanisms for gender equality at the national and local levels and the sectors of the civil society. Several meetings were held during 2009 at which the cooperation between the local bodies for gender equality and the local non-governmental organizations was also discussed as well as the inclusion of the associations in the preparation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality.

31. In order to support the activities of minor non-governmental organizations, the Directorate issued a public tender for the organizations interested in the submission of project proposals for the improvement of the status of women who face double and/or multiple discrimination in the Republic of Serbia. A large number of organizations applied to the tender (there were 115 project proposals received) of which 9 projects were selected to be financed from the budget of the Directorate for Gender Equality and additional funds provided by the UNDP through the project of Strengthening the Role of Civil Society in Shaping Poverty-related Policies and Practices (this project was financed by the Delegation of the European Commission).

3. Improvement of the status and protection of human rights of vulnerable groups of women

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 23, 37 and 38

(i) *Status of disabled women*¹⁰

32. In respect of disabled persons in the Republic of Serbia, the challenges they face at the visible, easily noticeable level are still most frequently analyzed and solved neglecting the specific problems the different subgroups of this large population face. Accordingly, the challenges the persons with visible physical disabilities face are what are most talked about.

¹⁰ The study of *Žene sa invaliditetom u Srbiji* (Disabled Women in Serbia) ...the Iz Kruga, Srbija, December 2009, is the source of the largest part of this segment of the report.

33. It is estimated that more than 700,000 persons having various types of disabilities live in the Republic of Serbia, although on 31 December 2009 there were only 23,023 of them registered with the National Employment Agency.

34. As regards disabled persons, as regards disabled women in particular, before the adoption of the Law on Prevention of Discrimination against Disabled Persons,¹¹ social care for this part of the population was mainly directed towards the so-called medical model. The laws governing social contributions and medical services dealt with the rights of disabled persons, as well as the special models of employment of disabled persons, while the laws regarding the court and administrative proceedings only recognized the notions of helpless persons, persons with disabilities, etc. No law dealt with those issues, and such legal solutions were not recognized as discrimination. There were no special regulations concerning the protection of human rights of disabled persons, especially of women. The adoption of this law means a big step forward in the accomplishment of the rights of disabled persons and recognition of a form of discrimination, although indirectly, because the fundamental laws have not been amended in respect of the rights of disabled persons. This law has not been widely applied and the large public has not been informed about it since there has been no organized education of disabled persons or training of lawyers and judges in this field.

35. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, in the section on Special Cases of Discrimination, defines discrimination of disabled persons as their treatment contrary to the principle of respect for equal rights and freedoms of disabled persons in political, economic, cultural and other aspects of public, professional, private and family life (Article 26). One of the positive effects of this law, at this stage, is the fact that a larger number of judges learned about the provisions of the Law on Prevention of Discrimination of Disabled Persons and the notion of legislation against discrimination so that it is expected in this regard that the treatment of disabled women will be improved in comparison with the previous period.

36. The Law on Ombudsman¹² established five deputies, and one of them is in charge of issues of gender equality and rights of disabled persons.

37. By the adoption of the Law on Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities¹³ on 29 May 2009 this Convention was also made an integral part of the national legislation as was the Optional Protocol to this Convention.

38. In 2006 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy on Improvement of the Status of Disabled Persons¹⁴ prescribing the objectives for the period from 2007 to 2015. Development and provision of equal opportunities for disabled women for equal participation in living in the community is one of the set objectives but at present there are no special regulations specifying and providing this objective. The establishment of the Sector for Protection of Disabled Persons with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is a considerable progress in the creation of policy in the field of disabilities, which evidently pays increasing attention to multiple discrimination of disabled women.

39. In the Strategy on Improvement of the Status of Women and Gender Equality, disabled women present one of the vulnerable groups of women and their status is treated all through 6 strategic goals.

¹¹ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 33/06.

¹² The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 79/05 and 54/07.

¹³ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 42/09.

¹⁴ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 55/05 and 71/05.

40. Social, stereotyped roles of men and women are still present in the Republic of Serbia and the level of disability of a woman in patriarchal society is measured in relation to the extent in which disability jeopardizes the fulfilment of her social, traditional role. Disability of a woman is of heavier degree if it affects her appearance, capability to do the household jobs, work and children upbringing. In view of the stereotypes, women who are not most frequently able to fulfil those roles in the expected and socially acceptable way become socially invisible and as such, they are often the victims of psychological, physical, sexual, economic and institutional violence. It often happens that a disabled woman becomes the victim of all members of her own family – husband, parents and children.

41. Improper expressions are present in the media: confined to a wheelchair or tied to a wheelchair, special needs and helpless. The expression of autistic is very common when describing the behaviour of political opponents in the negative sense, in order to describe bad and ignorant behaviour or to mock other persons. In spite of reactions by certain organizations of disabled persons for many years, similar expressions are still used quite legitimately by public figures as well.

42. According to the existing regulations in the field of health care, a large number of disabled women have problems exercising their rights to health care. The Law on Health Care¹⁵ prescribes that compulsory insured persons also include disabled persons and mentally retarded persons, meaning they are released from payment of a portion of the relevant costs. At the same time, the Rules on Contents and Scope of Rights to Health Care from Compulsory Health Insurance and on Participation in Costs¹⁶ defines a list of diseases and persons suffering from certain diseases, who enjoy those rights so that it happens that persons not suffering from the specified diseases remain outside the scope of rights although they are disabled women.

43. Those who use medical aids based on the Rules on Medical-Technical Aids Provided from the Funds of Compulsory Health Insurance¹⁷ must from time to time visit three specialized doctors for examination, regardless of the fact that in some cases they are in the conditions obviously requiring the use of aids for the rest of their life. The aids obtained this way are mainly of bad quality and in the largest number of cases they are not in function, whereas many forms of disabilities are not recognized, leading to a status of not being able to enjoy the rights recognized by these Rules in spite of the existence of disability.

44. Disabled women exercise their rights in the field of reproductive health with difficulties because the medical service itself is not accessible – there are no gynaecological beds adjusted for disabled women at most medical centres and hospitals, and there are no mammography devices, either (out of 152 medical centres only 7 of them have hydraulically-driven gynaecological chairs), because of prejudices, lack of technical equipment and lack of training of medical staff on how to use the equipment properly. Things are similar in case of other types of medical examinations.

45. Disabled women go to a doctor most frequently when the disease has largely progressed, while the use of services of preventive medical care is at considerably lower level in comparison with non-disabled persons. Within the previous period, the cooperation between ...the Iz Kruga, Srbija organization, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy was achieved in the implementation of the project of *Moje pravo da budem zdrava*.

¹⁵ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 107/05 and 72/09.

¹⁶ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 7/09 and 82/09.

¹⁷ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 22/08 and 42/08.

46. Within the framework of this project, the funds were granted to purchase a gynaecological hydraulically-driven bed for disabled women at the Narodni front Gynaecological-Obstetrical Hospital in April 2006. This project was also expanded to other towns so that in 2008 the funds were allocated from the budgets of local self-governments to purchase hydraulically-driven gynaecological chairs for medical centres in Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Užice, Novi Pazar, Sombor and Bačka Topola.

47. Special education of 230 medical professionals to work with disabled women was carried out. The project will be continued in another 5 medical centres: Stari Grad, Subotica, Kikinda, Kruševac and Leskovac.

48. Hospitals and medical centres are mainly inaccessible or if there are accesses to the building available there are no toilets for disabled persons. Within the previous period these buildings were increasingly adjusted to disabled persons, although the underdeveloped regions of the Republic of Serbia are neglected, because the funds to adjust the buildings are provided from donations of international organizations, ministries or the medical institutions themselves and local self-government.

49. Access to medical services of disabled women has been slightly increasing, although there remain many procedures to be implemented in order to enable disabled women as well as disabled persons in general in the territory of the Republic of Serbia to exercise their rights to health care equally with persons who are not disabled. In this process, it is necessary to improve information to disabled women, primarily in the domain of primary health care, as well as about availability of medical services in their immediate vicinity. It is necessary to continue and intensify education of medical professionals to work with disabled women, but with other vulnerable groups as well; to simplify administrative procedures and facilitate the procurement of medical aids for disabled persons.

50. During education, disabled women are very often discriminated against right from childhood, in their own families, in respect of education after the completion of primary school, and if they do not face and overcome such difficulties during school, at the majority of university institutions they are faced with the problem of architectural inaccessibility. Positive legal regulations are entirely non-discriminatory but the problems exist in practice, from the enrolment into primary school to the cases that many disabled children stop going to school in order that the family, most frequently the mother, remains exercising the right to aid and care for another person. The Law on Fundamentals of Education introduced measures and instruments of support for the implementation of inclusive principles and goals of education, facilitating their implementation in practice and obliging the employees to implement them.

51. According to the Law on Primary School¹⁸, primary school education is compulsory and free of charge. Retarded persons, adults and persons with special capabilities have the right to education respecting their special educational needs, in compliance with this Law and other laws. Activities related to primary education are performed by primary schools, primary schools for education of adults, primary music and ballet schools and primary schools for education of retarded pupils. Primary schools carry out school curricula, but may also carry out a modified curriculum for pupils and adults with disabilities and a special curriculum for education of adults. Primary education of children with disabilities lasts for up to eight years and it is accomplished in accordance with primary school curriculum or special curriculum. A retarded pupil may also gain primary education after 19 years of age. A retarded child shall gain primary education in accordance with this Law and shall be enrolled in school based on the decision establishing the type and the degree of

¹⁸ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 50/92; 53/93; 67/93; 48/94; 66/94; 22/02; 62/03; 101/05 and 72/09.

retardation. The rules on detailed conditions for assessment of needs to render additional educational, health or social support to a pupil, the composition and method of operation of inter-line commission have been in the process of adoption. The operation of the inter-line commission is defined on the principles of respect for the needs of a child and his/her potentials thus establishing a mechanism of support in cooperation of three systems (health, education and social security) and the parents making it easier for the child to be included into regular groups of the pre-school institution. For children with extremely severe difficulties, it is planned to include them into development groups at pre-school institutions.

52. Concerning employment and poverty, disabled women are most endangered. Without adequate qualifications disabled women are not competitive on the labour market and the problem of employment of disabled persons is very alarming, too. In 2007 the employment rate of disabled persons amounted to 13.6%, and the inactivity rate amounted to 69%. Women, persons without education and elderly persons are in an even more unfavourable position on the labour market. The reasons for such conditions are both prejudices of the employer and the lack of their willingness to adjust the working environment and the fear of disabled persons of losing the rights to social benefits. Mothers who cannot get employment are in the worst position because they have to take care of a disabled child.

53. Until 2009 the Law on Qualifications of Disabled Persons to Work and Their Employment was in force, which prescribed detailed types of disabled persons and governed their employment only under special working conditions.

54. The Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons also establishes, in addition to a quota employment system, wider types of disabled persons who might be employed under general and special working conditions (Article 4 of this Law), which by all means gives a positive picture that disabled persons may work.

55. The rights prescribed by this Law shall be enjoyed by a disabled person who has the established status of a disabled person (Article 4, paragraph 1). If a disabled person has no established working capacity, it shall be assessed in accordance with this Law in order to establish the options of employment or maintenance of employment (Article 8). By the assessment of the working capacity of disabled persons who had no status, these persons also gain the possibility to receive support in employment and change of professional career.

56. Findings, opinions and assessment of working capacity and options of employment or maintenance of employment shall be provided by the expert body of the organization in charge of pension and disability insurance (Article 9, paragraph 3). The decision on assessed working capacity shall be adopted by the organization in charge of employment affairs, as the organization entrusted with this job, on the grounds of findings, opinions and assessment of the expert body (Article 9, paragraph 4). The entire Law is based on the coverage and entire assessment of medical, psychological and social factors affecting the working capacity so that the accent is placed on the possibilities and capacities, and not on incapacities for work. The classification commissions are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and they only assess one type of disability. The practice so far indicated many objections in respect of the operation of the classification commissions concerning transparency of their operation, short duration of the examination, lack of respect and wrong assessments.

57. This Law introduced for the first time the system according to which the employers are obliged to employ a certain number of disabled persons depending on the number of employees, namely depending on the size of the company (Article 24). If the employers shall not fulfil this obligation, not even through established alternatives (Articles 26 and 27), they are obliged to pay certain amounts to the budgetary fund for professional

rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons (Article 29). The implementation of these provisions in practice is to be seen in the forthcoming period.

58. Only State, educational and medical institutions are obliged at present to announce vacancies publicly, and not the employers in private sector, which leads to indirect discrimination and aggravates employment of disabled women. Although the state provides a possibility of refund of justified costs of adjustment of a work post to disabled persons (Article 31), for disabled persons it is often far more difficult to get a job, because public grounds are mostly inaccessible for them.

59. The National Employment Strategy for the period from 2005 to 2010 noted that women look for a job longer regardless of their qualifications, that they are burdened with household jobs and upbringing of children, and that there is need to have better regulations concerning disabled persons. Disabled women are not separated as a special category in this context.

60. It is often the case that disabled women apply for a job, and during the selection process they are rejected although they meet all the requirements, in most cases when the selection procedure also includes having an interview with the employer, who has discretion to select a candidate he/she considers (subjectively) the best for the job concerned.¹⁹ It also happens that a disabled woman is also the best candidate according to the announcement conditions, but the employer shall not employ her without giving any explanation for his/her decision. The practice so far shows that disabled woman who succeed in getting a job progress slowly in their career, work more than other employees in order to keep the job, and that they are assigned to work without having direct contacts with customers.

(ii) *Status of the members of the national minorities*

61. In March 2008 the Government formed the Council for Improvement of the Status of the Roma, consisting of 22 members, also including the representatives of the Ministries of Finances, Health, Education, State Administration and Local Self-Government, as well as the representatives of other bodies which may have effect on the improvement of the status of the Roma minority.

62. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prohibits discrimination against national minorities and their members based on national affiliation, ethnic origin, religious beliefs and languages. The method of accomplishment and protection of the rights of national minorities are prescribed in another law (Article 24).

63. On 8 April 2009 the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for Improvement of the Status of the Roma in the Republic of Serbia. This document, as well as the Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women and Improvement of Gender Equality, defines the Roma women as an especially vulnerable group, for the reason that they are often the victims of double and multiple discrimination, as both women and Roma women.

64. In the Republic of Serbia there are about 15 Roma associations aimed at the elimination of discrimination against women, which have implemented the projects in all fields important for the improvement of the status of the Roma women. The Roma women's network was established in 2005 and it comprises at present more than 30 Roma activists. The establishment of stable financial mechanisms remains a challenge for the forthcoming period, with respect to both budgetary funds and funds from donations.

¹⁹ Article 34. paragraph 1, item 2 of the Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment (The Official Gazette of RS, no. 36/09).

65. In respect of education, the girls from the Roma families face difficulties at two levels: on one side it is the school environment without initiatives, which often meets them with discriminatory attitude and weak expectations, and on the other side it is the family and immediate surroundings where there is still a patriarchal opinion that women do not need to be educated. Parents often withdraw girls from primary schools as early as after the fifth grade and state they do it that way in order to protect them against attacks by other children, in order to protect their virginity, in order to get ready for marriage in the best possible way or to take over the duties at home, in order to help their mothers in housekeeping, look after younger and older members of the family, etc. The statistics indicate that women make at least 70% of illiterate persons in the Roma population.

66. Measures undertaken in the field of education, in the first place affirmative action and engagement of the Roma teaching assistants, contributed to better coverage of the Roma girls in the educational process. Up to 31 December 2009 the Ministry of Education financed 23 Roma teaching assistants from the budget and 26 Roma teaching assistants and coordinators of the Roma assistants from a donation by OSCE. The role of assistants as the support to pupils of the Roma nationality was evaluated from the research conducted in 2009, which indicates that out of 3,415 pupils of the Roma national minority who had support by Roma teaching assistants, 1,463 of them in total attended school from the first to the eighth grade of compulsory primary education. One of the results of this type of support was that female pupils did not leave school, which was not the case before.

67. The circle beginning for a female Roma by giving up education continues with her inability to be employed, early marriage and maternity leading to economic dependence on her husband, so that women from multiply marginalized groups make the weakest economic layer and the most powerless social layer. Direct and indirect discrimination the female Roma face on the occasion of attempts to find a job is a fact that is unfortunately very often denied or considered false. Property registered in the name of a female Roma represents less than 0.2% of the total property owned by the family. Jobs performed by the female Roma are the jobs paid at minimum and they are also the most difficult ones. There are different reasons for this: lack of education and qualifications, discrimination in employment, and also the entire economic state in the country. In June 2009 the National Employment Agency began keeping records on the Roma for the first time, which did not exist before, because no national affiliation was registered by the National Employment Agency on the occasion of registration, for the very reason to avoid discrimination on those grounds. According to the report for the first six months of 2009 there were 13,871 Roma registered with the National Employment Agency, of whom 88.72% had the first level of qualifications. The data about the number of unemployed female Roma are not published in the report. Until September 2009, the persons of the Roma nationality used 10,221 services rendered by the National Employment Agency. Out of this number, 4,047 services relate to services used by the female Roma. The National Employment Agency initiated affirmative action to allocate certain funds to start small businesses and self-employment, which prescribes additional points for the members of the Roma community, for women and male and female disabled persons. The intention was positive but this action found women not ready because without adequate knowledge and skills to run business, without adequate qualifications, the majority of female Roma did not use this option to get certain funds to start the process of self-employment.

68. In the field of health care, the female Roma are forced to neglect their own health, do not have adequate treatment, use health cards of other persons, give birth to children at home (without adequate conditions and professional assistance). Bad understanding of the importance of preventive examinations, wishing to avoid obsession with their own benefits contrary to care for family, may lead to the state that the female Roma consider medical services something that is not suitable for them and that they cannot afford. The phenomenon of sick health of women is frequent with the female Roma, and there are

numerous reasons for this: lack of time, money, traditional attitude that a woman must always be healthy, that it is a shame to go to see a doctor. Lack of documentation and discriminatory attitude of medical professionals present an additional obstacle. The above mentioned facts are often presented as lack of care for their own health, low level of awareness about importance of health, etc. Considerable differences in the contents of services rendered to pregnant women of the Roma nationality have been noted in relation to other pregnant women. Although 99% of child births in the Republic of Serbia take place at medical institutions and under professional assistance, with women of the Roma nationality this percentage is lower (93.3%). Concerning health care in respect of maternity (prenatal and perinatal), the female Roma are in the worst position in relation to all other vulnerable groups, having maternal mortality higher than 10%.

69. Within the implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan for the Improvement of the Status of the Roma in the field of health, the Ministry of health engaged 60 medical mediators, whose main task was to facilitate access and provide better quality health care for female Roma. Since the criteria to engage mediators were that they were women and mothers with completed primary school at minimum, it was one of rare opportunities to be employed, as the members of the most vulnerable group of population. In addition, the Ministry of Health has been financing the projects of medical centres since 2006, which are implemented in cooperation with the Roma associations, having the health of women as one of the priorities. The projects of the Ministry of Health, within the period from 2007 to 2009, provided personal documents for 1,333 persons, health insurance for 2,564 persons, financial aid for 567 families, 3,936 children were vaccinated, 903 children were enrolled in school, 1,087 health check-ups of pregnant and child-bearing women, 2,318 systematic examinations were performed and 272 mammography check-ups and 6,345 female Roma selected a doctor.

