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**NATIONAL-LEVEL REVIEW OF THE
PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND
PLATFORM FOR ACTION +25**

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Government of the Republic of Serbia

All the terms in the text which denote professions or occupations expressed in the grammatical male gender include natural male and female gender of the persons concerned.

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SECTION ONE: PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES

The most important achievements

1. What have been the most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years?

During the reporting period, **significant achievements** were made **in achieving gender equality**: a. the normative and strategic framework have been improved, b. institutional mechanisms for gender equality have been established at all levels, c. the institutional response to violence against women has been strengthened, d. the legal obligation of gender-responsive budgeting has been established, d. the Gender Equality Index has been introduced, f. gender statistics have been improved, i.e. the share of women in decision-making positions has increased.

a. Improved normative and strategic framework

The normative and strategic framework has been improved **in the field of gender equality and the prohibition of gender and other discrimination**. Gender equality and prohibition of discrimination based on sex/gender and other personal characteristics is firmly grounded in the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia¹, the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination² and the Gender Equality Law³. the Gender Equality Law stipulates that gender equality means “equal participation of women and men in all spheres of the public and the private sector, in accordance with the generally accepted rules of international law, ratified international treaties and the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia”, and that all are obliged to respect it⁴. The new laws that were passed during the reporting period incorporated anti-discrimination clauses, which is further reinforced by the prohibition of gender and other discrimination. The work on the new Gender Equality Law, which is adopted in order to further improve the legal framework for gender equality and ensure effective implementation of gender equality through special measures in various fields is at its final stage.

The second National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 has been adopted, **which established, for the first time, a comprehensive strategic framework for the systematic introduction of the principle of gender equality in all public policies**. Gender equality has become “part of the planning, drafting and implementing public policies, laws, programmes and measures; needs, priorities and

1 (“RS Official Gazette No”, No. 98/2006 Art. 15 and 21)

2 (“RS Official Gazette No”, No. 22/2009)

3 (“RS Official Gazette No”, No. 104/2009) In addition to these laws, electoral laws are also an important part of the framework which provide for a 30% quota system for the less represented gender for the parliamentary, provincial and local elections, such as, for example, the national-level Law on Election of MPs (“RS Official Gazette” No. 35/2000, 57/2003 - decision of RSCC, 72/2003 – as amended, 75/2003 - corr. as amended, 18/2004, 101/2005 – as amended, 85 / 2005 - as amended, 28/2011 – CC decision, 36/2011 and 104/2009 – as amended, Criminal Code “RS Official Gazette”, No. 85/2005, 88/2005 - corr., 107/2005 - corr., 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014 and 94/2016, which penalizes family violence and rape in marriage and defines human trafficking as organized crime, and the Family Law “RS Official Gazette”, No. 18/2005, 72/2011 – as amended and 6/2015, which regulates the relations between the partners and protects children’s rights, introduces special measures against violence and improves forced adoption, as well as in divorce procedures.

4 Gender Equality Law, Article 2, “RS Official Gazette”, No. 104/2009

the specific position of men and women, including vulnerable groups, are being systematically included in the public policies and their effects on the situation of women and men are being actively considered in all stages of planning, drafting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and at all levels, with equal participation of women and men in these processes⁵. The Strategy establishes three strategic objectives: a. changed gender patterns and improved gender equality culture; b. increased equality between women and men, through the implementation of equal opportunities policies and measures; and c. systematic gender mainstreaming in developing, implementing and monitoring public policies. In defining strategic priorities, account was taken of the obligations arising from ratified international treaties, and also of the other strategies in order for the gender perspective to be mainstreamed into all areas of society as consistently as possible. After the implementation of the first National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of the Strategy for the period 2016-2018⁶ its independent evaluation was carried out,⁷ which enabled us to identify priorities for the second NAP for the implementation of the Strategy. The development of the new NAP is at its final stage and its duration has a time-constraint linked to the expiry of the validity period of the current national strategy for gender equality.