70. An evident problem, making the status of the female Roma more delicate, is the fact that a certain number of the female Roma are not registered in the registry books. However, it is necessary to indicate that all legal assumptions had been ensured to uphold the right to register the fact of birth of all those persons in the registry book of births. The adoption of the Law on Registry Books,²⁰ which started to be applied as from 28 December 2009 additionally advanced the accomplishment of this right, especially in the part referring to the registry of the fact of birth of persons applying upon the expiration of the legal term (the so-called subsequent registration of the fact of birth in the registry books of births). In this respect, the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government formed a special working group to implement the Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of the Roma in the Republic of Serbia.

71. Among the members of the Roma national minority there is still a custom that parents contract marriages for their under-aged children. In the cases concerned, it cannot be considered that a bride shall enter the marriage of her free will, because it is about the contracted marriage between the parents of the future spouses in most cases, but it also happens that a marriage is contracted at the early age of children.

72. Upon the publication of the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality translated the recommendations and in cooperation with the European Roma Rights Centre, on 19 July 2007 it arranged the public presentation of recommendations, with a special stress on the recommendations related to women from vulnerable groups. Within the same event, the Shadow Report was also presented, which had been submitted to the Committee by the Roma associations aimed at the elimination of

²⁰ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 20/09.

discrimination against women, in order to raise awareness of decision-makers concerning the status of the female Roma and the recommendations related to the improvement of their status. The public presentation of the recommendations was attended by the ministries of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, the representatives of the provincial administrative bodies, mechanisms of gender equality, and the representatives of female non-governmental organizations.

(iii) *Status of refugee and displaced women*

73. The Republic of Serbia is the state with the largest number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Europe. At present, there are 86,154 registered refugees and 210,146 registered internally displaced persons. The registration of internally displaced persons was made in 2001, so that there are data about the number of displaced women from that period only – 94,320 women or 50.6% in the population of displaced persons. It is estimated that about 300,000 refugees and persons who had previously had the status of refugees had been declared to be integrated. The basic problem in the establishment of the rights of women who are refugees and displaced persons is the lack of systematic state monitoring of their status in various fields of social life. Three studies at the state level were conducted within the period from 2007 to 2009: Social and Economic Status of IDPs in Serbia, Analysis on the Grounds of the Questionnaire on Living Standards of IDPs²¹ and State and Needs of Refugee Population in the Republic of Serbia.²² However, there is little data on the specific status of women who are refugees and internally displaced persons.

74. According to the data of the Refugee Commissioner Office of the Republic of Serbia and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, obtained through the 2004/2005 registration of refugees, the majority of the refugee population is in the category from 19 to 59 years of age (59.57%). Average age is 43 years. Women prevail (51.44% in relation to 48.56%), especially in the age group of over 60 years, where this percentage is considerably higher, which is a direct consequence of male deaths in the war (63.91% in relation to 36.09%).

75. In 1992 the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law on Refugees²³ constituting the Refugee Commissioner Office, as a special organization performing professional and other jobs related to placement of refugees, competent bodies in the Autonomous Province, the city of Belgrade and municipality in charge of organization of placement, as well as commissioners with the executive councils of the municipality, the city of Belgrade and the Autonomous Province assigned to have contacts with the Commissioner and to perform certain jobs for the Commissioner Office (Article 5).

76. The Decree on Placement of Refugees²⁴ governs the methods and forms of rendering aid to refugees in respect of social, health care and education. The National Strategy on Resolution of Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons was adopted on 30 May 2002, and in November 2009 the Refugee Commissioner Office developed the draft of the revised National Strategy on Resolution of Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.

77. In the National Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality, refugee women and internally displaced women are recognized as a double and/or multiply discriminated group.

²¹ Cvejić and Babović, 2008.

²² The Refugee Commissariat, 2008.

²³ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 18/92 and 45/02.

²⁴ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 20/92, 70/93, 105/93, 8/94, 22/94, 34/95, 36/04.

78. Within its competences the Refugee Commissioner Office has always taken care of the needs of refugees women and internally displaced women on the occasion of the selection of collective centres (referring to the conditions and quality of placement, services of social welfare centres, etc.), especially in case of women (with or without children) as the victims of family/sexual violence, women with health problems, and by placement in collective centres these persons had more available programmes for the improvement of living conditions intended for the close of collective centres related to the resolution of housing needs (construction and self-construction of dwelling houses, completion of construction, placement in social dwelling houses under protected conditions and profitable activities).

79. The establishment of an overall system of resolution of housing issues of refugees, former refugees, i.e. the improvement of living conditions of internally displaced persons, based on clearly defined needs and criteria, meant that the Refugee Commissioner Office, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other partners, placed the accent on the most vulnerable groups of this population. That is why it always especially stressed participation of women in its projects, primarily of self-supporting mothers, who are always represented in the projects of construction of dwelling houses to a certain extent, so that all constructed dwelling areas have women with children as the occupants of dwelling houses, whether they are families of war veterans or single parent families because of divorce or for other reasons (unrecognized or undetermined paternity, cease of common-law marriage, etc.).

80. The occupants of social dwelling houses under protected conditions are also, in addition to elderly persons and families who cannot provide essential earnings due to illness of a member of the family, self-supporting parents, of whom 90% are women, whereas special care is taken of women who keep houses and of women who are the victims of family/sexual violence, based on the needs recognized in practice. Also, some social welfare centres provide a flat at those houses for the requirements of a safe house for women.

81. The Refugee Commissioner Office cooperates with safe houses for women and ensures that they receive assistance, after the stay there and professional support received at a safe house, if necessary, in the form of further placement within the framework of the existing collective centres. There is no information on violence against women in this population in Serbia, but this population is at risk of violence because of poverty, living conditions and a patriarchal model of predominant form, especially among refugees. There is also a high risk of violence in collective centres, due to the fact that they are over-populated and there is no privacy. It is necessary to investigate this phenomenon among the population of refugee women and internally displaced women to protect them and cover them with protective activities.

82. Since 2008 the Refugee Commissioner Office, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), has started the project of preparation of local action plans to resolve the issues of refugees and internally displaced persons. Up to now this project included 125 municipalities and towns, whereas it is also planned that the remaining municipalities/towns shall be included in it in the forthcoming period. In this way the accent shall be placed on the most endangered groups of this population, whereas the priorities are: families of self-supporting parents, victims of domestic violence, women who keep houses.

83. The Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality should continue and develop this well-founded practice and concrete forms of aid (primarily in strengthening the provision of placement or resolution of housing needs), which has been implemented by the Refugee Commissioner Office since the beginning of its activities.

84. According to the Law on Refugees, the refugees have the right to employment and education as the citizens of the Republic of Serbia (Article 2, paragraph 2). In accordance with this, the Commissioner Office has tried to see to it that all children, especially girls, are enrolled in schools (primary, secondary, higher schools and universities) in accordance with their wishes and possibilities, under the conditions and criteria regulated by the system through the educational institutions. The Commissioner Office finances the placement of refugee pupils at students' hostels, taking particular care of children of self-supporting parents and from families of war veterans. The objective is that refugees and internally displaced persons, especially vulnerable groups (little girls and girls, and those living in collective centres) are included at all levels of education to the same extent as the domiciled population. According to the data obtained during the registration of refugees in 2004/2005, almost half of all registered refugees completed secondary school.

85. According to the research conducted by the Refugee Commissioner Office in 2008 related to persons having the status of refugees, in order to assess the state and the needs of refugee population in the Republic of Serbia, there is obviously more women than men who have no education (21% women in relation to 10% of men), who only have primary school education (25% of women in relation to 21% of men). Educational structure of persons placed in collective centres is considerably less favourable than the structure of persons having private accommodation. In collective centres 39% of refugees have secondary school education, 8% of them have higher school or university qualifications, 31% of them have primary school education, and 18% (mostly women) have not completed primary school education. If we compare the educational structure of the refugee population with the educational structure of the general population, it may be seen that refugee population is behind in respect of the number of persons with higher school and university education.

86. The questionnaire on the living standard of IDPs (in 2008) indicated that the children from the refugee population were well integrated into the educational system although compared with the general population of the Republic of Serbia, they participate in university education with 45% in relation to 61%, which is probably the consequence of a lack of financial resources. For the same reason, a smaller number of pupils from the families of IDPs participate in activities after school. It was also noted that in relation to the children from the domiciled communities, a smaller number of displaced children gets scholarships for education. Gender differences in the population of displaced children are only present in respect of attendance of activities after school, which are attended more by boys than by girls. Training after school plays an important role in the processes of socializing and social integration of displaced children into age groups.

87. There are attempts to mitigate financial difficulties in the education of children and youth from vulnerable social groups through the Fund for Young Talents of the Republic of Serbia within the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Fund for Scholarships of Poor Secondary School Pupils within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Since there are no affirmative measures for little girls and girls or adequate monitoring of the criteria, it is quite certain that those funds are not sufficient and that there is a need to establish additional funds, at both the national and the local levels.

88. The high rate of unemployment is the main indicator of the endangered position of refugees. Almost 60% of refugees are unemployed. Among refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina there are considerably more unemployed women (63.4%) than men (46.0%). It is similar with the refugee population from Croatia: 66.8% of women in relation to 51.0% of men. One of the objectives of the National Strategy on Resolution of Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons is the provision of reinforced inclusion of women in the implementation of all planned measures in order to decrease the existing obvious gender non-equalities among the population of refugees and displaced persons in respect of unemployment and employment. Pursuant to the analysis based on the questionnaire on the

living standard of IDPs (in 2008) within the population of IDPs there are very distinctive gender differences: the rates of employment of women from this population are considerably lower (47% of men and 21% of women) and the rates of unemployment are considerably higher (29% of men and 48% of women). If they work, they enjoy more rights to social care than men, but they are paid less on average (17% of men and 30% of women earn less than the minimum salary). It is interesting that pursuant to the basic properties of unemployment (educational structure of unemployed persons, period with no employment, previous work experience, etc.), there are no significant gender differences between men and women among IDPs. The quality research by the 484 Group on the status of women from the population of refugees and displaced persons on the labour market showed that women belonging to this population face many problems in respect of employment: their access to information on vacancies and employment opportunities is aggravated, they have limited social networks (friendships, acquaintances), which proved to be a very important channel of employment, facing prejudices of employers and employees regarding refugees and displaced persons. Because of these obstacles refugee women and displaced women are often forced not to wait for a proper job but to perform jobs below their qualifications (mainly services requiring low qualifications), badly paid jobs, informal jobs. In addition, due to bad financial standing, they are often forced to perform several jobs at the same time. Within the project of Research of Effects of the Governmental Policies on Refugees, which was implemented by the 484 Group in cooperation with the UNDP, the publication of the Status of Refugees on the Labour Market and Participation in Active Employment Measures was issued. If we compare the data obtained from the research on women from the refugee population and the data from the questionnaire on the working capacities from 2005 for women from the general population, it is noticeable that the rate of activities and the rate of employment of women from the refugee population is higher, although the rate of unemployment is also higher. The data from the research also indicate that a third of employed women from refugee population are informally employed. The majority of refugees have resolved their status in the meantime, while at the end of June 2009 there were 6,528 internally displaced persons in the records of the National Employment Agency.

89. In 2007 the National Employment Agency issued a special public announcement for employment of vulnerable categories of refugees and displaced persons and/or members of the Roma nationality. 45 programmes in total were financed providing employment for 58 persons (43 Romas, 9 displaced persons and 6 refugees). Out of this, 33 persons started running their own business, and 25 persons were employed through opening and equipping new working posts. 24 women in total were employed within the framework of this programme.

90. On the occasion of placement of families and individuals, the Commissioner Office has been trying to provide the most adequate accommodation to vulnerable categories with health problems. In cooperation with non-governmental organizations and donors examinations of women at collective centres have been arranged, as well as psychological-social support. Pursuant to the analysis based on the questionnaire on the living standard of IDPs conducted in 2008, differences in respect of sexes are very slight regarding their health conditions. There is a slightly higher number of internally displaced women who stated they suffered from chronic diseases (28.8% in relation to 23.2% of men). The difference is most obvious in case of rheumatic diseases and high blood pressure, which is also the case with the national sample. In the forthcoming period it is necessary to establish and apply affirmative measures of health care directed to especially vulnerable population groups of refugee and internally displaced persons in the Republic of Serbia, i.e. to include these groups in the services of health care up to the level reported in the general population the Republic of Serbia.

(iv) *Statistical data*

91. There has been certain progress in the collection and access to statistical data in the past period. In 2008 the Statistical Office of the Republic prepared and published the second publication of Women and Men in Serbia.²⁵ The data of the Statistical Office of the Republic and the following sources are presented: the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, the National Employment Agency, the Health Protection Institute, etc. These data relate to the following: population, households and families, health care, education, social care, judiciary, employment, salaries, decision-making process and standard of the population. The publication also contains the data on some especially vulnerable groups of women, such as self-supporting mothers, housewives, rural women, women as supporting members of households.

92. In the preparations for the next census, which is to be conducted in 2011 (a trial census was conducted in 2009), some amendments were made that should contribute to better quality gender-sensitive approach.

93. The Law on Gender Equality prescribes that statistical data to be collected, registered and processed at the level of the Republic of Serbia, the Autonomous Province and the unit of self-government, as well as at the institutions and organizations exercising public powers, public companies and commercial entities, must be presented in respect of sexes (Article 40, paragraph 1).

94. The statistical data of the present Report are mostly a separate part of it.

Article 4 **Special provisional measures**

95. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prescribes that special measures introduced in order to achieve full equality, protection and progress of persons, namely of a group of persons having an unequal status are not considered discrimination (Article 14).

96. According to the Law on Gender Equality the adoption of special measures in order to eliminate and prevent unequal status of women and men and achieve equal opportunities of sexes are not considered discrimination or violation of the principle of equal rights and obligations (Article 7). No one must bear harmful consequences because he/she had given a statement as a witness or a victim of gender-based discrimination before the competent authorities or had warned the public of a case of discrimination (Article 8).

97. Special measures to increase employment and employment options of the less employed gender as well as special measures to increase participation of the less represented gender in professional training and provision of equal opportunities for promotion are not considered discrimination or violation of the principle of equal opportunities (Article 11, paragraph 2).

98. A new measure introduced by this Law relates to the Plan of Activities to eliminate or mitigate unequal representation of sexes for each calendar year, which must be adopted by employers having more than 50% of employees on permanent basis being also obliged to submit annual reports on its implementation, not later than 31 January of the current year for the previous year. They are obliged to submit the reports concerned to the ministry in charge of gender equality affairs (Article 13).

²⁵ Belgrade, 2008.

99. The Law on Gender Equality prescribes special measures supporting childbirth and special measures for protection and improvement of women's reproductive health (Article 28, paragraph 3).

Article 5

Elimination of stereotypes

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 19 and 20

100. In spite of legislative-legal regulations proclaiming and guaranteeing gender equality, traditional views of the role of a women and her status in the society are still present in the social consciousness.

101. According to the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, propagation of discrimination through public media means is included in severe forms of discrimination (Article 13, paragraph 3). Any denial of rights or public or hidden acknowledgement of advantages in respect of sex or because of sex change is prohibited. Physical and other violence, exploitation, expression of hate, humiliation, blackmail and harassment based on gender are prohibited, as well as public advocacy, support and acting in accordance with prejudices, customs and other social behaviour patterns based on the idea of subordination or superiority of sexes, namely on stereotyped roles of sexes (Article 20).

102. On 31 August 2009 the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Public Information.²⁶ This Law precisely defines the responsibility of founders of media with respect to violations of the legal provisions and also precisely defines rights and obligations of the media distributors regarding distribution of public media.

103. According to the Law on Gender Equality information released through public information means must not contain or encourage gender-based discrimination, which also refers to all forms of advertisements and advertising matter, and the public information media are obliged to raise awareness of gender-based equality in their programmes, as well as to undertake adequate measures to change social and cultural patterns, customs and any other practice, causing stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination founded on the idea of subordination, namely of superiority of a certain sex (Article 41). A responsible person with the public information media shall be punished with a fine from 5,000 to 25,000 dinars if some information published in the means concerned insults the dignity of persons in respect of their sex, violates the equality of persons in respect of their sex or encourages such violations (Article 55).

104. Within its competences in the media, the Ministry of Culture shall undertake measures to improve the status and image of women in the public media means; issue annual tenders for co-financing of projects/programmes in the field of public information that with their contents contribute to the enjoyment of the right to public and objective information; support projects contributing to the promotion of the status of women in the society, note the issue of domestic violence, etc. One of the important goals on the occasion of assessment and selection of such projects is that they are accessible to the largest possible number of users, so that raising awareness on the necessity of the change of the role of women could reach the communities where discrimination is widely present.

²⁶ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 43/03; 61/05 and 71/09.

105. According to some studies, discrimination of women in the media is still present to a large extent, in respect of both their status in the media companies and their image in the media contents, which is still stereotyped and follows a patriarchal pattern of the role of women in family and society. As an example, let us mention the research conducted by the Women's Information-Documentary Centre at the end of 2008 under the title of Gender Equality in Media and Through Media. This research covered 10 printed media and 7 radios and televisions of each local, regional, provincial and national character, in 7 towns of Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, Kraljevo, Valjevo, Novi Pazar and Kruševac).

106. The results proved that a small percentage of articles, i.e. supplements have been dedicated to women at all levels; that only in about 15% of cases were women in the central focus of news; that news in such media mainly mention women in the field of sports, culture, chronicles and entertainment, and that columns regarding political events, current events, education and economics have the smallest number of news concerning women. It has also been noticed that the prevailing topics were related to popular and famous personalities, whereas the topics regarding gender equality and education were at the bottom. The number of reporters of both sexes in the printed media has been almost equalized, whereas the presence of women on TV is higher, which is attributed to good appearances of hostesses. There is a high percentage, even 40%, of presence of men in the news about women, and in half of cases they are also present in photographs. Women whose photographs are published are mostly anonymous (models, photo-models) or they are presented in group photographs (for example, photographs of sports teams). Only a third of news related to women as the main subjects in the printed media, and their official statements do not exceed 10%, while the number of expert comments and personal opinions of women is negligible. It has also been noticed that there is discrimination of women in respect of their age, because women of up to 18 years of age are mostly represented, as well as those from 35 to 49 years of age, while women over 65 years of age are almost entirely excluded from the media. Concerning the supplements about women, men are represented more than women. However, the data indicate that there is slight progress in respect of gender equality, especially in the news and supplements other than columns about entertainment and chronicles.

107. Within the tender issued in 2008, the Ministry of Culture supported two projects dealing with the status of women: the Astra Video Production from Pirot was awarded the funds in the amount of 532,000 dinars for the project under the title of Women from the South, which in 12 documentary films deals with the issues of women in the traditional community and domestic violence, where women are the most frequent victims. The series has just been broadcast on several regional television channels in the South and the South-East Serbia. Furthermore, the research of the team for the support and assistance to the victims of violence indicated that as many as 39.3% of questioned female citizens of Pirot were affected by violence, and that many of them did not even recognize the forms of violence. Another media company that had been awarded funds by the Ministry of Culture at this tender in the amount of 500,000 dinars was RTV5 from Niš for the project of Safe House – a series of 4 programmes, also having the topic of domestic violence, and in the light of the fact that the construction of a safe house in Niš had been announced, as well as that more than 800 women had been received temporarily at the emergency centre for the victims of violence. The objective of the project was to find donors because without their support the Safe House will not have sufficient funds to accommodate the victims of violence.

108. In 2009 the Ministry of Culture issued a tender in the field of public information, and one of the advantageous criteria for the selection of projects were also the topics dealing with the issue of gender equality. Out of 355 received projects, the Commission awarded 425,000 dinars to the project of TV Campaign on Gender Equality, submitted by the Panonija Fund from Subotica (TV Panon). This project stipulated the filming of 10

thematic programmes dedicated to the issues of gender equality – to the rights of women in political and public life, education, labour, marriage and family, combat against all forms of violence against women. The project submitted by the Centre for Democracy and development of the South of Serbia from Leskovac, under the title of Strengthening of Socially Vulnerable Groups in the Pčinjski and Jablanički Districts was awarded 408,000 dinars, and it also stipulated the production of 12 specialized TV/radio/print reports drawing the attention of the public to the problems (and their solution) of the children and youth population, displaced persons, persons with disabilities, the poor, self-supporting mothers. These programmes will be broadcast on some ten regional and local televisions and radio stations, and their most interesting parts will be also published by FoNet Agency. The third project awarded in this tender with the funds in the amount of 359,280 dinars was the project of Combat against Domestic Violence, submitted by CIP – Radio 996 from Kraljevo. Proceeding from the results of research conducted in the region of Kraljevo, according to which almost every third women declared that she had suffered violence at some stage of her life, the project stipulates the implementation of 12 programmes in the form of reportages, not only pointing out to the issue of violence but also to the methods of its prevention and protection against it.

109. At the tender for the media in minority languages issued in 2009, the funds in the amount of 180,000 dinars were awarded to PC Radio Subotica – Programme in Hungarian Language for the project of Women and Social Problems, which will address the opportunities of employment for women, domestic violence, women's health, their status in political life in radio programmes in Hungarian language, et. PC Radio Šid was another media organization that had been awarded funds at this tender for the project of A Women – the Foundation of the Slovak Evangelistic Church in Šid (84,000 dinars). The programmes in Slovak language present the specific properties of this church because it engages women to a great extent in its activities, who are holding the highest positions now – the president of the church community, the cashier, the cantor, the conductor of the church choir. In this way the Ministry of Culture contributes to affirmation of women who are the members of national minorities, which is of particular importance for the prevention of the so-called double discrimination.

110. On the occasion of marking the 8th of March, International Women's Day, high-circulation daily newspapers published inserts aimed at the affirmation of the combat of women for their rights and demystification of the idea of feminism (in 2008) and that women also learn about the existing legal framework related to the status of women (in 2009). In the course of March 2009 the Danas daily newspaper published the Gender-equality Dictionary, in order to inform the large public about the basic ideas of the concept of gender equality, and in November and December the same year this daily published articles on women's human rights and combat against sexual and gender-based violence. The Danas daily regularly publishes the articles affirming women's human rights and gender equality.

111. The local media have supported the already mentioned campaign of 16 Days of Activities to Combat Violence against Women, which included 18 round tables in 17 towns all over the Republic of Serbia, informing about the events in their surroundings.

112. In the system of education the adoption of the Law on Fundamentals of Education and the Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Aids²⁷ meant the introduction of positive legal solutions of anti-discriminatory nature, but which also have positive secondary consequences for the elimination of stereotyped role of women in the society. In these laws, the objectives of education point to the development and respect for racial, national,

²⁷ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 72/09.

cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, sexual and age equality, tolerance and respect for diversities.

113. According to the Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Aids, the textbooks and other teaching aids should enable through their contents and forms the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities of girls and boys. The contents or the forms of textbooks and other teaching aids must not imperil, belittle, discriminate or distinguish groups and individuals or encourage such behaviour, based on racial, national, ethnic, linguistic, religious or sexual affiliation, handicap, disability, physical and psychical characteristics, health conditions, age, social and cultural origin, property status, namely on political affiliation, as well as on other grounds established by law governing prohibition of discrimination (Article 4). The principle of gender equality has been gaining importance within the framework of curricula and textbooks. The curricula and textbooks increasingly have gender sensitive dimension, especially in the implementation of the teaching of Civil Education. The difference between normative and actual is stressed to pupils, i.e. the difference between the description of a democratic society as it should look like in its ideal form and the description of what exists in a society in reality. In the first grade of secondary school civil education deals with the issues of nature and the method of regulation of relations in a group/community, the nature of attitudes we have towards other people and groups, methods of research of one's own opinion and communication with other people. This programme teaches about non-violent communication and techniques of peaceful solution of conflicts, gender equality, use of gender sensitive language, etc.

Article 6

Women trafficking

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 25 and 26

114. The Criminal Code prescribes a criminal act of human trafficking in Article 388 and in August 2009 amendments and supplements to the Criminal Code were adopted, in respect of both introduction of new criminal acts and amendment of incrimination of the existing acts. Punishments have been increased for almost all forms of this criminal act, and some provisions harmonizing this act in full with the international standards in this field have also been added. The provisions governing the conditions under which this act is committed by an organized criminal group are new (Article 388, paragraph 6): if the offender knew or he/she might have known that a person was a victim of human trafficking, so he/she used his/her status or enabled another person to use his/her status for exploitation; if the act is committed against a person the offender knew or might have known to be a minor (Article 388, paragraphs 2 and 3). The consent of a person to be exploited or to establish slavery or similar relation shall not affect the existence of a criminal act.

115. The amendments and supplements of the title of Article 185 of the Criminal Code have also been adopted, which now reads Presentation, Provision and Possession of Pornographic Matter and Abuse of an Under-Aged Child for Pornography, as well as of the title of Article 389 of the Criminal Code, which now reads Trafficking of Under-Aged Persons for Adoption, thus increasing the age limit and protecting under-aged persons against all forms of exploitation and trafficking. Also, the threat of criminal sanction in case of commitment of the criminal act contained in Article 184 — Mediation in Performance of Prostitution — is more severe.

116. According to the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, slavery, human trafficking, apartheid, genocide and ethnic cleansing are characterised as severe forms of discrimination (Article 13, paragraph 4). Physical and other violence, exploitation, expression of hate,

humiliation, blackmail and harassment in respect of sex, as well as public advocacy, support and acting in accordance with prejudices, customs and other social patterns of behaviour based on the idea of subordination or superiority of sexes are prohibited, namely on the idea of stereotyped roles of sexes (Article 20, paragraph 2).

117. Great efforts have been made in order to increase cooperation at international, regional and national levels with the aim to provide effective implementation of laws and programmes regarding human trafficking. The Commission for coordination of activities and further improvement of cooperation in the field of judiciary and internal affairs in relation to issues of general interest was formed at the end of 2008, in particular to coordinate the activities in the combat against corruption, organized crime, terrorism, drugs, human trafficking, confiscation of property, money laundry and other related issues.

118. The Law on Criminal Procedure²⁸ was also amended in August 2009 in order to introduce special research techniques and powers of prosecution offices and police. Preparations have been in progress at present to provide the training programme for the implementation of the Law on Deprivation of Property Benefit Earned Through Criminal Acts,²⁹ for financial investigation, confiscation of immovable property as means to commit a criminal act. Regional cooperation is the key in the combat against human trafficking and it also implies the use of evidence collected abroad. In 2006 Serbia ratified the Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, which entered into force in August 2007, as an extremely important international treaty in the field of international legal aid. The international and European standards in the field of international criminal legal aid have been incorporated into the Law on International Legal Aid in Criminal Matters, which entered into force in March 2009.

119. The Law on Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings³⁰ was adopted on 18 March 2009.

120. The Law on Foreigners, which entered into force on 1 April 2009, prescribes that a foreigner as the victim of human trafficking shall be granted temporary residence in the Republic of Serbia, and if he/she does not have enough funds to support himself/herself, he/she shall be provided with adequate accommodation, food and essential living conditions (Article 28).

121. In December 2006 the Government adopted the Strategy for Combat against Human Trafficking.³¹ This document has been prepared according to the Guidelines for National Action Plans of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and in compliance with the Programme for the preparation and implementation of overall national response to the issue of human trafficking and the best practice in the region, worked out by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

122. In April 2009 the Government adopted the conclusion on the adoption of the National Action Plan for Combat against Human Trafficking for the period from 2009 to 2011, through which the Republic of Serbia fulfilled one of the technical conditions for liberalization of the visa regime with the European Union.

123. During the chairmanship of the Republic of Serbia over the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, from May to November 2007, October was declared to be the month of combat against human trafficking when advertising campaigns, seminars, educational gatherings and the campaign in respect of the series of Modern Slavery were

²⁸ The Official Gazette of SRJ, no. 70/01, 68/02. The Official Gazette of RS, nos., 58/04, 72/09.

²⁹ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 97/08.

³⁰ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 19/09.

³¹ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 111/06.

organized. On 18 and 19 October 2007 the regional seminar under the title of Combat against Human Trafficking: Protection Measures and Improvement of Victims' Rights was held in Belgrade wherein the members of the Ministry of Interior were lecturers and participants.

124. The idea of the public painting tender on the subject of Modern Slavery has been prepared and implemented, which was issued by the Office of the Council of Europe, the Council for Combat against Human Trafficking and the Ministry of Interior and announced in the *Politika* daily on 11 October 2007. The pupils of primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia participated in this tender. The objective of the tender, as well as of a series of activities undertaken in the course of October, was to raise the level of awareness with children and youth on the existence of a very complex and multi-layered social phenomenon. The Office of the Council of Europe in Belgrade received 1,195 works from all over Serbia and several works from a school in Bijeljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, for which reason it gained an international character. In total, 175 schools participated in this tender, as follows: from Central Serbia – 82 schools in total and 738 pupils, 68 works from 34 schools were selected for the exhibition; from the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina – 41 schools in total and 320 pupils, 17 works from 10 schools were selected for the exhibition; from the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija – 4 schools in total and 48 pupils, 4 works from 4 schools were selected for the exhibition; from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Srpska (Bijeljina) – 1 school and seven pupils.

125. The objective of the tender was to select the best work to be printed on additional charge stamp, whereas the funds to be obtained through its sale were intended to be for the victims of human trafficking. In addition to the best work, another 13 works were also selected that were printed in the 2008 calendar and January 2009 calendar with the same topic. Through the sale of additional charge stamp on the topic of human trafficking within the period from 21 to 27 January 2008, the funds in the amount of 60,000 euros were collected, which were allocated for rendering direct assistance to the victims through the Agency for Co-ordination of Protection of Human Trafficking Victims.

126. In the course of 2007 the Ministry of Interior investigated the forms of labour exploitation, since it had been noticed that there was abuse of severe financial status of unemployed persons by various employers offering tempting options and opportunities for employment in the country and abroad. Police officers initiated and implemented, in cooperation with the National Employment Agency, efforts to pay special attention to the issue of human trafficking in the October copy of the *Jobs* magazine, which is issued by this Agency. Announcements of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia and thematic posters have been published showing various forms of exploitation of actual and potential victims of human trafficking, such as: labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and abuse of the Internet in order to recruit for human trafficking.

127. In October 2008, the month highlighting combat against human trafficking, police officers of the Ministry and all police directorates participated in: 176 public platforms (which lasted for 285 school classes), which were attended by 12,145 pupils, students and parents, as well as by 952 principals, professors, teachers, pedagogues, psychologists and other experts. Some platforms were also attended by the representatives of NGOs and social welfare centres. In the public information media – on radio stations 65 programmes on human trafficking totalling 9 hours and 32 minutes were broadcast, there were 111 programmes on TV dedicated to this issue, for a total of 36 hours. Within the same period, the police officers of the Ministry of Interior had interviews, held press conferences and issued 32 media statements, and 31 newspaper articles were published about the issue of human trafficking in the Republic of Serbia. 2,000 posters and 10,000 information leaflets were printed on prevention educational activities in combating human trafficking and protection of victims, which were disseminated to the regional border police centres and to

the police directorates to be displayed in police premises and at border crossings. The posters and information leaflets contain the contact telephone number of the Emergency Centre with the Border Police Directorate and the electronic address of the Border Police Directorate established for the collection of information on human trafficking. The contents of information leaflets refer to human trafficking, forms of human trafficking, victims of human trafficking, methods of prevention, legal and institutional framework and national mechanisms for combat against human trafficking and protection of victims in the Republic of Serbia. With the aim of the education of Roma population, which was recognized as the most vulnerable population, public platforms and meetings with the members of 43 Roma associations in total were held, which were attended by 390 members.

128. In the course of October 2009, the police officers of the Border Police Directorate and all police directorates participated in 284 public platforms in total lasting for 530 school classes, which were attended by 25,769 pupils and students, 1,318 principals, professors, teachers, pedagogues, psychologists and other experts. Some platforms were also attended by 255 representatives of NGOs, the Red Cross and the Social Welfare Centre. In order to educate the Roma population, public platforms and meetings with the members of Roma association were held, which were attended by 232 members in total. Radio stations broadcasted 16 programmes on human trafficking, totalling 270 minutes; on television stations there were 102 programmes, totalling 1,913 minutes, and 47 newspaper articles on the issues of human trafficking in the Republic of Serbia were also published.

129. The exhibition of children's paintings from the tender implemented in 2007 was opened on 18 October 2009. The President of Serbia, the Prime Minister, the President of the National Assembly, the ministers the members of the Council for Combat against Human Trafficking, the ministers whose representatives are the members of the Republic team for combat against human trafficking (the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Human and Minority Rights, the Minister of Youth and Sports), the Minister of Culture, the representatives of the diplomatic corps, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Mission of OSCE to the Republic of Serbia, IOM, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR and ICMPD were invited to attend its opening, as well as other important guests dealing with this issue. The exhibition was also attended by the children who were the authors of paintings and who were given the book entitled *You Would Not Like Being a Slave in Ancient Greece!*³² and copies of the 2010 calendar. The poster announcing the exhibition in electronic form was put on the Internet site of the Ministry of Interior, as well as on the Facebook profile of the Ministry of Interior. There was also a promotion of the 2010 calendar containing children's works, which was printed by the National Bank of Serbia in 1,000 copies delivered to the present guests.

130. From a transit and destination country, the Republic of Serbia became a country of origin, transit and exploitation of domestic citizens and it has been noticed that there is a tendency of decrease of age limit of the victims to 14 to 18 years, which increasingly even goes down to children younger than 14 years of age.

131. In the previous period, the employees of the Agency for Co-ordination of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking identified 127 victims of human trafficking in total, where there were 107 victims of human trafficking and 20 were potential victims. Out of the total number of victims, 59 were under-aged and 68 were of age. In respect of sex, 104 victims were female and 23 victims were male. Out of the total number of victims, 116 were citizens of the Republic of Serbia, 3 were from Romania, 2 were from the Dominican Republic, 1 from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 1 from Albania, 1 from the Republic of Moldova, 1 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1 from Montenegro and 1 victim

³² The Creative Centre, Belgrade.

was a citizen of the Czech Republic. In respect of type of exploitation: 66 were victims of sexual exploitation; 18 were victims of labour exploitation; 14 were victims of exploitation in the form of begging, 6 were victims of forced labour, 2 were victims of commitment of criminal acts and 1 was a victim of attempt of illegal adoption.

Article 7

Improvement of the status of women in political and public life

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 27 and 28

132. The Law on Local Elections³³ prescribes that an election list must have at least 30% of candidates in total belonging to the less represented sex in the list (Article 20, paragraph 3) and be considered to have failures if that it is not so and that the proposer of the list shall be invited to remedy such failures, if an election list does not meet these requirements (Article 20, paragraph 4). It is prescribed that the election commission shall refuse to declare an election list if the proposer of the list does not remedy such failures (Article 20, paragraph 5).

133. The Law on Election of National Deputies³⁴ prescribes that an election list must include a candidate of the less represented sex in the list among every four candidates in sequence of the list (the first four seats, the second four seats and on to the end of the list), and the total number of candidates in the list must be at least 30% of candidates of the less represented sex in the list (Article 40a, paragraph 1). If an election list does not meet the above mentioned requirements, it shall be considered to contain failures to be declared an election list, and the proposer shall be invited to eliminate such failures (Article 40a, paragraph 2). If the proposer of the list does not eliminate failures, the Republic Election Commission shall refuse to declare the election list (Article 40a, paragraph 3).

134. The adoption of the Law on Uniform Election List³⁵ meant considerable improvement of the legal framework for the accomplishment of the right to vote in the Republic of Serbia, since the registration in the election list is a condition to enjoy the right to vote prescribed by law. This Law entered into force on 24 December 2009 and its implementation shall start upon the expiry of two years after its entering into force. This Law governs in a uniform way the issue of registration of voters, which had to that point been regulated by laws governing the election of national deputies and the President of the Republic. Another novelty introduced by this Law is that it provides that an election list shall be kept as an electronic data base, which shall by all means enable more efficient and easier upholding of the right to vote.

135. The Law on the National Councils of National Minorities³⁶ was adopted in order to establish a comprehensive definition of the status of national councils in the legal system of the Republic of Serbia, thus ensuring a comprehensive legislative framework to improve and protect the rights of national minorities. This Law governs competences of national councils of national minorities in the fields of education, culture, public information and official use of language and script, relations with state authorities, authorities of

³³ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 129/07 and 34/10- Decision of the Constitutional Court.

³⁴ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 35/00; 57/03- Decision of the Constitutional Court of RS; 72/03- other law; 75/03- cor. Of other law; 18/04; 85/05-other law; 101/05-other law and 104/09.

³⁵ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 107/09.

³⁶ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 72/09.

autonomous provinces and units of local self-government, the procedure for the election of national councils, financing of activities of national councils, etc.

136. This Law prescribes that in the case of direct elections of national councils at least 30% seats in the election list must be reserved for the less represented sex, whereas every third seat in the election list shall be reserved for the less represented sex (Article 72, paragraph 3). If the election list does not meet this requirement, among other things, it shall be considered to contain failures to be declared an election list, and the proposer of the list shall be invited to eliminate the failures from the list (Article 72, paragraph 4). If the proposer of the list does not eliminate such failures, the Central Election Commission, as the body to conduct elections of national councils, shall refuse to declare the election list (Article 72, paragraph 5). The identical solution for representation of women in electoral lists is also prescribed for elections for national councils (Article 109, paragraph 3).