A comprehensive **anti-discrimination legal framework** was developed during the last decade. Strategy for the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for the period from 2014 to 2018 has been adopted and implemented and six reports on monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan have been developed. The Council for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy was established by the Government in 2015 with the task to timely warn about the challenges in the implementation of measures. Discrimination is prohibited by the Republic of Serbia Constitution, stipulating in Article 21 that everybody is equal before the Constitution and the Law and everyone has the right to equal legal protection, without discrimination, that any discrimination is prohibited, indirect or direct, on any grounds and particularly on the grounds of race, sex, nationality, social origin, birth, religion, political or other opinion, property status, culture, language, age, mental or physical disability. In addition, the Constitution stipulates that special measures which the Republic of Serbia may introduce to achieve full equality of individuals or groups of individuals in a substantially unequal position compared to other citizens is not to be deemed discrimination. The Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination⁸, which is the basic and general law in this area, stipulates general prohibition of discrimination on the basis of any personal characteristics, including multiple discrimination. Special anti-discrimination laws also contribute to the achievement of equality, such as the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities⁹, Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities¹⁰ and the Gender Equality Law¹¹. Anti-discrimination provisions are also included in many laws regulating specific areas of social relations: Labour Law¹², Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with

5 The National Strategy for Gender Equality for the period from 2016 to 2020, p. 4

6 <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/lat/dokumenti/nacionalna-strategija-za-rodnu-ravnopravnost-za-period-od-2016-do-2020-godine-sa-akcionim>

7 <http://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/04/evaluation-of-the-national-action-plan-for-the-implementation-of-the-serbia-national-strategy-for-ge>

8 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 22/2009)

9 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 11/2002, "RS Official Gazette", No. 1/2003 - Constitutional Charter and "RS Official Gazette", No. 72/2009 - as amended, 97/2013 - CC decision and 47/2018)

10 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 33/2006 and 13/2016)

11 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 104/2009)

12 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 24/05, 61/05, 54/09, 32/13, 75/14, 13/17 - CC decision, 113/2017 and 95/2018- authentic interpretation)

Disabilities¹³, Law on Health Care¹⁴, Law on Foundations of the Education System¹⁵, Law on Primary Education¹⁶, Law on Secondary Education¹⁷, Law on Churches and Religious Communities¹⁸, Law on Patients' Rights¹⁹, Law on Protection of Persons with Mental Disorders²⁰, Law on Movement with Guide Dogs²¹, Law on the Use of Sign Language²² and other laws.

In the future, based on lessons learned and evaluation of the effects of implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality for the period 2016-2020, it is necessary to timely prepare the third National Strategy for Gender Equality, with full participation and cooperation of public authorities and civil society organizations. It is particularly important to ensure continued monitoring of the implementation of adopted documents, measure, control and report on the results achieved. One of the key tasks and challenges is gender mainstreaming of all public policies and improve the gender equality culture. Creating conditions for effective access to justice for victims of gender and other discrimination and improving efficiency in the provision of judicial protection of the right to non-discrimination are of particular importance here.

b. Established institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels

During the past decade²³ the Republic of Serbia made **progress in establishing mechanisms for gender equality at all levels**. Institutional mechanisms are key support in gender mainstreaming of public policies and implementing the equal opportunities policy. Today, Serbia has national, provincial and local gender-equality mechanisms.

The **Committee on Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality** acts at the national legislative level. It considers, among other things, draft laws and other general acts from the gender perspective and examines the situation in the implementation of gender equality policies. Since February 2013, the Women's Parliamentary Network²⁴, has been active in the National Assembly as an informal form of joint action of MPs from all parliamentary groups.

Within the executive branch, the Government's decision in 2014 established **the Coordination Body for Gender Equality**.²⁵ Heading this authority is Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure. Raising this authority to a significantly higher level compared to the previous institutional solution²⁶ is an expression of the understanding of inter-sectoral nature of gender equality, respect for the need for greater horizontal and vertical coordination and political commitment of the Government to incorporate gender agenda in

13 ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 36/09 and 32/13)

14 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 107/2005, 72/2009 - as amended, 88/2010, 99/2010, 57/2011, 119/2012, 45/2013 - as amended 93/2014, 96/2015, 106/2015, 113/2017 - as amended and 105/2017 - as amended), Article 11

15 ("RS Official Gazette" No 88/2017, 27/18 (I) – as amended and 27/18 (II) – as amended)

16 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 55/13, 101/17 and 27/18 – st- law)

17 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 55/13, 101/17 and 27/18- st- law)

18 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 36/06)

19 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 45/13)

20 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 45/13)

21 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 29/15)

22 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 38/15)

23 In Serbia, the first institutional mechanisms were established in 2003 at the local, and in 2004 at the provincial and then at the national level. The adoption of the Gender Equality Law in 2009 legally regulated their establishment within the local governments.