137. Direct protection of the principle of representation of women in national councils has been ensured for indirect elections (Article 98, paragraph 6) and for electoral lists (Article 109, paragraph 12), which establish the rule that mandates belonging to a certain election list are granted to the candidates from the list according to the sequence of their names in the list, wherein every third seat is reserved for the less represented sex.

138. The Law on Gender Equality prescribes equal availability of jobs and positions and if the presence of the less represented sex in each organizational unit, at management positions and in management and supervision bodies amounts to less 30%, the authorities are obliged to apply affirmative measures in accordance with the Law on Civil Servants and the Law on State Administration (Article 14).

139. In Chapter 5, under the title of Political and Public Life, this Law governs in detail the following: equal opportunities for political and other activities (Article 35); election right (Article 36); equal representation and equal opportunities of access to the bodies of executive power, public, financial and other institutions (Article 37); obligations of the bodies of local self-government units (Article 39); statistical records (Article 40); associations whose goals are related to improvement of gender equality (Article 42).

140. The Law on Associations,³⁷ which entered into force on 22 July 2009, has been applied since 22 October 2009. The field of associations of citizens is regulated in accordance with the highest European standards, the conditions for establishment and registration into the registry of associations are more liberal and there is also a possibility to establish active associations even without registration in the registry. Associations may be established by at least three founders (natural persons having business capacity or legal entities may be founders of associations), provided that at least one founder has residence, namely seat in the territory of the Republic of Serbia (Article 10). It is important to stress new legal solutions, according to which one of the grounds for prohibiting the operation of associations is the promotion of objectives aimed at causing and encouraging non-equality, hate or intolerance based on, inter alia, sex, gender, physical, psychical or other properties or capabilities (Article 50, paragraph 1 within the meaning of Article 3, paragraphs 2 and 3). The implementation of the new Law on Political Parties³⁸ came into force on 23 July 2009.

141. According to the Law on the Army of Serbia³⁹ a citizen of the Republic of Serbia who fulfils the relevant conditions of completion of adequate military training for the duty to take may be a professional army officer and another condition for men is that they had

³⁷ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 51/09.

³⁸ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 36/09.

³⁹ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 116/07 and 88/09.

completed army service (Article 39, paragraph 1. item 9). The completion of army service is not a condition to be fulfilled by women. The positive side of this Law is that now women have an option to contract employment in the capacity of professional army officers. Out of the total number of employees in the defence system, 19% are women in all categories (professional soldiers, sergeants, officers, civil servants, employees, military officers and military employees) at all positions from military to commanding, from executive to leading positions. Out of the total number of women employed in the defence system, 7% are employed in the capacity of professional military employee (professional soldier, sergeant and officer). The Army of Serbia employs 1,291 women in total, namely 18 officers (0.4%), 27 sergeants (0.37%), 355 professional soldiers (5.62%) and 891 civilians (27.14%). One woman officer is holding a managerial position with the Army of Serbia, two women are sergeants and nine women are civil servants. In view of the fact that the Military Academy started training of female persons to perform officer duties, it is expected that there will be a larger number of women officers, thus also at leading positions. In the course of 2009, during the implementation of the tender for admission into professional army service in the capacity of professional soldiers, it was noticed that there was great interest in it of female persons who meet the requirements for admission into professional army service so it is expected that the number of professional female persons in the army will be further increased.

142. The Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence, in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, initiated the preparation of the National Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) of the Security Council. Four working groups have been formed consisting of the representatives of the ministries and other relevant institutions that had worked on the collection of data and preparation of the draft of the Action Plan to be forwarded to public debate. The Resolution was presented at the National Assembly on 4 December 2009 at the round table organized by the Board of Foreign Affairs of the National Assembly. This table was attended by the national deputies from the relevant boards, the representatives of ministries, experts, the representatives of diplomatic corps as well as the representatives of international organizations accredited in the Republic of Serbia. It was stressed at the gathering that the implementation of the resolution is a legal obligation of each member state of the United Nations and that the adoption of the National Action Plan would be a confirmation of the intentions of Serbia to contribute adequately to the processes of peace building, stability and security, primarily in the immediate surroundings of the region of the South-East Europe and other parts of Europe, through the comprehensive process of European integrations.

143. According to the current data, the most significant positions in the state are now held by women (the President of the National Assembly, the President of the Constitutional Court, the Acting President of the Supreme Court of Cassation). There are 51 women among the national deputies, which makes 20.4% of the total number of national deputies (250). There are 5 women ministers in the Government out of 24 ministers in total. At the local level 27% of council representatives are women. Out of 159 presidents of municipalities 7 are women. In the lists of elected judges there are 1,703 women out of 2,399 judges in total.

Article 8

Participation of women in diplomatic service

144. According to the Law on Gender Equality everybody has equal right to participate in the same way and without discrimination in international cooperation accomplished within the framework of foreign policy of the Republic of Serbia, and in accordance with the competences of the Republic of Serbia, autonomous provinces and units of local self-

government and to be appointed in the activities of international organizations. On the occasion of selection and appointment of delegations to represent the Republic of Serbia, the composition of the delegation must include at least 30% of persons of the less represented sex, in compliance with international standards. The provisions of paragraph 2 of this Article are also applied to international cooperation carried out by autonomous provinces and units of local self-government in accordance with the Constitution and the laws prescribing competences (Article 38).

145. The Republic of Serbia has 10 women ambassadors and 4 women are general consuls (66; 9.24%).

Article 9 Citizenship

146. New biometric passports and termination of visa regime are the most significant new measures for the citizens of the Republic of Serbia in the past period. In respect of citizenship, there have been no changes.

147. The Law on Travel Documents⁴⁰ governs travel documents for the travelling of citizens of the Republic of Serbia abroad, defines types of travel documents and the method of their issuance.

148. New biometric passports of the Republic of Serbia were presented at the beginning of 2008 and the first new passports were issued to citizens at the beginning of August 2008.

149. In the Republic of Serbia, in addition to biometric passports, passports issued according to the former forms are also still used, pursuant to the Law on Travel Documents of Yugoslav Citizens.⁴¹ Pursuant to the Law on Amendments of the Law on Travel Documents⁴² the validity of the old passports has been extended until 31 December 2010, and at present the proposal to extend the validity of old passports till 31 December 2011 has been in the parliamentary procedure.

150. A passport shall be issued to any citizen of the Republic of Serbia according to the conditions prescribed by the Law on Travel Documents. The accomplishment of the right to a travel document is ensured without discrimination on any grounds, such as sex, race, skin, language, religion, national origin or social status, property or other status.

151. Passports are valid within the period of 10 years, except for persons younger than three years who are issued passports with the validity period of three years. Persons from 3 to 14 years of age are issued passports with the validity period of five years. The validity period runs from the date of application for the issuance of a passport, and not from the date of issuance or production as in the case of previous passports.

152. Passports are to be issued within the period of 30 days (if an application is submitted in the country), or within the period of 60 days (if an application is submitted through diplomatic or consular representative office of the Republic of Serbia) from the date of submission of applications. In exceptional cases, if evidence is attached to an application showing that there are reasons for a passport to be issued urgently, the competent body is obliged to issue a travel document not later than 48 hours from the date of submission of an application. Please note that the procedure for amendments and supplements to Article 34 of the Law on Travel Documents related to the urgent issuance of passports has been in the

⁴⁰ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 90/07, 116/08 and 104/09.

⁴¹ The Official Gazette of SRJ, no. 33/96...5/2003 and the Official Gazette of RS, no. 101/2005.

⁴² The Official Gazette of RS, no. 104/09.

parliamentary procedure. Approximately 1.6 million biometric passports have been issued so far.

153. By the decision of the European Union, the requirement of visas for travelling abroad to countries in the European Union has been lifted for the citizens of the Republic of Serbia on 19 December 2009.

Article 10

Improvement of the status of women in the field of education

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 29 and 30

154. All key laws adopted in the previous period govern and promote the improvement of the status of women in the field of education, too.

155. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination governs discrimination in the field of education and professional training in the part regarding special cases of discrimination. Everyone has the right to pre-school, primary, secondary and university education under equal terms, in accordance with the law. Any person or a group of persons, based on their personal characteristics, must not be aggravated or disabled to enrol in an educational institution, or to be excluded from such institutions, aggravated or deprived of the possibility to attend teaching and participate in other educational activities. Pupils must not be classified according to their personal characteristics, ill-treated or subject to any other unjustified difference between them or treated unequally. It is prohibited to discriminate educational institutions performing activities in accordance with the law and other regulations, as well as to discriminate against persons using or having used the services of such institutions in compliance with the law (Article 19).

156. In the chapter under the title of Education, Culture and Sports, the Law on Gender Equality regulates equality in the field of education. Accordingly, within the meaning of equal opportunities, educational and scientific institutions, as well as institutions for professional training, must not engage in gender-based discrimination, especially regarding the conditions of admission and rejection of admission to an institution, the conditions of access and opportunities for access to permanent education, including all programmes for education of adults and programmes of functional literacy, the conditions for exclusion from the educational process, scientific work and professional training, the method of service rendering and provision of privileges and information, assessment of knowledge and evaluation of achieved results, the conditions to get scholarships and other types of support for education and studies, the conditions for selection or mastering of knowledge, professional orientation, professional advancement and acquiring of diplomas, the conditions for progress, additional qualifications or new qualifications (Article 30).

157. Education about gender equality is an integral part of pre-school, primary, secondary and university education, as permanent learning. Education about gender equality is ensured within the curricula and study programmes with the aim to overcome limiting gender-based roles, to promote freedom from gender-based stereotypes and gender-based prejudices. Special adequate teaching relating to sexual relations and reproductive health is also provided within the framework of curricula. The state authorities in charge of education, namely the educational institutions are obliged to provide the implementation of the policy of equal opportunities for women and men in the procedure of the adoption of curricula and study programmes and on the occasion of establishment of standards for textbooks, teaching methods and standards for school premises and equipment (Article 31). The authorized proposer shall propose at least 30% of representatives of the less

represented gender on the occasion of nomination of members of management and supervision boards in public services (Article 32).

158. The Law on Gender Equality prescribes special measures aimed at provision of conditions for advancement and more complete inclusion into the process of education and professional training, which the public authorities in charge of education are obliged to undertake in order to include into the above mentioned processes the pupils or groups of pupils who leave school early because of their culture, tradition and social-economic conditions. The measures for special support to pupils or groups of pupils for transfer from lower to higher educational level, namely for continuation of education, may also be undertaken. The public authorities in charge of education shall establish special programmes for the return of pupils to schools and other educational institutions. The public authorities in charge of education may also undertake other special measures, especially the measures to encourage information, technical and technological education of less represented sex (Article 33).

159. In the course of 2009 the educational system of the Republic of Serbia was also improved by the adoption of two important laws, namely: the Law on Fundamentals of Education and the Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Aids.

160. According to the Law on Fundamentals of Educational System, all children, pupils and adults must be provided with equal rights and access to education without discrimination and separation based on sex, social, cultural, ethnic, religious or other affiliation, place of permanent or temporary residence, financial standing or health conditions, handicap and disability or some other grounds (Article 3, paragraph 1), as well as with equal opportunities for education at all levels and types of education, in accordance with the needs and interests of children, pupils and adults, without any obstacles to change, continue and supplement education or lifelong learning (Article 3, paragraph 5).

161. All persons have the right to education. The citizens of the Republic of Serbia are equal in accomplishment of their right to education regardless of sex, race, national, religious and linguistic affiliation, social and cultural origin, property status, age, physical and psychical constitution, handicap and disability, political affiliation or other personal property. Handicapped and disabled persons have the right to education respecting their educational needs in the regular system of education, in the regular system of education with individual or group support or in special pre-school group or school, in accordance with this Law and other relevant laws. Persons with exceptional capabilities have the right to education respecting their special educational needs in the regular system of education, in special classes or special schools, in accordance with this Law and other relevant laws. Foreign citizens or stateless persons have the right to education under the same conditions and in the manner prescribed for the citizens of the Republic of Serbia (Article 6).

162. This Law obliges the institutions to prepare individual curricula, individual programmes and individual methods of teaching. For children and pupils who need additional support in education due to their social disadvantages, handicap, disability and other reasons, the educational institution shall provide elimination of physical and communication obstacles and adopt an individual educational scheme. In this way it will be possible for mothers to be included in the activities and other social interactions they had been deprived of because of impossibility for the child to have an adequate care.

163. The objective of the individual educational scheme is to achieve optimum inclusion of children and pupils into the regular educational activities and their independent activities in the community of the same age. The duration of pre-school education has been increased. The programme of preparation of a child within pre-school education before entering primary school lasts for four hours daily for nine months at minimum.

164. This Law also prescribes the establishment of the Council for Professional Education of Adults of 21 members, including the president, too. The president and the members of the Council for Professional Education of Adults shall be appointed by the Government among the distinguished representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, craftsmen, associations of employers, experts for professional training and education of adults, economy, employment, labour, social and youth policies, teachers from the associations of professional schools and representative trade unions established in the territory of the Republic of Serbia for education. The Government shall appoint the members of the Council for Professional Education of Adults for the period of six years. As an exception from paragraph 3 of this Article, half of members of the first appointed composition of the Council for Professional Education of Adults shall have the mandate of three years. A person elected, nominated or appointed to the function at a state authority, territorial autonomy body, local self-government unit and a person who is a member of the political party body or the school body member may not be appointed a member of the Council for Professional Education of Adults (Article 15).

165. The Council for Professional Education of Adults shall:

(a) Monitor and analyze the status of education within its competences, its harmonization with the European principles and values and propose measures for its improvement;

(b) Participate in the preparation of the professional training development and improvement strategy, especially of secondary professional training, education of adults, specialized and craftsmen's education, secondary professional education and training of handicapped and disabled persons and other forms of professional education (formal and informal);

(c) Propose to the Minister:

(i) A list of educational profiles;

(ii) Special achievement standards for secondary professional education;

(iii) Additional quality standards for activities of professional schools and education of adults;

(iv) Qualification standards for the level of secondary professional training, professional advancement and other forms of professional education;

(v) Programme standards and standards for implementation of professional training programmes and training if they are implemented according to non-standard school regulations;

(vi) A part of curricula and programmes for educational profiles, for professional subjects and modules of secondary professional education and education of adults and programmes of other forms of professional education – labour education, professional qualifications and training;

(vii) Programmes of specialized exams, craftsman's exam, final labour education exam, professional qualification exam, training exam and models of recognition of previously gained knowledge and skills, in accordance with this Law and other relevant laws;

(viii) Programmes of professional graduation exams and final exams of secondary professional education;

(ix) Approval of textbooks and teaching aids for professional subjects;

(x) National framework of qualifications for the level of secondary professional education, professional advancement and other forms of professional education;

(d) Consider, take views and give opinions to the Minister in the process of preparation of drafts of laws, proposals of regulations concerning the network of professional schools for adult education and other documents governing the issues of importance for education within its competences;

(e) Monitor, encourage and direct activities linking education and employment and their effects to the economical development;

(f) Link and include the needs and interests of social partners with the directions of development of professional education and education of adults;

(g) Consider and include in the fields of its competences the models of development and professional consulting;

(h) Perform other activities pursuant to this Law (Article 16).

166. The new systematization of working posts with the Ministry of Education also includes the Department for Adult Education, which shall, in accordance with the legal solutions, support the opening of primary and secondary schools for education of adults, support new forms of formal and informal education.

167. The Ministry of Education shall implement the projects in order to achieve equality at all levels of education, and in particular:

(a) Increased level of education;

(b) Balanced professional advancement of girls and boys;

(c) Integration of gender principle into curricula and textbooks;

(d) Professional advancement of male and female teachers.

168. In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Serbia it has been stated that it was necessary to introduce Gender Studies into the educational system and increase the number of computer literate women. Gender Studies have been introduced at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade and at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, and the Faculties of Law in Belgrade and Niš have the so-called legal clinics, wherein the students also render free of charge consultations to women thus being educated and becoming sensitized for this type of legal aid, too. The second goal requires the accomplishment of more universal primary education, i.e. it has to be ensured that by 2015 all children, girls and boys equally, would be able to complete their primary education. The third goal is directed to the elimination of differences between sexes at all levels of education, by 2015 at the latest.

169. Out of 8 persons appointed to the Ministry of Science and Technological Development 3 persons are women, as follows: the Secretary of the Ministry, 1 state secretary and 1 assistant minister. According to EUROSTAT, the Republic of Serbia is in the fourth place, with over 40% of women as researchers, although funds in this area are not sufficient – only 0.3% of gross domestic product.

170. The European Women in Mathematics association held its 14th meeting in Novi Sad from 25 to 28 August 2009 in co-organization with the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics from Novi Sad. This meeting was co-financed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The European Women in Mathematics is an organization formed in Finland in 1986 with the aim to network, support and promote women dealing with mathematics. The previous meetings were held in Great Britain (2007), Russia (2005) and France (2003). The working group for women in physics

was formed in Serbia in 2001 by the Association of Physicians of Serbia. Women are very active, very successful and visible in the scientific domain. A doctor of medical science from the University of Niš is the winner of the UNESCO — L’Oreal Fellowship — Women in Science for 2009. For her scientific project, which deals with detection of proteins in urine in order to diagnose kidney diseases, she had been awarded this award in the strong competition of female scientists from all over the world and is the first winner of this prestigious UNESCO award in the amount of 40,000 dollars in the Republic of Serbia.

171. In addition to the current programmes indicating that representation of women in science is good, it has been planned with the Ministry of Science and Technological Development to introduce, through the National Action Plan for improvement of the status of women and promotion of gender equality for the period from 2009 to 2015, the integral programmes of analysis and researches of gender perspectives in science, in accordance with strategic scientific priorities of this Ministry, which shall have place in essential, development and applied researches and contribute to the European integrations.

172. The National Action Plan to improve the status of women and promote gender equality in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2009 to 2015 prescribes a series of activities in the forthcoming period, which shall support and ensure gender equality in the field of education.

Article 11

Improvement of the status of women in the field of labour and employment

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 31 and 32

173. In respect of improvement of the status of women in the field of labour and employment, the adoption of key laws in the course of 2009 additionally strengthened legal regulations in this field and the most significant novelties are the introduction of equal opportunities as well as the fact that sexual harassment, together with harassment and sexual blackmail, are sanctioned and defined as expressions.

174. In the part concerning special cases of discrimination, the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prohibits discrimination in the field of labour, namely infringement of equal opportunities to contract employment or enjoy all rights in the field of labour under equal conditions, such as the right to work, free choice of employment, career advancement, professional advancement and professional rehabilitation, equal compensation for the work of the same value, just and satisfactory working conditions, holidays, education and membership in trade unions, as well as to protection against unemployment. Protection against discrimination is enjoyed by an employed person, a person performing temporary and occasional jobs or jobs on contract basis or on the basis of some other agreement, a person performing additional work, a person holding a public function, a member of the army, a person looking for a job, a student and a trainee pupil, a person attending professional training and advancement without employment contract, a volunteer and any other person who participates in performance of some work on any other grounds. It is not considered discrimination if difference is made, if there is an exclusion or grant of privileges because of the specific properties of some job where personal properties of a person present the actual and the decisive condition to perform such a job, if the purpose wished to be achieved is justified, as well as undertaking of protection measures for certain categories of persons – women, pregnant women, maternity women, parents, under-aged persons, disabled persons and other (Article 16).

175. The Law on Gender Equality governs the area of labour and employment, introducing significant novelties that should contribute to the improvement of the status of women as the less represented sex and ensure more efficient protection of their rights (Articles 11–22). For example, in chapter 2 under the title of Employment, Social and Health Care, this Law prescribes a series of obligations for employers in respect of equal opportunities and introduction of special measures to increase employment and opportunities for employment of the less represented sex and to increase the participation of the less represented sex in professional training and provision of equal opportunities for advancement (Article 11), keeping of records and documentation about the gender structure of employees (Article 12) as well as in respect of planning of the measures to mitigate or eliminate unequal representation of sexes and reporting on planned and performed measures (Article 13).

176. This Law prescribes equal accessibility of jobs and positions so if the representation of the less represented sex in each organizational unit, at managerial positions and in the management and supervision bodies is less than 30%, the public authorities are obliged to apply affirmative measures in accordance with the Law on Civil Servants and the Law no State Administration (Article 14).

177. When contracting a job and work engagement and in public announcements of jobs and conditions for their performance and during the decision-making on the selection of persons looking for a job in order to get employment or other form of work engagement, it is not permitted to make any difference in respect of sex, unless there are justified reasons established in compliance with the law governing labour issues (Article 15).

178. In respect of assignments and advancements, sex must not be an obstacle to career advancement. Leave from work because of pregnancy and parenthood must not be an obstacle to the promotion to a higher position, advancement and professional training. Leave from work because of pregnancy and parenthood must not be grounds for assignment to inadequate jobs and for cancellation of the employment contract in accordance with the law governing labour issues.

179. Employees, regardless of their sex, shall enjoy the right to equal salary for the same work or for the work of the same value with the employer, in accordance with the law governing labour issues (Article 17).

180. In relation to the findings stated in the concluding comments, paragraph 31, we note that labour relations, rights and duties of civil servants and certain rights and duties of employees with the state administration bodies, courts, public prosecution offices, the Public Prosecution Office of the Republic of Serbia, the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government, the Constitutional Court and the agencies whose employees are appointed by the National Assembly are governed in the Law on Civil Servants.⁴³ It is prohibited to favour or deprive a civil servant of his/her rights and duties, especially because of racial, religious, sex, national or political affiliation or because of some other personal characteristic (Article 7). It is prescribed that on the occasion of employment with the state authorities, care would be taken that the national composition, representation of sexes and the number of disabled persons reflect the structure of the population to the greatest possible extent (Article 9, paragraph 3). The Law on Salaries of Civil Servants and Employees⁴⁴ defines the method of establishment of a basic salary (Article 7), the method of establishment of salary basis (Article 8), the method of establishment of coefficient and salary group (Article 9), while salary coefficients are

⁴³ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 79/05, 81/05-corr., 83/05-corr., 64/07, 67/07-corr., 116/08 and 104/09.

⁴⁴ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 62/06, 63/06-corr., 115/06-corr. and 101/07.

defined in the provisions of Article 13 of this law and according to Article 14 they are to be fixed by the manager by a relevant decision. Neither the Law on Labour Relations with the State Bodies,⁴⁵ which governs the labour related rights and obligations of the employees with the bodies of territorial autonomy and the bodies of local self-government, which had been applied to all employees of the state bodies before the adoption of the Law on Civil Servants recognizes any possibility to fix different salaries for the same work in respect of sex. It is to be stressed in particular that in the public sector in the Republic of Serbia no cases of discrimination of women were reported. The Administration Inspection noted no cases of discrimination of civil servants and employees during the inspections and in the procedure of acting according to the complaints filed by civil servants and citizens (in the bodies of local self-government) in respect of sex.

181. The former Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment was in force from 23 July 2003 to 22 May 2009 and was based on the principle of equal availability, acting and prohibition of discrimination in employment. It guaranteed equal access to jobs and equality in the procedure of employment of women and men (Article 8). It also prescribed an option that damage because of discrimination in employment was compensated (Article 21).

182. The new Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment entered into force on 23 May 2009. This Law is based on the principle of gender equality (Article 5). The payment of pecuniary compensation shall be continued during: (a) additional education and training, in accordance with the individual employment schedule; (b) temporary inability to work as defined by the regulations on health insurance, but not longer than 30 days from the date of occurrence of temporary inability; (c) maternity leave, leave from work to care for a child and leave from work because of special care for a child, according to the labour related regulations or other regulations governing leave from work (Article 73).

183. The Labour Inspectorate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy had some complaints because of violations of the rights of women on maternity leave, in the sense that the employer did not issue to an employed woman the decision on the rights during maternity leave and during leave because of care for a child, as well as that the employer did not pay earnings during maternity leave and during leave because of care for a child. Such cases were resolved as priority cases by ordering the employer to effect the payment, which was done by the employer almost every time within the fixed term (if contrary to this, the labour inspector would have filed a complaint for the offence). As the reason for non-payment of earnings during maternity leave and during leave for care of a child, the employers stated that they often had no pecuniary funds of their own to pay these costs together with the salaries of other employees, and the funds from the Health Insurance Fund are not paid regularly, i.e. they are not regularly reimbursed to the employers. It has been noted that the employers most often contract employment with women for a specified period of time in order to be able to cancel it in case of maternity leave and leave because of care for a child, because of the expiration of the period the contract had been concluded for, thus being released from the payment of legal liabilities. There were cases in which disrespect for work discipline was specified as the reason for the cancellation of the employment contract in order to hide the true reason for it, pregnancy of an employed woman.

⁴⁵ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 48/91, 66/91, 44/98-other law, 49/99-other law 34/01-other law, 39/02, 49/05-the CC of RS, 79/05-other law, 81/05-corr. of other law and 83/05-corr. Of other law.

184. The Labour Inspectorate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in charge of cases of discrimination on the occasion of employment stresses the problem of evidencing of this type of discrimination.

185. According to the Criminal Code whoever deliberately fails to comply with law or other regulations, collective agreement and other general acts on labour rights and on special protection of young persons, women and disabled persons at work, or on social insurance rights and thereby deprives or restricts another's guaranteed right, shall be punished with a fine or imprisonment up to two years (Article 163). Whoever deliberately contravenes regulations or otherwise unlawfully deprives or restricts a citizen's right to be freely employed under equal conditions in the territory of Serbia, shall be punished with a fine or imprisonment up to one year (Article 164). A person responsible for undertaking protection measures at work who knowingly fails to observe the law or other regulations or general enactment on safety measures at work, thereby endangering life and health of employees, shall be punished with a fine or imprisonment up to one year (Article 169).

186. The National Employment Strategy for 2005–2010 Period prescribes measures to support gender equality in respect of employment and salaries, as follows:

- (a) Provision of respect for the protective provisions of the Labour Law and severe sanctioning of any forms of violations;
- (b) Introduction of standards for identification of different forms of discrimination related to employment and mechanisms to prevent and sanction discrimination;
- (c) Promotion of flexible forms of employment with the aim to create possibilities of optimum choice for parents;
- (d) Provision of reasonable services related to care for children under seven years of age;
- (e) Wider introduction of optional forms of daily stay at schools for children under 12 years of age;
- (f) Special attention within active measures on the labour market to be paid to self-supporting parents, as well as to parents with low levels of education.

187. The National Employment Action Plan for 2006–2008 Period – support measures to gender equality in respect of employment and labour require consistent application and severe sanctioning of violations of legal provisions, as well as:

- (a) Improvement of the status of women and encouragement of employment of women on the labour market: training for entrepreneurship and management for women, self-employment programme, regional programmes, flexible employment, pilot projects for women;
- (b) Better inclusion of women into the existing programmes of active measures on the labour market: keeping of separate records for women and men, encouragement of inclusion of women into the programmes of active measures on the labour market.

188. The National Employment Action Plan for 2009 prescribes the incitement of employment of women through the following measures:

- (a) Implementation of programmes and projects for unemployed women;
- (b) Inclusion of unemployed women into the measures of active employment policy;
- (c) Financial incitements to women to establish and operate companies.

189. The measures of active employment policy imply, in the widest sense, the mediation in finding jobs and rendering of consulting services, training and grant of subsidies for employment. These measures are implemented by the National Employment Agency in order to improve the offer of labour on the labour market organizing training, increase demand for labour by granting subsidies to improve the functioning of labour market through mediation in employment.

190. The funds in the budget of the Republic of Serbia, which are allocated for the measures of active employment policy, in spite of the fact that they had been increased (1,950,983,950 dinars in 2007, 3,014,000,000 dinars in 2008, 3,500,000,000 dinars in 2009) remain still ten times less in relation to the developed countries. In average these allocations amount to only 0.1% of gross domestic product (GDP), which is very low and insufficient.

191. The percentage of women included in the programmes of additional education and training implemented by the National Employment Agency is higher than the percentage of included men. The percentage of women in the total number of persons who had been granted subsidies for self-employment to start their own business is still very low, although women had gender-based priority in the list of points under equal conditions.

Number of persons and percentage of women included in the measures implemented by the National Employment Agency

<i>Measure</i>	<i>2007</i>		<i>2008</i>		<i>2009</i>	
	<i>Total number of persons</i>	<i>% Women</i>	<i>Total number of persons</i>	<i>% Women</i>	<i>Total number of persons</i>	<i>% Women</i>
Programme of additional education and training	14 551	65.4	10 030	58.9	20 515	56.9
Subsidies for self-employment	5 465	39.6	3 386	36.1	5 303	41.1
Subsidies to employers to open new working posts – Regional Programmes	4 108	49.6	8 668	50.9	6 429	47.3

Note: The data for 2009 are the total data on participation of persons in the measures conducted according to the National Employment Strategy, which are financed from the budget of the Republic of Serbia and the budget of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

192. In 2008 in cooperation with the National Employment Agency the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality implemented the programme of grant of subsidies for self-employment and new employment of supporting mothers in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. 18 applications for self-employment and 27 applications for new employment were approved.

193. As from May 2009 to May 2010 the International Migration Organization (IMO) in Belgrade in cooperation with the National Employment Agency implemented the project of Sustainable Response of Labour Market to Need for Economic Inclusion of Human Trafficking Victims. It is expected that 20 women who have been victims of human trafficking would be included in active job finding and standard employment programmes of the National Employment Agency, in order to ensure their inclusion in the labour market.

The Labour Questionnaire conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

<i>The labour questionnaire for persons from 15 to 64 years of age</i>	<i>October 2007</i>		<i>October 2008</i>		<i>April 2009</i>		<i>October 2009</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Employment rate %	60.0	43.0	62.2	44.7	58.7	43.3	57.4	42.7
Unemployment rate %	16.5	21.7	12.7	17.3	15.0	18.1	16.1	19.1
Activity rate %	71.9	54.9	71.3	54.1	69.0	52.8	68.4	52.8
Inactivity rate %	28.1	45.1	28.7	45.9	31.0	47.2	31.6	47.2

194. The reduction of differences in rates of employment and unemployment of men and women within the period from 2005 to 2009 indicates that the employment policy implemented in the Republic of Serbia resulted in encouragement of employment of women. According to the Labour Questionnaire, the difference in unemployment rate between women and men in the Republic of Serbia amounted to 9.8 percentage points in 2005, while it was reduced to 3 percentage points in October 2009. It is necessary to mention that since the beginning of 2008 there has been a change of methodology, i.e. a change of the questionnaire, which resulted in differences in indicators of unemployment rates in 2007 and 2008 being higher than they actually were (in October 2007 the unemployment rate for men amounted to 16.5% and in October 2008 it amounted to 12.7% while in October 2007 the unemployment rate for women amounted to 21.7% and in October 2008 it amounted to 17.3%). The differences in employment rates and rates of activity of men and women are still very high, although there is trend of their gradual decrease.

<i>Rate differences for men and women in percentage points</i>	<i>October 2005</i>	<i>October 2006</i>	<i>October 2007</i>	<i>October 2008</i>	<i>April 2009</i>	<i>October 2009</i>
Employment rate	20.4	18.6	17.0	17.5	15.4	14.7
Unemployment rate	9.8	6.9	5.2	4.6	3.1	3.0
Activity and inactivity rates	18.1	18.2	17.0	17.2	16.2	15.6

195. According to the data contained in the Labour Questionnaire from April 2009, the number of unemployed men is higher than the number of unemployed women by about 10,000 persons, while this difference increased to about 16,000 persons in October 2009.

<i>The labour questionnaire for persons from 15 to 64 years of age</i>	<i>October 2007</i>		<i>October 2008</i>		<i>April 2009</i>		<i>October 2009</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Employed	1 461 559	1 064 011	1 523 387	1 122 835	1 405 626	1 081 108	1 391 876	1 058 767
Unemployed	288 982	295 234	221 737	235 468	248 039	238 820	266 427	250 562
Active population	1 750 541	1 359 245	1 745 124	1 358 303	1 653 665	1 319 928	1 658 303	1 309 329
Inactive population	683 841	1 114 600	703 447	1 153 645	741 731	1 178 255	764 949	1 172 608
Total working age population	2 434 382	2 473 845	2 448 571	2 511 948	2 395 396	2 498 183	2 423 252	2 481 937

196. According to the data contained in the Labour Questionnaire, the percentage of self-employed women in the structure of employed women was increased within the period from 2007 to 2009, but the percentage of women as supporting members of households was also increased within the same period. Contrary to this, the percentage of employed women was decreased. In comparison with the structure of employed men, a considerably higher percentage of self-employed men has been noted as well as a considerably lower percentage of men as supporting members of households.

<i>Structure of employed according to the labour questionnaire</i>	<i>October 2007</i>		<i>October 2008</i>		<i>April 2009</i>		<i>October 2009</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Self-employed	26.5	11.3	29.9	14.9	30.5	14.8	28.9	14.9
Employed	70.4	76.8	66.2	70.1	65.1	70.3	66.5	70.8
Supporting members of household	3.1	11.9	3.9	14.9	4.3	14.8	4.6	14.3

197. In 2007 and 2008 there was a drop of unemployment rate of women from 55 to 64 years of age, while in April 2009 it slightly increased. The employment rate of women from 55 to 64 years of age amounted to 25.7% in April 2009 and was considerably lower in relation to the total population of women amounting to 43.3%. However, the unemployment rate was also considerably lower and in April 2009 it amounted to 6.2%, which is considerably less in relation to the total population of women where unemployment rate was 18.1%. The inactivity rate of women from 55 to 64 years of age has been slightly lower in the last years, but it is still high and in April 2009 it amounted to 72.6%. In the Republic of Serbia women reach the age limit for retirement earlier than men, so the majority of women from 55 to 64 years of age meet the requirements for retirement.

The labour questionnaire

<i>Women from 55 to 64 years of age</i>	<i>October 2007</i>	<i>October 2008</i>	<i>April 2009</i>
Employment rate %	22.0	26.3	25.7
Unemployment rate %	8.6	5.9	6.2
Activity rate %	24.1	27.9	27.4
Inactivity rate %	75.9	72.1	72.6
Employed	124 439	149 969	153 443
Unemployed	11 730	9 469	10 073
Active population	136 169	159 438	163 516
Inactive population	428 953	411 018	433 407
Total number of women from 55 to 64 years of age	565 122	570 456	596 923

198. The number of unemployed persons looking for a job for the first time is smaller than the number of earlier employed persons. According to the data contained in the Labour Questionnaire from April and October 2009, the number of unemployed men is considerably larger than the number of unemployed women in the category of earlier employed persons. In October 2009 there were about 42,000 more unemployed men who had been employed earlier than in October 2008 so it may be concluded that the crisis affected the labour market more in relation to men who had lost their jobs more than women in 2009.

<i>The labour questionnaire</i>	<i>October 2007</i>		<i>October 2008</i>		<i>April 2009</i>		<i>October 2009</i>	
	<i>Persons</i>		<i>Persons</i>		<i>Persons</i>		<i>Persons</i>	
	<i>looking for job for the first time</i>	<i>Earlier employed persons</i>	<i>looking for job for the first time</i>	<i>Earlier employed persons</i>	<i>looking for job for the first time</i>	<i>Earlier employed persons</i>	<i>looking for job for the first time</i>	<i>Earlier employed persons</i>
Men	112 656	177 147	91 422	130 315	81 156	168 164	93 440	172 987
Women	120 419	175 250	108 949	126 519	95 400	143 875	99 041	151 900
	233 075	352 397	200 371	256 834	176 556	312 039	192 481	324 887

199. In respect of the persons looking for a job for the first time, the number of women is considerably higher than the number of men. The number of young women looking for a job for the first time is higher than the number of young men, although there was a decrease of this difference in October 2009 in relation to April 2009 according to the data contained the Labour Questionnaire. Unemployment rate of young people from 15 to 24 years of age is very high, in particular in case of young women.

<i>Young people from 15 to 24 years of age</i>	<i>October 2007</i>			<i>October 2008</i>			<i>April 2009</i>		
	<i>General</i>			<i>General</i>			<i>General</i>		
	<i>15-24</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Employment %	18.7%	22.6	14.4	21.2%	26.3	15.7	16.8%	19.9	13.6
Unemployment %	43.7%	40.7	48.3	37.4%	32.2	45.1	40.7%	38.5	43.7

200. The Republic of Serbia has been paying particular attention to employment of young people. The Action Plan for employment of young people was adopted in 2009 and the Young People Employment Fund was established, which is orientated in particular to young people with no qualifications and young people who get jobs with difficulties. In 2009 about 33% of funds allocated from the budget for the measures of active employment policy were directed towards the Programme of Employment and Professional Training of Young People under 30 years of age with qualifications. In 2009 55.5% of women were included in the Programme of Employment and Professional Training.

201. The largest number of women is employed in the following sectors: 24.5% in agriculture, forestry and water resources, 17.7% in whole and retail trades and repairs, 15.3% in processing industry, 11.4% in health and social services. Within the last five years the amount of the highest salary is in the sector of financial mediation activities and it is considerably higher than the salaries in other sectors of activities. In this sector the number of employed women is also considerably higher than the number of employed men. The salaries in the sectors mentioned hereinafter are above the average net salary in the Republic of Serbia: production of electricity, gas and water, ore and stone mining, state administration and social insurance, real estate transactions, renting, traffic, storage and communications, health and social care activities, education. 32.8% of women are employed in the above mentioned sectors out of the total percentage of employed women and 25.8% of men out of the total number of employed men. In other sectors of activities the average net salaries are under the average value in the Republic of Serbia.