24 <https://zpmrsrbija.wordpress.com/>

25 The Government Decision on the establishment of the Gender Equality Coordination Centre, 05 No. 02-13613 / 2014-01 dated 30 October 2014.

26 Until 2014, the national institutional mechanism was under the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs Directorate

its priorities. The Coordination Body for Gender Equality coordinates the work of the public administration in implementing gender equality policy and considers all issues of relevance to its enforcement²⁷. The work of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality had a positive effect on the promotion of gender equality in Serbia. This is confirmed by the findings of the first evaluation of the NAP for the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality, but also by the progress achieved in this area and registered in the Gender Equality Index for Serbia for 2018.

The main horizontal mechanism for gender mainstreaming and coordinating the gender equality policies in cooperation with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, is a **network of focal persons for gender equality in all line ministries and key institutions**. Also, all budget beneficiaries have set up teams for gender-responsive budgeting. Within the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs department, the **Sector for Anti-Discrimination Policy and Improvement of Gender Equality**²⁸ was set up which is, among other things, responsible for monitoring and proposing measures in the area of improving gender equality and non-discrimination.

The Committee on Gender Equality of the Parliament of Vojvodina operates at the level of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (APV), whereas the **Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality**²⁹ is responsible within the executive government branch and is responsible for implementing the Decision on Gender Equality of AP Vojvodina.³⁰ In addition, it is important to mention the operation of an **Institute for Gender Equality** - an expert body charged with promoting the concept of gender equality and making recommendations for gender mainstreaming of all policies, measures, actions and programmes of the AP Vojvodina Government.

At the local level, in accordance with the legal obligation to set up a standing working body or appoint a focal point for gender equality and the performance of tasks of achieving equal opportunities, over **100 bodies have been set up in the local government units**. These bodies should contribute to the implementation of policies and measures of equal opportunities, ensuring the participation of women in decision-making and the implementation of measures to contribute to the achievement of the goals in this area defined at the national level, to keep gender-sensitive statistics, but also to respond to the needs and priorities of the local community. They assist the local governments to, ensure gender equality and equal opportunities within their jurisdiction.³¹

Independent bodies for the protection of human rights at the national level deal with the promotion of gender equality: the Ombudsman, whose one of three deputies is in charge of children's rights and gender equality and the Commissioner for Equality. These authorities promote and advance human rights and the principle of equality and act on complaints about human rights violations and discrimination. At the level of AP Vojvodina, there is the Provincial Ombudsman, one of whose

27 <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/koordinaciono-telo-za-rodnu-ravnopravnost>

28 <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr/struktura/sektori/sektor-za-antidiskriminacionu-politiku-i-unapredjenje-rodne-ravnopravnosti>

29 <http://www.vojvodina.gov.rs/sr>

30 "AP Vojvodina Official Gazette", No. 14/2004 and 18/2009

31 Gender Equality Law, Article 2, Paragraph 3 and Article 39 Art. 1 and 2

deputies is solely responsible for the area of gender equality. Local ombudsmen act in the local governments, who engage in the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Women Entrepreneurship Section has been established in the Serbian Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneurship Department in order to support women entrepreneurs. The main activities are focused on the networking of women entrepreneurs, improving their skills for better business, etc.

In the future, it is necessary to improve efficiency of the vertical and horizontal coordination between institutional mechanisms at the national level, as well as national and local mechanisms in the implementation of the policy of gender equality and empowerment of women and ensure their sustainability. One of the priorities is the establishment of a broader partnership between various stakeholders, donors, institutions and NGOs in order to make use of all available resources.

c. Strengthened institutional response to violence against women

Marked progress has been made in establishing the response to violence against women. Thanks to this, awareness has been raised not only among professionals in the institutions of the system, but also the general public about violence against women, which is being increasingly recognized as a dangerous and harmful social phenomenon.