Ranking of sectors of activities in respect of average net salary in 2008 according to the Data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the structure of employed запослених лица према сектору делатности према APC, октобар 2008

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
1. Financial mediation	1.5	3.2
2. Production of electricity, gas and water	2.2	0.5
3. Ore and stone mining	1.8	0.3
4. State administration and social insurance	4.8	4.8
5. Real estate transactions, renting	3.1	3.3
6. Traffic, storage and communications	7.4	2.7
7. Health and social care	2.7	11.4
8. Education	2.3	6.6
9. Other utility, social and personal services	4.6	4.1
10. Whole and retail trades, repairs	13	17.7
11. Civil engineering	10.2	1.6
12. Agriculture, forestry and water resources	23.6	24.5
13. Processing industry	20.0	15.3
14. Hotels and restaurants	2.7	3.6
15. Fishing industry	0.1	0
Total	100	99.6

202. According to the data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia from 2007, average salaries of women are higher in the following sectors of activities: civil engineering, traffic, storage and communications, real estate transactions and other utility, social and personal services. In all other sectors of activities men earn more than women.

203. In respect of salaries of elder employed persons there is no difference in the calculation of salaries for men and women and the percentage of salary increase is calculated equally in relation to the years of working age.

204. The economic transition has caused many changes for women in the Republic of Serbia and mainly worsened their status. An increasing number of women work in the worst paid economic branches and services, under the increasing gap between paid work of men and women. Insufficient payment of women is more notable in education, health and social insurance, where there is a large number of employed women. Differences in salaries have spread to all categories of employment last years. A research by the Belgrade Human Rights Centre⁴⁶ shows that 90% of women think men can get a job easier and 63% of them believe than men earn more than women.

205. Mothers with children have a particularly disadvantageous status and women face age discrimination more than men. The employers avoid employing women over 40 years

⁴⁶ Public opinion research: *Working Rights and Discrimination – Knowledge of and Opinions of Women in Serbia*.

of age so that they almost have no chance to get another job after they had lost their previous jobs. Since in the majority of cases they do not meet the conditions for retirement they have no regular personal income.

206. Feminisation of poverty is also present and there are 52.1% of women under the poverty limit while there are 47.9% of men under this limit. Each third employed woman fears losing her job and the women employed with private companies fear mostly, i.e. 47%⁴⁷ of them. Many women work without an employment contract, without paid working age and contributions for pension, social and health insurances, without the right to leave from work and paid holidays and without any protection at work.

207. The economic status of women is also marked by the fact that there are considerably more women who are workers than women who are employers. There are at least twice as many men who are employers than women who are employers. The data from 2007 indicate that there are 50 women⁴⁸ per 100 men who are employers.

208. A very small percent of women think that the trade unions seriously deal with the rights and the status of employees and there are only 11% of them who think that the trade unions are committed to the status of women and protection of their rights. Weak confidence in the trade unions obviously also results from the fact that only 13% of women stated they would refer to the trade union in case of harassment at work and only 8% of them would do the same in case of sexual harassment at work.⁴⁹

209. A frequent form of discrimination of women is non-recognition and non-evaluation of their work to a sufficient extent. In the Republic of Serbia there is so-called effect of glass ceiling, where women see opportunities for promotion but they are prevented from reaching this objective by a seemingly invisible barrier (glass ceiling).

210. Women are considerably less represented at high management positions. The number of employed women at companies frequently meets the relevant standards, but in essence women are much less present at the decision-making positions. Women are frequently excluded from the selection for employment and promotion because of their marital status or because of age, regardless of the fact they fulfil all the conditions with their qualifications. They accept less attractive and less paid jobs, they even accept contracts including conditions contrary to law, for example, a condition they will not get pregnant.

211. The Belgrade Human Rights Centre conducted a study, the results of which showed that a number of cases wherein women ask for protection of their working rights before the domestic courts is largely disproportionate to the realization of women concerning the actual number of violations of their rights in practice.⁵⁰

212. Using the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Interest,⁵¹ the Belgrade Human Rights Centre referred to 130 courts in Serbia with a request to review the acting of those courts in cases related to violations of working rights.⁵² 102 responses were received, which showed that even before 58 courts there were no such proceedings. 12 labour

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Public opinion research: Working Rights and Discrimination – Knowledge of and Opinions of Women in Serbia.

⁵¹ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 120/04.

⁵² The request was limited to investigation of violations of the following Articles: 18–21 of the Labour Law, 163–169 and 128 of the Criminal Code.

disputes have been in progress and 62 criminal proceedings. An analysis of the received responses showed that women had asked for protection of their rights before courts in 35 cases. In addition to fear of losing a job and permanent or long-lasting inability to find a job, the reasons for this are also insufficient knowledge of their rights guaranteed by law, high proceedings costs and lack of social mechanisms to prevent victimization of participants in such proceedings. The above mentioned causes affect women in the most vulnerable status most severely and most frequently (e.g. women having low level of education, women affected by poverty, women without employment for a long period of time, women not qualified to perform jobs needed on the market, disabled women).

Sexual harassment

213. According to the Law on Gender Equality harassment means any unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical act, committed with the intention or having a violation of dignity as the consequence and causing of fear or creation of gender-based hostile, humiliating, degrading or insulting environment (Article 10, paragraph 6); sexual harassment means unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical act of sexual nature committed with the intention or consequence of violation of personal dignity, creation of gender-based threatening, hostile, degrading or insulting environment (Article 10, paragraph 7); sexual blackmail means any behaviour of the responsible person who, with the intention to ask for services of sexual nature, blackmails another person to declare something against him/her or against a person close to him/her that would be harmful for his or her honour and reputation if rendering of required services is rejected (Article 10, paragraph 8).

214. In the chapter under the title of Employment, Social and Health Care, the Law on Gender Equality prescribes that harassment, sexual harassment or sexual blackmail at work or related to work by one employee to another employee are considered a violation of working obligation, which is the ground for the termination of the employment contract, namely for ordering the termination of employment, as well as the ground to discharge the employee from work. The employee shall inform the employer in writing about the circumstances indicating that he/she is exposed to harassment, sexual harassment or sexual blackmail and ask for efficient protection (Article 18).

Article 12

Improvement of health care of women and girls

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 33 and 34

215. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prohibits discrimination of persons or a group of persons based on their health conditions, as well as of members of their families. There is particular discrimination if a person or a group of persons are rejected medical services because of their personal characteristics, if special conditions for medical services are made, which are not justified from medical reasons, if they are refused diagnosis and deprived of information on the current health conditions, undertaken or intended treatment or rehabilitation measures, as well as harassment, insulting and humiliation during a visit to the medical institution (Article 27).

216. According to the Law on Gender Equality gender-based discrimination is prohibited during the upholding of the rights to health care. The Republic of Serbia provides medical care for women and men by establishing medical institutions at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in accordance with the relevant law governing health care. Health care for women includes in particular: prevention and early detection of disease; health care related to family planning, during pregnancy, delivery and maternity; health care in case of disease

and injuries, pursuant to the law governing health care (Article 24). Social and health care institutions are obliged to adjust organization of activities and working hours to the requirements of customers (Article 25).

217. According to the Law on Gender Equality, in respect of reproduction, every person of reproductive age has the right to health care and medical services related to family planning, regardless of sex. Partners are equal in planning of the number of children, access to information, education and means enabling them to exercise those rights. Special measures encouraging giving birth and special measures of protection and improvement of the reproductive health of women are not considered discrimination (Article 28).

218. The Law on Public Health governs the accomplishment of public interest, creating the conditions for preservation and improvement of population health by means of comprehensive activities of the society directed towards preservation of the physical and mental health of the population, preservation of living and working environments, prevention of occurrence and effects of risk factors causing health disorders, diseases and injuries, method and procedure, as well as the conditions for organization and implementation of public health (Article 1).

219. The Law on Treatment of Infertility through Procedures of Bio-medically Supported Conception⁵³ defines the conditions, method and procedure of treatment of infertility with women and men through procedures of bio-medically supported conception for the purpose of child conception, supervision over the implementation of this Law and performance of certain jobs of the state administration in the field of treatment of infertility through procedures of bio-medically supported conception, as well as other issues of importance for the performance of procedures of bio-medically supported conception (Article 1). The principle of gender equality is accomplished by the provision of equal conditions for both men and women to be treated for infertility through bio-medically supported procedures, in accordance with this Law (Article 8). The principle of protection of human dignity is accomplished through the implementation of infertility treatment by applying bio-medically supported conception respecting human dignity, right to privacy, health care, welfare and rights of a child to be born (Article 10). The right to treatment of infertility through procedures of bio-medically supported conception is held by all women and men of age who have business capacity who live together in accordance with the law governing family relations – spouses, namely wedlock partners who are, in respect of their age and general health conditions, able to perform parental duties and who are of such psychosocial state on which grounds it may be reasonably expected that they will be capable to perform parental duties, pursuant to the law, in the interest of a child. A living community must exist at the time of insertion of sexual cells, namely embryo into a woman's body. Exceptionally, the right to treatment of infertility through bio-medically supported procedures is also held by a woman of age having business capacity who lives alone and meets the necessary requirements, under the approval of the minister in charge of health issues and the minister in charge of family relations, if there are especially justified reasons to do so. It is prohibited to include into bio-medically supported procedures a woman at the age improper for childbirth in respect of her age and general health conditions, namely a woman who is at the age improper for childbirth (Article 26).

220. On 24 April 2009 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Decree on the National Programme of Health Care for Women, Children and Youth,⁵⁴ which supports the efforts to preserve and improve the health of women during pregnancy, child delivery and motherhood and health of children and youth. This document defines the basic

⁵³ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 72/09.

⁵⁴ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 28/09.

objectives, priority activities and directions of development of health care for women, children and youth in the Republic of Serbia.

221. The Programme is based on the following principles: follow-up of life course; equality and accessibility; age and gender sensitive access to rendering of health care; protection of human rights; care for sensitive groups; participation of community; participation of individuals; partnership for health (inter-sector cooperation); quality of operations of agencies in charge of health care for women, children and youth and uniform health information centre.

222. The population groups the Programme relates to are: women concerning family planning, pregnancy, delivery of child and motherhood; newborn babies and infants; children up to four years of age; children of pre-school and early school age; youth up to lawful age; youth after lawful age up to 26 years of age. The programme has the aim to preserve and improve health by applying the measures and activities of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, based on evidence.

223. Programme units of special importance: improvement and protection of mental health, health care for children and youth with acute and emergency states and diseases of greater social-medical importance; health care for children and youth with chronic diseases and states and disabilities, have been integrated with the units in respect of the above mentioned population groups following life course, from birth up to the age of young adult persons. One or several general objectives have also been defined for each programme unit.

224. Health care for women regarding family planning, pregnancy, child delivery and motherhood is directed towards the implementation of the National Millennium Development Goals until 2015: reduction of maternity mortality and mortality rate of women of fertile age, especially rate of malignant diseases; reduction of morbidity from sexually contagious infections and HIV; increase of inclusion of preventive examinations and use of modern contraceptive aids and methods; comprehensive health care for pregnant women; preservation of the health of pregnant women and foetuses.

225. Within the period from 1997 to 2007 the share of women of reproductive age decreased from about 24.5 % to 23.4 %. The programmes and projects in the field of health promotion have been developed and improved within the same period with the aim to educate future parents and motivate them to build human relations among sexes and responsibility of parenthood.

226. On 31 January 2008 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy on Incitement of Child Births, which establishes the measures and the holders of activities in order to achieve strategic goals of extreme importance for demographic development of Republic of Serbia. This Strategy is the national platform to combat against low birth-rate, defining measures, activities and mechanisms aimed at the mitigation of the economic price of bringing up a child, coordination of work and parenthood, reduction of the psychological price of parenthood, promotion of reproductive health of adolescents, combat against infertility, healthy motherhood, education of the population and local self-government becoming active.

227. A low percentage of women over 15 years of age is included in preventive gynaecological examinations at the medical centres for health care for women (10.3% in 2007). Within the same year, the family planning advisory centre was only addressed by about 5% of women of fertile age. The largest number of visits paid to the advisory centre for pregnant women was achieved in the first three months of pregnancy, whereas the ratio of initial and repeated visits was 1:6.5 in 2007, which indicates that pregnant women take care of their health better. Polyvalent visiting nurse made 0.8 home visits per each pregnant woman, which is insufficient cover. In recent years there is a trend of increase of home visits by a polyvalent visiting nurse to a woman in confinement and coordination with the

established scope and content of activities of polyvalent visiting nurse service (4.7 visits per a woman in confinement, including nearly 80% in 2007).

228. Diseases and states related to pregnancy, childbirth and confinement report the constant drop, as well as the total number of services at advisory centres for pregnant women, which is in accordance with the drop of fertility rate and birth rate. The proportion of Caesarean sections per 100 of deliveries in case of single pregnancies amounted to 18.04% in 2007.

229. According to the available data, maternity mortality (death outcome of women related to pregnancy, child birth and confinement) as a rare incident, varies each year having the trend of decrease. The ratio of maternity mortality, expressed as a five year average value for the period from 2000 to 2005 amounted to 5.6 in the Republic of Serbia, which is at the level of average of the European regions, but it is still higher than the average value in the countries of the European Union, as well as in relation to the goal specified in the Millennium Development Goals (4.9 by 2015). It is estimated that maternity mortality is 10% higher in relation to the official data, which is explained by sub-registration due to improper coding and non-presentation of death outcomes outside maternity hospitals. The leading causes of deaths of mothers during pregnancy, delivery and in puerperium in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 1997 to 2005 are: postpartum bleeding and complications during child delivery including pre-eclampsia, eclampsia, bleeding and womb rupture.

230. Among many progressive movements all over the world the initiative called Baby Friendly Hospital is singled out, which implies the application of the strategy of the World Health Organization and UNICEF of Ten Steps to Successful Breast Feeding: to inform pregnant women, namely future parents about nourishment, care, protection of physical and mental health of women (pregnant women – women in confinement – breast feeding woman) and child (foetus – newborn baby – infant); preparation for child delivery and parenthood at schools for parents, namely at schools for pregnant women and through psychophysical preparations, including the option of having painless child delivery and presence of the partner during child delivery, as well as the creation of conditions for a baby to be with the mother during the stay at hospital and for mothers to breast feed their babies if required. The existing concept of Baby Friendly Hospital is one of the priority activities meaning creation of new modern concept in accordance with the best practices in the world.

231. A low inclusion of women over 15 years of age in preventive gynaecological examinations is stressed as one of priority issues: low inclusion of women of generative age in the activities of the advisory centres for family planning and insufficient inclusion of pregnant women during the first three months of pregnancy to visit a gynaecologist for the first time.

232. Within the general objective – Preservation and improvement of the health of women of reproductive age, the focus is on four specific goals: preservation and improvement of health of women before pregnancy; preservation and improvement of health of women during pregnancy; provision of adequate health care and the best conditions for child delivery and child birth and preservation and improvement of health of women after delivery.

233. It is expected that the results of the Programme, which are classified as short-term results and long-term results, will be obtained by 2015.

234. The expected short-term results are: harmonization of the existing health care doctrine for women concerning motherhood, children and youth with current demographic, epidemiologic and social properties, as well as with modern scientific and technological achievements of medical and other sciences in this field; direction from dominant clinical

towards public health, namely to promotional – preventive access in primary health care including strengthening of team work of medical workers and medical associates, individuals, family, local self-government, associations, public media; coordination of scope of medical care use with the possibilities but also with specific and current needs of this population; provision of equity in accessibility and use of health care for children, youth and women concerning motherhood, especially for vulnerable groups; strengthening of commenced activities to improve organization, develop and apply better quality, more effective and more efficient health care for children and youth of all ages and women regarding motherhood at all levels of health care.

235. Long-term results of the Programme are directed towards: reduction of non-equality in accessibility and use of health care between rural areas and towns, administrative counties, between sexes, in relation to the members of the Roma nationality, disabled persons and marginalized groups; achievement of full health and development potential for children and youth, as well as active participation in the promotion and preservation of their own health; improvement of the health care system for better health of vulnerable groups of the population (children, youth and women regarding motherhood); construction of necessary facilities for the improvement and protection of health of women concerning motherhood, children and youth in the best and the most efficient way and improvement of work quality, follow-up and estimations, and the development of health information system, too.

236. The funds required to implement this programme shall be provided from the budget of the Republic of Serbia. The funds intended for the implementation of the Programme shall be allocated every year depending on the schedule of utilization of funds and planned activities for the current year.

237. In 2009 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the National Programme of Serbia to combat cervical cancer, the National Programme for prevention of breast cancer and the National Programme for prevention of colon/rectal cancer.

238. In April 2009 the Ministry of Health and the Social Insurance Fund of the Republic of Serbia, under the support of some pharmaceutical companies and some media companies started the national campaign of Serbia against Cancer. In the Republic of Serbia about 4,000 of women in Serbia get breast cancer annually, about 1,400 get cervical cancer and about 1,500 get colon/rectal cancer. Breast cancer makes 25% of all malignant tumours in Serbia. Within the framework of this campaign mobile mammography devices were donated to the Institute of Oncology and Radiology of Serbia in Belgrade, to the Clinical Centre in Niš and to the General Hospital in Paraćin. Great success has been achieved using mobile mammography devices, which cover less developed regions of the Republic of Serbia, where 5,000 examinations were carried out by the end of 2009, and women increasingly become aware of the importance of preventive examinations. The campaign is very present in the media, including participation of many public figures.

239. According to the data of the Ministry of Health there are 2,414 persons infected with HIV virus in the Republic of Serbia, and one third of them are women. It is estimated that there are 3,000 HIV positive persons, which indicates that some of them had not been registered. The highest percentage of HIV positive persons (57%) is at the age between 25 and 39 years. The number of diseased and those who had died from this disease in the last 10 years has been slightly decreasing, thanks to improved treatment. There has been a change in the entire epidemiologic image of HIV infection concerning transmission, there is an increasing number of persons who contracted HIV virus through sexual intercourse, and until 1999 this disease was mostly transmitted among drug addicts. The problem noted is that the new cases of infected persons were registered only after they had been infected.

240. According to the revised data of the central registry of diseased and dead from AIDS in the Republic of Serbia, since the beginning of epidemic in 1985, inclusive of 2009, there were 1,489 of registered cases of AIDS (61% of all registered HIV positive persons). Also, within the same period 970 persons died from AIDS (65% of all diseased from AIDS). In 2009 another 52 newly diseased persons were registered (incidence of 0.71/100,000 citizens), while 25 persons died from AIDS (mortality of 0.34/100,000, namely 48% of dead in relation to newly diseased in 2009). In 2009 registered incidence and mortality from AIDS were at similar level as in 2005 and 2006. Out of 25 dead persons from AIDS in the course of 2009, three were from the territory of Vojvodina, and 17 (68%) from Belgrade. The sex ratio among those who had died from AIDS amounts to 4:1 (20M:5F), while the highest number of dead was registered at the age from 30 to 59 years (18 persons, i.e. 72%). In the age group from 20 to 29 years three persons who had died from AIDS were registered (mortality of 0.30/100,000). In relation to transmissible category, the largest number of dead was registered in the population of intravenous drug addicts (12 persons, i.e. 48%), and then among persons infected with HIV through sexual intercourse (9 persons, namely 36%), while for one eighth of dead the way of transmission was not registered (3 persons, i.e. 12%). Among the newly AIDS diseased in the course of 2009, 14 death outcomes were registered (27%), while with 11 diseased persons AIDS was diagnosed within the period from 1998 to 2008.⁵⁵

241. In the previous two years the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Serbia granted two five-years projects in the total amount of about EUR 20 million for combat against AIDS. One of them is implemented by the Ministry of Health and the other is implemented by the Ministry of Health and Youth of JAZAS.