The priority in the field of combating violence against women was domestic and intimate partner violence against women. The Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence³² has been adopted regulating the coordinated action of state authorities when there is a risk that violence will be committed or repeated. Urgent protection measures have been introduced³³ and the provision of assistance and support to survivors has been stipulated. The law establishes **multi-sectoral cooperation between the national authorities in the planning of individual assistance and support to victims within coordination and cooperation groups which have been established in every basic public prosecutor's office.**

The Ministry of Interior, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and Women's Parliamentary Network, and with UN Women support, has since 2019 been implementing the project "Improved Safety for Women in Serbia". The said project provides for investments in building operational and institutional capacities of the Ministry of Interior and other stakeholders relevant for working on the protection of women from violence. The project plans for introducing and implementing new protection measures – system of bracelets for victims and perpetrators of violence.

The Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code³⁴ has been adopted introducing new offences whose survivors are mostly women - forced marriage, sexual harassment, stalking and genital mutilation, thus harmonising the normative framework with the standards of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), which Serbia ratified as one of the first ten countries.

Providing assistance and support to survivors of violence through the development of services adapted to the needs of women has been strengthened. A network of shelters for survivors of

32 Entered into force on 1 June 2017

33 48-hour emergency measures may be imposed by the police, while the court may extend it by 30 days at the prosecution's motion.

34 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 85/2005, 88/2005 - corr., 107/2005 - corr., 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014 and 94/2016)

domestic violence, as well as a shelter for victims of human trafficking have been established. In AP Vojvodina, through project support,³⁵ seven pilot centres for victims of sexual violence have been established.

For more on the results achieved in the area of prevention and protection from violence against women and the challenges in this area, please see the section on policies in the area of freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes.

In the future, it is necessary to establish operational, complete and unified records and harmonized methodology for data collection on violence against women and domestic violence, provided by the adopted Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, with the aim to efficiently monitor violence against women, its processing and the provision of assistance and support to victims. It is also important to support research on violence, which is mainly implemented by civil society organizations. Also, the services of support and assistance for victims of violence should be further developed and supported, including psychosocial assistance and support, free legal aid, special services for victims of sexual violence, and programmes for perpetrators.

d. Established legal obligation of gender responsive budgeting

The Republic of Serbia is one of the few countries in the world that have incorporated the obligation to strengthen gender equality into the reform of the public finance management through the Budget System Law³⁶, relying on the gradual introduction of gender responsive budgeting (GRB). "Gender Responsive Budgeting is the introduction of the principle of gender equality into the budget process, including gender budget analysis and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to improve gender equality".³⁷ All budget beneficiaries at all levels of government, in accordance with this law, are obliged to contribute to the achievement of the four objectives of the budget, one of which is "allocative efficiency", which implies the allocation of the budget in order to improve gender equality³⁸. Gradual introduction of GRB in the budget for 2020 will cover 47³⁹ out of 53 direct budget beneficiaries at the national level and all 26 direct budget beneficiaries at the APV level. Local governments are also making slow progress in the gradual introduction of the GRB. The Annual Progress Report on the gradual introduction of gender responsive budgeting in the public financial management system in Serbia is available to all budget beneficiaries involved in the process, as well as the expert public as of 2019⁴⁰. By introducing GRB, institutional records and statistics have been improved⁴¹, sectoral gender analyses⁴² have been developed, examples of the transformative impact of GRB on gender equality have been collected and used in further

35 The "Stop, protect, help" project, which is funded by the United Nations Trust Fund to support the actions of eliminating violence against women (The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women-UN Trust Fund)

36 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 54/2009, 73/2010, 101/2010, 101/2011, 93/2012, 62/2013, 63/2013 - corr. 108/2013, 142/2014, 68/2015 - as amended 103/2015, 99/2016, 113/2017 and 95/2018)

37 Ibid, the definition of Article 2, 58v

38 Ibid, the budgetary targets, Article 4.

39 <http://www.mfin.gov.rs/pages/article.php?id=13643>

40 Expert public includes the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, academia, women's organizations and other civil society organizations working to promote gender equality.