242. The campaign under the title of Both Plus and Minus has been organized and implemented by the Ministry of Health through the Project for Combat against HIV, which is financed from the funds of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the Public Health Institute of Serbia. Together with commercial sex workers, the project is implemented through:

(a) The project of Prevention of HIV/AIDS, programme for reduction of damage among male/female commercial sex workers in Belgrade, which is implemented by the Association for Combat against AIDS – JASAZ;

(b) The project of HIV Prevention Services, decrease of damage among commercial sex workers in Kragujevac, which is implemented by Youth of JAZAS from Kragujevac;

(c) The project of HIV Prevention Services, decrease of damage among commercial sex workers in Niš, which is implemented by the Timok Youth Centre;

(d) The project of HIV/AIDS Prevention Services among commercial sex workers in Subotica, which is implemented by Youth of JAZAS in Novi Sad;

(e) The project of Decrease of damage among commercial sex workers in Novi Sad, which is implemented by the Prevent.

243. The opinion about persons suffering from HIV has been changed, although they still face discrimination. The assessment of the Ministry of Health is that awareness of citizens in the Republic of Serbia had mostly changed in the combat against HIV, thanks to every day activities all over the country in combat against this disease, which is the best example of inter-sector cooperation and partnership, also including the United Nations agencies,

⁵⁵ Data source: The Dr Milan Jovanović Batut Public Health Institute. The report on infectious diseases in 2009 in the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

international, non-governmental and religious organizations in addition to the activities of the line ministries.

Article 13

Improvement of the status of women in economic and social life

244. The incitement of the economic development of the Republic of Serbia is performed through the grant of long-term and short-term loans to economic subjects through the Development Fund of the Republic of Serbia, as follows:

(a) Start up loans for beginners are implemented through crediting of entrepreneurs and crediting of legal entities. Loans for beginners are primarily intended to the young and the means of security of these loans for the young does not have to be mortgage on property, which is often not possessed by the young. The loans granted by the Development Fund are equally available to men and women, but the number of women who submit applications for loans is lower than the number of applications submitted by men and accordingly the number of concluded contracts on the grant of loans is smaller. The number of concluded contracts with the Development Fund to grant loans to women beginners in business has been increasing every year and amounts to 30%–40 % of the totally granted loans;

(b) Loans to incite and develop companies and entrepreneurship in the mostly underdeveloped municipalities in the Republic of Serbia are granted in order to build new facilities, expand the capacities of the existing buildings and expansion of business activities of the existing craftsmen's activities. Regarding the loans granted to entrepreneurs in the underdeveloped regions, the share of women amounts to slightly over 20%.

245. In April 2008 the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality started with the implementation of the project of Towards the Policy of Gender Budgeting in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, which analyzed the programmes to encourage employment and self-employment and were financed from the budget of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, in order to assess their availability to women and men. Recommendations for inclusion of gender perspective in those programmes were prepared within this programme. In addition to this, on the occasion of issuance of instructions for the preparation of the budget of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, the Provincial Secretariat of Finances issued a recommendation to all provincial bodies to express gender component when preparing the budget where possible and where they find it necessary. The long-term goal of the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality, which is implemented within the framework of gender budgeting programme, is to review all provincial policies and programmes from the view point of their effect on women and men, as well as that care for accomplishment of gender equality be a task and regular activity of all those creating and implementing policies so that they are available to women and men in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. In accordance with this goal, the Provincial Secretariat provided training for introduction of gender perspective into programmes and policies for decision makers in the provincial administration and for the members of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

246. The project of the Guarantee Fund of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina under the title of Support to Non-Working Women and Women Entrepreneurs commenced in November 2006 with the aim to provide support to non-working women and women entrepreneurs running business for less than three years, providing credit lines under favourable conditions and guaranteeing regular repayment of loans approved by commercial banks. The Regional Centre for Social Economic Development – Banat, the Academy of Women's Entrepreneurship from Kikinda, the Zrenjanin Educational Centre

and the Alma-Mons Regional Agency for development of Small and Medium Companies from Novi Sad are also included in the project, through rendering expert assistance to future applicants. 132 guarantees were issued until the end of 2009 and the guarantee potential was committed in the total amount of 175,083,671 dinars. 518 new working posts were opened through this activity of the Fund. These tender activities were supported by Banca Intesa a.d. Beograd, providing the credit line in the amount of the guarantee potential established in the tenders. For the project of the Guarantee Fund in 2008, the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina received the award for the promotion of social cohesion through economic development by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities with the Council of Europe.

247. According to the Law on Financial Support to Families with Children,⁵⁶ parental allowance is obtained by mothers for the first, the second, the third and the fourth child provided she is a citizen of the Republic of Serbia, that she has residence in the Republic of Serbia and that she has health care coverage through the Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of Serbia. Exceptionally, if the mother has three children, and she brings two or more children at the next delivery, she will have the right to parental allowance for each child delivered at the next delivery, based on a separate decision of the ministry in charge of social issues.

248. The Law on Gender Equality prescribes equal representation of sexes in sports and also prescribes that educational institutions are obliged to provide equal conditions for active going in for sports, regardless of sex, and to undertake measures to encourage physical exercises and sports activities for girls and women. Sports organizations and associations are obliged to ensure equal treatment of sexes in the development and financing of sports activities. Sports organizations and associations are obliged to ensure equal representation of sexes in management bodies of such organizations and associations (Article 34).

249. The Sports Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2009–2013 was adopted on 27 November 2008. The first objective in the field of women in sports is the achievement of gender and sexual equality and female sports on a massive scale and the creation of the community in which girls and women are socially affirmed in sports activities at all levels and feel safe in sports activities and where the activities directed towards the implementation of those objectives are the implementation of information programmes on benefits of sports activities and continuing education about health –useful effects of sports on the female population of all age groups and organization of discussions and campaigns to raise the awareness of instructors, officials, parents and sportsmen on the seriousness of the problem of insufficient engagement of women in sports organizations. The second objective is the development of scientific researches on female sports and the activities within this objective are: performance of scientific researches on female sports and effects of sports activities on women and organization of professional gatherings on the application of results of scientific researches in female sport. The third objective is the existence of the development programme and improvement of female sports where the foreseen activities are: participation of all sports factors in the preparation and implementation of development programmes and improvement of female sports. The fourth objective is the introduction of compulsory participation of women in all committees, commissions and working bodies of sports organizations with activities related to the adoption of the recommendation of the Government/the competent ministry on desired percentage of participation of women in accordance with the world and European standards.

⁵⁶ The Official Gazette of RS, nos. 16/02, 115/05 and 107/09.

250. In 2008 the Ministry of Youth and Sports conducted an analysis of the capacities of youth associations and organizations, which, inter alia, analyzed the gender structure of members of youth associations. An analysis of 266 active youth organizations of civil society indicated that more than a half of organizations have equal representation of women and men, while only several organizations have absolutely homogeneous sexual structure. The same results indicate considerable gender non-equality, which may be noted at the level of decision-making. The management body of every second organization (49.8%) consist of the majority of men, while women are the majority in every third organization (33.7%). The difference becomes even more obvious if we take into account the organizations absolutely managed by men (8.6%), and by women (4.1%).

251. In youth organizations women and men are absolutely equally represented in the management bodies. In half of organizations (48.5%) women are the majority, and in the same number of organizations men make the majority. In youth organizations (in which 2/3 of members are young people from 15 to 30 years of age), men are present in almost three fourths of organizations (70.2%) dominantly taking management positions, and women are only present in 25.5% of organizations.

252. The researches carried out up to now showed that there was a considerably lower percentage of representation of women in the sports system of the Republic of Serbia. Out of a total of 11,053 of employees in sports organizations, 931 are women, of which 90% are employees of general services (accounting, translators, secretaries ...).

253. The Fund of Young talents has been within the framework of the Ministry of Youth and Sports since August 2008. The data base of the Fund for 2009 indicates that scholarships were granted to 361 men and 639 women at the tender for scholarships for 1,000 best students of the final year of basic academic studies and master studies from the faculties and universities.

Article 14

Status of women in rural areas

254. Out of the total number of women, 42.75% of women in the Republic of Serbia live in mixed or rural settlements. In relation to men, there are 50.33 % of women who live in mixed or rural surroundings.

255. In many researches conducted in 2008 the comparative analysis of rural and urban population indicates that there are great differences between these two populations. The percentage of population living under the poverty limit is more than twice as high in rural regions (9.8%) than in urban regions (4.3%). Average consumption in urban regions is about 25% higher than in rural regions. Half of citizens in rural regions estimate that they are not satisfied with the quality of living. Such estimation is based on bad accessibility and quality of health care, educational and cultural institutions and other services.

256. The level of economic development and living standard in South-East Serbia is lower in relation to the average value in the Republic of Serbia. The rural population in the South-East Serbia is characterized by the highest percentage of poor people in Serbia. In this group the percentage of poor people amounts to 18.7%, in relation to 9.8% of poor people in the total rural population and 8.6% of poor people in the urban population of South-East Serbia.

257. The difference in unemployment and employment rates between men and women in the rural population of South-East Serbia is higher than in general and rural population, which makes the status of women in this group on the market even worse in relation to the already bad status of women in the Republic of Serbia. In 2008 the percentage of

vulnerable employment of rural population in the South-East Serbia reaches 54.8% (in relation to 47.6% in the rural population and 31.2% in the total population). The rural population of South-East Serbia also maintained the status of higher vulnerability and bad status in 2009, according to the basic indicators of the labour market in relation to the total rural population. In 2009 the unemployment of this group was 20.5% (in relation to the unemployment rate of the total population of rural regions of 13.4%), and in comparison with 2008 this rate went up 5.8 percentage points. The categories of women with secondary education and the groups of the young from the rural population of South-East Serbia are in an exceptionally bad status, where unemployment rates reach 26%, 24% and 51%, respectively. The very unfavourable status of these categories of the population is additionally aggravated because of the 2009 crisis.

258. According to the Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality, rural women belong to double and/or multiply discriminated groups of women and as other vulnerable groups they are not treated separately in the Strategy and the Action Plan but through all six strategic fields.

259. Within the framework of its competences in 2009 the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources issued a tender for the award of stimulating funds for the support of development of rural areas investing in expansion and improvement of economic activities of the rural population for 2009. The objective of this tender is to encourage activities, such as: promotion of countryside tourism, increase of employment of women, manifestations fostered by the associations of women in rural regions, handicrafts, traditional crafts, etc. This should have an effect on the reduction of unemployment of rural population, primarily of women, which would reflect in the increase of income of agricultural estates.

260. The activities to be performed within the period from 2009 to 2015 are, as follows: public campaigns with the aim to change patriarchal values in the country (by informing women about their rights and mechanisms to accomplish the same, raise awareness of women on the importance of ownership over land, real estates and property earned mutually, economic contribution to family property through household jobs), encourage women in rural regions to have associations and cooperatives (in the manner to increase employment of rural women, increase the number of women's cooperatives, associations, newly registered agricultural estates), develop programmes of outright stimulating funds for the support to development of women's tourism as well as for the development of women's entrepreneurship related to countryside tourism (fostering of women's manifestations).

261. Special measures intended for women from rural regions are implemented within the framework of the project of the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality under the title of the Rural Women's Year, which includes the activities related to the increase of capacities of rural women to make profit.

262. In the course of 2009 the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality and the Gender equality Institute implemented the programmes and activities dedicated to affirmation of creative potentials of rural women in Vojvodina:

(a) Preparation of the data base of women's organizations in Vojvodina (450 in total, 230 rural, 76 political);

(b) Four days' seminar held in two sessions (on 28 and 29 May and on 16 and 17 June) to increase the capacities of rural women's organizations to write projects and manage project cycles according to the European Union standards (38 women from 28 municipalities were educated);

(c) Organization of the concert of women's folklore and singing groups in the territory of AP of Vojvodina. The concert was held on 14 October 2009 at the Hall of the

Government of AP of Vojvodina. The highest amateur results and cultural-artistic achievements of 12 authentic folklore women's groups from AP of Vojvodina were presented;

(d) On the occasion of marking of the International Rural Women's Day on 15 October 2009, an exhibition of works of rural women from Vojvodina was held at the Novi Sad Fair presenting creative potentials, handicraft works, old craft products and rich cultural heritage of 150 women's rural organizations in Vojvodina. The exhibition was accompanied by round tables and presentations on the topic of Development of Women's Co-operatives and Agricultural Women, presentation of research results about the status of rural women in Vojvodina and the cross-border cooperation projects and an exhibition of photographs under the title of Rural Women.

263. Within the previous period the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality also implemented trainings for unemployed women from rural environments in the field of information systems, services of aid to the old and sick people (gerontology house-keepers), in the field of ethno and agricultural tourism. The tender for the award of outright funds to finance the projects intended to improvement of cultural creativity of women in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

264. According to the research conducted in 2008 by the group for creative initiative, the SeConS, of a sample of 500 women from 50 villages in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, the results indicated that 6.7% of the employed population had the status of a supporting household member of whom 74% were women, meaning they are engaged in family business without being paid. During the season of agricultural works rural women work longer than specified full working hours, without having a day of holidays. Rural women work in small and medium-size agricultural estates having mixed production, which are mostly owned by male members of families. Every tenth household is owned by a woman and 84% of women do not own any land or means for production.

265. It is established that 17% of women had no health insurance and that 93% of them do not pay their pension-disability insurance mainly because of their bad financial standing and lack of information. A fifth of women with no health insurance cure themselves. The majority of insured women exercise this right thanks to their husbands who hold key financial power. Some women have their own secret funds for their personal requirements, which is mostly saving from direct sale of agricultural products.

266. It is registered that among the tested forms of social care the households from the sample only receive child's allowance, while other forms of financial support are not represented although rural households possessing less than one acre of land make up 70% of the poor.

267. As indicated in the research, one of the main reasons of unfavourable economic status of women is the repetition of patriarchal local patterns. By getting married and going to live in the husband's households rural women mostly dispose of their maiden property in favour of male members of the households, whereas they do not have the right to dispose of property at the household they married into. The research showed that 44% of women were previously employed in industry, trade and catering industry. The status of a housewife and of a supporting family member is not their choice but a must in most cases. Nevertheless, the majority of questioned women did not express any interest to get a job somewhere else out of the family estate. It is only one fourth of women actively looking for a job and only 20% of women are ready to start entrepreneurship and business. On the other hand, they are very interested in cooperatives and even two thirds of them would like to join agricultural cooperatives or would establish agricultural cooperatives with other women from the village. The majority of them even have ideas about the activities of a cooperative, mainly being handicrafts, flower growing or some other agricultural production.

268. The round table with the representatives of the competent ministries, institutions and organizations was organized, as well as individual talks with the representatives of relevant ministries in order to present the findings of the research and define mutually further measures and activities. The media expressed great interest in this topic. The findings of the research indicate two basic conclusions:

(a) The status of women as supporting members of households cannot be systematically improved without the improvement of the status of agricultural households or the improvement of employment conditions for those who would like to establish their economic status outside households;

(b) The gender dimension of social status indicates that the social status is conditioned by obvious property non-equalities, exclusion or limited participation in decision-making on economics of estates, limited access to household income and unbalanced share of responsibilities and activities related to household keeping and family maintenance.

269. Rural women are marginalized twice, as the members of agricultural households and as women within the framework of economic and family organization of their households. Their social status cannot be improved without the improvement of the status of agricultural households, which mainly do not make a lot of profit, or without better conditions for employment of those women who wish to establish their economic status outside their households. These women mostly live according to traditional patriarchal principles. Lack of information is one of the major problems.

270. It is necessary to inform women about the possibility to access health and social care and encourage them to get involved in the programmes for unemployed. It is possible to make a step forward by education, promotion of association of women in rural production and delivery of detailed information on the method of gaining access to health insurance to home addresses.

Article 15

Equality before law, legal and business capacities, freedom of movement, temporary and permanent residence

271. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination and the Law on Gender Equality additionally stress equality before law of all people, namely of both sexes.

272. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prescribes protected rights and persons. Every one has the right to effective protection against all forms of discrimination by the competent bodies and other bodies of public power of the Republic of Serbia. A foreigner in the Republic of Serbia, in accordance with international treaties, has the right to all rights guaranteed by the Constitution and law, except for the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and law to the citizens of the Republic of Serbia only. It is not allowed to exercise the rights established by this law contrary to the objectives they had been recognized for or with the intention to deny, violate or limit the rights and freedoms of other persons (Article 3).

273. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination promotes the principle of equality in Chapter 2 under the title of General Prohibition and Forms of Discrimination.

274. All people are equal and enjoy the same status and equal legal protection regardless of their personal properties. Everyone is obliged to respect the principle of equality and prohibition of discrimination, respectively (Article 4).

275. A violation of the principle of equal rights and obligations shall exist if a person or a group of persons, because of his/her or their personal properties is unjustifiably deprived of

rights and freedoms or if obligations are imposed that are not deprived of or imposed to another person or a group of person in the same or similar situation, and if the objective or the consequences of undertaken measures are unjustified, as well as if there is no proportionality between the undertaken measures and the objective to be achieved by such measures (Article 8).

276. In Part 3 under the title of Special Cases of Discrimination, the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination prescribes that propagation or exercise of discrimination by the public authority and in the procedures before the public authorities (Article 13 paragraph 2) are severe forms of discrimination and also defines discrimination in the procedures before the public authorities and discrimination in rendering of public services and use of buildings and space.

277. Everyone has equal access and equal protection of rights before courts and public authorities. Discriminatory treatment by an official, namely by a responsible person of public authority is considered severe violation of work duty, pursuant to law (Article 15).

278. Discrimination in public services is if a legal entity or a natural person, within their activities, namely profession, based on personal properties of a person or a group of persons, shall refuse to render some service, ask to meet requirements not asked to be met by other person or a group of persons, namely if they unjustifiably enable other person or a group of persons to have advantage.

279. Everyone has the right to equal access to buildings in public use (the buildings with the seats of public authorities, buildings in the field of education, health, social care, culture, sports, tourism, the buildings used for the protection of environment, for the protection against natural disasters, etc.), as well as to public space (parks, squares, streets, pedestrian crossings and other roads, etc.) in accordance with law (Article 17).

280. Spouses decide on the place of living in an agreement and how to keep their household (Article 27).

281. In Part 3 under the title of Family Relations, the Law on Gender Equality prescribes that everyone is equal, regardless of family and marital status (Article 26). Spouses and common-law partners are equal, in accordance with law (Article 27).

Article 16

Equality in marital and family relations

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 35 and 36

282. On 25 February 2005 the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law on Family Relations. The transitional and final provisions of this Law prescribe that this Law shall be applied as from 1 July 2005, except for the provisions of Article 203 paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Law (provisions on the composition of court panels in family disputes), which shall be applied as from 1 July 2006. New legal institutions have been introduced in the field of the rights of the child, mutual exercise of parental rights, protection against domestic violence, mediation, issue of marital contract, gift contract, tenancy rights and emancipation. Legal institutions that had undergone considerable changes are adoption, common-law marriage, agreement on marriage dissolution, establishment and contest of maternity and paternity, establishment and contest of maternity and paternity in case of conception under biomedical support and maintenance. The institute of marital contract and protection measures against domestic violence are some examples whose introduction caused discussions in professional and large public, primarily because of justification of

their introduction and effects to be achieved through their application, as well as because of possibility to abuse the relevant rights.

283. The Family Law defines: marriage and marital relations, relations in common-law marriage, relations between children and parents, adoption, fostering, custody, maintenance, family property relations, protection against domestic violence, proceedings related to family relations and personal name (Article 1). Family enjoys special protection by the state. Everyone has the right for respect of family life (Article 2). Marriage is a community of woman and man established by law. Marriage can only be contracted on the grounds of free consent of future spouses. Spouses are equal (Article 3). Marriage cannot be contracted by a person whose will is not free (Article 24). Common-law marriage is permanent community of woman and men, who have no marriage impediments. Common-law partners have rights and duties of spouses under the conditions prescribed by this Law (Article 4).

284. In Part 2 in the section under the title of Marriage Effects, the Family Law prescribes that spouses are obliged to live in community and to respect and help each other (Article 25). Spouses are independent in selection of their work and profession (Article 26). Spouses are obliged to support each other under the conditions prescribed by this Law (Article 28).

285. In respect of the procedure for marriage contraction as well as of age required to contract marriage there are no amendments in relation to the Initial Report.

286. According to the data published by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, average age in the Republic of Serbia during marriage contraction was 28.83 years of age for bride in 2008 and 32.57 years of age for bridegroom.

287. The Family Law does not recognize the institution of engagement. An engagement is the institute of customary law of various groups of citizens living in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, so the customs related to the institute of engagement are also different. The institute of engagement is not prescribed by the positive regulations of the Republic of Serbia.

288. Marriage is null and void if contracted by two persons of the same sex, if the statements of spouses are not affirmative or if a marriage is not contracted before the registrar (Article 31).

289. In respect of property relations, the Family law introduces for the first time (without taking into account the solutions from the laws of the pre-war Yugoslavia prescribing the institution of dower on the occasion of marriage contraction) the institute of marital contract.

290. Family property relations are governed by law but they may also be governed in an agreement pursuant to this Law (Article 9). The property of spouses may be common and separate. Spouses may settle their property relations on the grounds of marital contract (Article 29) according to the conditions stipulated by law. The Family Law prescribes that the spouses may also define their property relations concerning the existing or future property differently if they conclude a marital contract (Article 29). Marital contract must be concluded in writing and certified by a judge (Article 188). The practice does not show that many spouses decided to conclude marital contracts. In case of some groups of citizens living in the territory of the Republic of Serbia (Roma, Vlachs), according to customary law, a bride is bought, namely a bride brings dower into marriage although there are no data to mention this phenomenon in some concrete way.

291. In Part 3 under the title of Family Relations, the Law on Gender Equality prescribes that everyone is equal in respect of family life, regardless of family and marital status

(Article 26). Marriage and common-law marriage are equal, spouses and common-law partners are equal, in accordance with this Law (Article 27).

292. In respect of inheritance, there have been no amendments of the legal solutions in relation to the initial report.

Domestic violence

Follow-up with regard to the concluding comments of the Committee, paragraphs 14 and 21–24

293. According to the Law on Gender Equality gender-based violence means behaviour imperilling bodily integrity, mental health or peacefulness or causing material damage to a person as well as serious threat because of such behaviour preventing or limiting some person to enjoy rights and freedoms based on the principle of gender equality (Article 10 paragraph 5).

294. All family members have equal right to protection against domestic violence. Special measures and programmes intended for the victims of domestic violence are not considered discrimination because they ensure social, legal and other support and compensation aimed at protection against domestic violence and elimination and mitigation of violence consequences, placement of victims of violence to prevent violence and accomplish the victims' right to life without violence (safe houses, etc.) and sanction the offenders of violence to stop it. The public power bodies are obliged to plan, organize, implement and finance measures intended to raise awareness of the public about the need to prevent domestic violence (Article 29).

295. The Criminal Code introduced amendments (concerning criminal acts against sexual freedom), which relate to criminal act of rape and consist of the fact that the offender of this criminal act may be both a man and a woman. The actions previously included in the criminal act of gross indecency are treated as criminal act of rape (another act equalized with rape).

296. The Republic of Serbia proceeded with the establishment of systemic grounds to treat violence against women. Also introduced by the Family Law are protection measures against domestic violence, primarily meaning measures to issue orders for vacation of family flat or house, regardless of the right of property over the real estate (Article 198, paragraph 2). The statistical data show that in the majority of cases of domestic violence the offender remains in the family flat or house, even if he/she does not hold the property right or the right to use the property concerned. An analysis of the court cases related to domestic violence in Belgrade for the period from 2006 to 2008 shows that prohibition of further harassment had been ordered in 43 % of cases and in 22% of cases access to the victim had been prohibited while vacation had been ordered in 18% of cases.

297. In lawsuits for the protection against domestic violence, the rules of special civil proceedings are applied, the course of which is defined in Part 10 of the Family Law regarding the family relations proceedings (Articles 283–289).

298. The Ministry of Justice has an important role in respect of training in judiciary and lawyers in general, since professional training of such employees is one of the activities within the scope of competences of the Ministry of Justice.

299. Until December 2009 this training was conducted by the Judicial Centre for training and professional advancement of judges and prosecutors. The Ministry of Justice and the Serbian Association of Judges established this institution in 2001, with the aim to ensure continuing and quality education in judiciary and improve efficiency of the activities of the courts, in the greatest interest of legal certainty of citizens.

300. The Judicial Training Centre has organized a series of trainings aimed at the improvement and advancement of knowledge of employees of the state bodies in order to administer legal regulations more efficiently. The Family Law introduced compulsory specialization of judges acting in cases concerning the rights of the child (Article 204), and the specialization programme is prescribed in the Rules on programmes and methods of gaining special knowledge by judges acting in family cases in the field of the rights of the child. The Rules prescribe that the Judicial Training Centre is obliged to carry out and organize the training for relevant certificates (Article 10). This programme includes specific training in the field of the rights of the child, legal consequences of marriage dissolution and common-law marriage, child's opinion and domestic violence. The seminars last for 5 working days while the six day is foreseen for testing. Since the Family Law entered into force in July 2006, the Judicial Training Centre organized 18 seminars until April 2009, which were attended by 525 judges from all courts who received the relevant certificates as well as 45 one-day seminars on the subject of the Family Law – the Principles, which were attended by 735 judges.

301. The Law on Judicial Academy⁵⁷ was adopted in December 2009. The Judiciary Reform Strategy, which is in progress, prescribes that the Judicial Training Centre would be transformed into an institution for training in judiciary and that the initial and permanent training of judges, public prosecutors, deputies of public prosecutors, judicial and prosecution assistants and apprentices would be organized in a comprehensive way, as well as the training of employees in judicial and prosecution administration. The aim of establishment of the Academy is to contribute to professional, independent, impartial and efficient performance of judge and prosecution duties and to expert and efficient performance of jobs of judicial and prosecution staff. As from the date of this Law entering into force, the jobs of the Judicial Training Centre shall be performed by the Academy.

302. Within the period from June 2006 to April 2009, within the Civil and Criminal Law Sector, the Ministry of Justice organized 74 one-day seminars on the subject of Domestic Violence – Civil Legal and Criminal Legal Aspects of Enforcement in Family Matters, which were attended by 987 judges and public prosecutors and their deputies.

303. The preparation of the training programme for public prosecutors and deputy public prosecutors on how to treat the victims of domestic violence. This programme is aimed at the introduction of the continuing training of public prosecutors and their deputies on how to adequately treat the victims of domestic violence. As the result of this training, the efficiency, responsibility and transparency of work of public prosecutors would be strengthened and the capacity of actions improved. This programme takes into account the importance of multidisciplinary cooperation in the combat against domestic violence, primarily between prosecutors and judges, but also psychologists, social workers, doctors and other persons involved in the protection process, in order to understand this harmful phenomenon comprehensively and from all aspects in each concrete case. It is necessary to coordinate the actions and cooperation of all persons involved, i.e. of judiciary bodies, health bodies and institutions, education and employment. This training shall also include case-study, in order to inform the participants about the successful examples of the combat against domestic violence and assistance rendering to the victims, about the measures and activities undertaken with the aim to suppress domestic violence, about experiences of prosecutors and their deputies who had already dealt with the cases of domestic violence. The programmes shall also include the issues such as rape in marriage, planning of victims' safety, application of protective measures, such as prohibition of access to another person, risk assessment, guarantees of efficient intervention, i.e. the shortest possible proceedings,

⁵⁷ The Official Gazette of RS, no. 104/09.

legal aid rendering to victims, protection of witnesses, police and public prosecution powers to prosecute the offenders in the capacity of office.

304. In cooperation with the Provincial Ombudsman, the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality prepared the Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence in AP of Vojvodina 2008–2012, which was adopted by the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina on 23 September 2008. The Strategy also defines the measures for prevention of violence, which are grouped in five separate fields:

(a) General legal and political measures including the implementation of policy based on the principles of non-discrimination, respect and protection of human rights; measures related to data collection, analyses and researches, as well as keeping of statistics, records and documentation;

(b) Preventive measures related to public awareness raising; social-economic measures and development of local action plans;

(c) Education implying the implementation of training courses within the framework of formal education of professionals; training programmes within professional advancement and introduction of educational programmes in regular education of children and youth;

(d) Support and protective measures related to advancement of access to justice, legal aid and victim protection; improvement of access to health, psychological and social services and improvement of access to specialized services; improvement of cooperation between the institutions and organizations and development of rehabilitation programmes for aggressors, as well as establishment of assistance to professionals;

(e) Monitoring, assessment of effects and revision based on monitoring of laws, programmes and measures, as well as on monitoring of implementation, assessment of effects and the revision of the Strategy.

305. Preparations to implement this Strategy were made in the course of 2008 and the implementation of measures started in January 2009. The measures contained in the Strategy plan to include all municipalities (45) in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina within the period from 2009 to 2011. The implementation of the measures concerned implies the increase of capacities of female and male professionals employed with social welfare centres, police, health services, education, prosecution and courts, as well as of the female and male representatives of non-governmental organizations and organizations representing vulnerable population groups, in order to secure better prevention and protection of women who are victims of violence, especially of women from vulnerable groups. The implementation of this measure started in February 2009 and the training of professionals in 12 municipalities was carried out. Special activities are carried out in order to ensure accessible, efficient and effective system of prevention and protection against violence through establishment of coordinated operations of the institutions and organizations at the local level. In order to secure better access to assistance and protection, special activities to improve access to justice and legal assistance for victims are carried out in the form of expert meetings and education of criminal and civil law judges, as well as of prosecutors and lawyers at social welfare centres. Aimed at achievement of this objective, there are also activities to strengthen the existing and develop new capacities of specialized services of anonymous and/or free assistance through training of medical workers on early detection of violence signs further support and assistance procedures, establishment of advisory – therapy work with the victims of violence, as well as of free legal aid at social welfare centres.

306. The Executive Council of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina allocated the funds for the construction of safe houses for women in the territory of AP of Vojvodina. So far the funds have been provided for the construction of safe houses for women in the territories of the municipalities of Zrenjanin, Sombor, Pančevo, together with the existing safe houses in Novi Sad and Subotica.

307. The Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality has been collecting the data on the size and consequences of domestic violence, as well as about the quality and accessibility of specialized services, with the aim to establish systemic and regular data collection, whereas a special working group has been working on the development of methodology and software to keep universal and standardized records of reported cases of violence, fully respecting the provisions on protection of personal data and with participation of all relevant institutions and organizations. In order to secure the application of the methodology, the Provincial Secretariat shall provide technical support and training. The application of this methodology should contribute to the establishment of regular monitoring of the number of registered cases of violence and good quality services.

308. With the aim to improve information and public awareness of consequences and inadmissibility of gender-based violence and domestic violence, as well as about available types of assistance and services and organizations rendering assistance and support to women who are victims of violence, each year the Provincial Secretariat of Labour, Employment and Gender Equality provides printed matter, intended for women who are victims of violence, on the rights of victims, signs of violence, protection procedures and proceedings, and on types of assistance and possibilities of protection against violence. Since 2009 the information printed matter has also been available in the languages of the national minorities living in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

309. In order to raise public awareness of inadmissibility of violent behaviour and violence against women, special cooperation has been achieved with the members of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and the media, which had attended the training on violence against women and which had been included in the public awareness raising campaigns. It has been planned that the public would be also informed through media campaigns about violence against women and protection against violence.

310. Sexual abuse and all forms of violence are often manifested in the form of long-term sexual abuse, which is in a large number of cases directed to mothers by fathers. There are frequent cases of sexual abuse within a family by fathers-in-law or close relative (uncles) or by persons in the immediate vicinity towards mothers or children. In a certain number of cases such type of abuse is not reported, mostly because of fear of physical ill-treatment, fear of economic uncertainty or fear of losing children or because of complaints and rejection by the community.

311. Criminal acts in the field of sexual wrongful acts committed by unknown offenders had been mostly committed in open, on which occasion the offender used places insufficiently lighted, near parks, passages, isolated bus stops and where there are no passers-by under the threat of direct attack to life or body, the vulnerable person is approached with a pistol, knife or other article, and rape is committed. The offenders of the above mentioned criminal acts frequently come from poor social classes and have no permanent employment or residence. There is a considerable number of offenders coming from crime-present surroundings, as well as the number of those socially acceptable. In the majority of cases they stress their wealth, so by inviting for a drive in an expensive car or by false promises, etc. they take the opportunity to rape the victim.

312. In their activities related to clearing up of criminal acts in the field of sexual wrongful acts, the members of the Ministry of Interior cooperate with medical institutions, social welfare centres and non-governmental organizations with the aim to provide

necessary medical aid to victims and aid to restore normal functioning and overcome traumatic experience through consultations, support, psycho-therapeutic treatments, medical and legal aid or placing the victim in safe houses.

313. It has been planned to prepare the National Strategy for the Combat against Gender-Based Violence and the project of Combat against Sex-Based and Gender-Based Violence⁵⁸ has also been started. It is foreseen that this project will be implemented within the period of three years and it will be financed by the Government of Norway. The objective of this project is capacity strengthening of the Gender Equality Directorate within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for the development and introduction of system solutions in the field of sex-based and gender-based violence, capacity strengthening of the institutions dealing with protection of victims against violence, establishment and application of mechanisms to ensure activities in accordance with the international standards related to human rights. This Project is aimed at strengthening the legislative framework in the field of protection of victims of violence, development of standard procedures and protocols on actions by the relevant institutions, development of coherent system for the collection of data about sex-based and gender-based violence and awareness raising of the public and female and male citizens about inadmissibility of violence as a model of behaviour in order to contribute to the creation of social environment to have a preventive function.

314. Since July 2009 the following activities have been performed under the Project of Sex-Based and Gender-Based Violence:

(a) Questionnaires have been prepared and sent to social welfare centres in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, in order to map the existing services rendered by the centres concerned to victims of violence. The filled-in questionnaires had been returned and they are being processed at present;

(b) Co-operation with women's non-governmental organizations dealing with the issues of sex-based and gender-based violence and relevant state institutions dealing with this issue has been established;

(c) Female and male consultants have been engaged to research the best practices of rehabilitation programmes for the offenders and prepare action strategies for treatment of offenders of sex-based and gender-based violence; for mapping of the existing services rendered by the social welfare centres to the victims of sex-based and gender-based violence; for creating of curricula and performance of training courses for female and male instructors at three institutions: the Judicial Training Centre of the Republic of Serbia, the Police Academy the Human Resources Agency of the Republic of Serbia; for development of uniform procedure and form for collection of data about sex-based and gender-based violence among the relevant parties; for development of Action Protocols in case of violence at the relevant institutions; for comparative analysis of strategies and creation of the draft of the National Strategy and for the production of the white book containing proposals for amendments of the existing legislation in the field of domestic violence; for adoption of by-laws and protocols to govern the actions of the police, the social welfare centres, the providers of health care and other relevant factors in cases of sex-based and gender-based domestic violence;

(d) The tender has been issued to grant funds to all legal entities being stakeholders at the local level such as social welfare centres, health centres, educational institutions, police, courts, prosecution offices, civil society organizations, women's groups,

⁵⁸ The Conclusion of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, no. 018-5539/2008 of 11 December 2008.

media and other dealing with the issues of sex-based and gender-based violence and the tender to grant funds for researches in this field;

(e) The questionnaire of the Council of Europe on violence against women has been filled in;

(f) The project team has participated at the conferences related to sex-based and gender-based violence in the country and abroad, presenting the Project of Sex-Based and Gender-Based Violence and the Gender Equality Directorate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;

(g) On 25 November 2009, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the campaign of 16 Days of Activities to Combat Violence against Women, which included 18 round tables in 17 towns all over Serbia (Majdanpek, Lebane, Prokuplje, Niš, Ivanjica, Kruševac, Novi Pazar, Kikinda, Negotin, Jagodina, Kragujevac, Pirot, Vrbas, Senta, Kovačica, Pančevo, Pećinci) and the final round table in Belgrade on 11 December 2009 with the aim to link and improve the cooperation of local institutions and organizations rendering protection and assistance to victims of violence, promotion of gender equality and the status of women. Several presentations of this Project were held for all relevant female and male associates in this Project (state institutions, civil society organizations, professional public, media).

315. According to the data of the Ministry of Interior for the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009, which relate to the committed criminal acts with the elements of sexual abuse and violence, certain criminal acts against sexual freedom and criminal acts against marriage and family have been separated:

<i>Criminal offence</i>	<i>1 January–31 December 2008</i>	<i>1 January–31 December 2009</i>
Rape	160	139
Rape against helpless person	22	20
Rape against child	63	83
Prohibited sexual acts	115	120
Domestic violence	2 980	3 396

316. The Ministry of Health has prepared *the Protocol Intended to Medical Workers on How to Treat and Protect Women Exposed to Violence*. The researched conducted in our country so far showed that medical workers have no official instructions and protocols on how to treat women who had been the victims of violence and how to organize and coordinate social actions to render adequate assistance. This Protocol has been prepared because of these recognized needs and it is intended to medical workers at all levels of health care. It defines procedures and precise roles of medical workers related to prevention and treatment of violence against women.