41 In accordance with Article 40 of the Gender Equality Law

42 Sectoral gender analysis prepared by the following budget beneficiaries: Provincial Secretariat for Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Government (underway), Commissioner for Information of Public Importance, the Ministry of Environmental Protection

improvement of the GRB process and cooperation between the financing authorities at all levels and institutional gender equality mechanisms has been strengthened.

In the future, activities on the introduction of GRB should be intensified, especially at the level of local governments, where the process is lagging the most, capacities, knowledge and cooperation on introducing GRB further improved, exchange, promote and popularize good practice examples and facilitate the monitoring and reporting system by using existing software, systemic solutions.

e. Introduced Gender Equality Index

The Republic of Serbia is the first country outside the European Union to introduce the **Gender Equality Index, an EU-measuring instrument for monitoring gender equality** in six domains - work, money, knowledge, time, power and health⁴³, which was originally developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality for the 28 EU member states. The first report on the Gender Equality Index in the Republic of Serbia was published in 2016, with data for 2014, and the second one in 2018 with data for 2016. **In less than three years, considerable progress was made on the Gender Equality Index by 3.4 points.**

This increase is mainly due to the increased value of the index in the area of power, which recorded the highest increase and where Serbia is ranked 16th among EU Member States, but also due to a moderate or slight increase in the index value in the areas of work, money, knowledge and health. The index has not recorded changes only in the domain of time, because the same data were used for both periods, as there was no follow-up survey. It is significant that no negative changes have been recorded in any areas. In the last measurement, Serbia ranked 22nd compared to EU Member States. The index has allowed the recording of areas with positive trends, but also those which require more effort, primarily the area of work. Also, it is planned that the Gender Equality Index will become an annual thematically focused measurement, which will enable the Republic of Serbia to focus on important areas, such as the establishment of a balance between professional and private life, in which the EU itself is looking for answers.

f. Improved gender statistics

During the reporting period, **gender statistics have improved and diverse gender-sensitive data are available**, which contributes to a better understanding of the needs and the impact of policies on different groups of women and men. Since 2005, an updated national publication entitled "Women and Men in Serbia" issued by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) is published once in three years. Since it was first published, the "Women and Men in Serbia" publication has been included in the regular SORS plans and programmes, whereas special statistical data processing, translation, editing and design of the publication have occasionally been funded by projects.

Since 2010, SORS has a special Gender Statistics Group which prepares this publication. The publication includes gender-disaggregated data on population, health, social welfare, education and science, employment, wages and pensions, living standards, time use, the judiciary, and decision-making. The SORS monitors data for most indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. SORS, as the institution responsible for official statistics in the Republic of Serbia, is

⁴³ The Gender Equality Index in the Republic of Serbia, the measurement of gender equality in the Republic of Serbia in 2016, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia

responsible to provide data, as well as to coordinate measuring, monitoring and providing data for SDG indicators.⁴⁴

Data on the political participation of women, including women in elected and appointed positions in institutions have been collected and analysed.⁴⁵

Each year, the Republic of Serbia updates and adopts the Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia which contains an overview of statistics on all categories of migrants, disaggregated by sex, age, citizenship, etc. all in line with Regulation 862/2007 of the European Parliament and Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection. This entire process is led by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration.

The availability of gender-sensitive data provides the basis for the development of public policies relevant to gender equality and contributes to the development of awareness on the position of women in various fields and to increasing the public awareness of the gender equality issues. Also, thanks to the gender-responsive budgeting and programme budgeting, the situation in official records and institutional data has improved, which are now gender-disaggregated more than they used to be. Although the development of gender statistics records a positive trend, in many areas, such as justice, the data are still not gender-sensitive. It is necessary to continue work on the development of gender-sensitive records and statistics and ensure disaggregation of data on women from vulnerable groups, such as Roma women, women with disabilities, women in rural areas, etc.

g. Increased participation of women in decision-making positions.

There has been a **constant increase in the percentage of women in the National Assembly, the Assembly of the autonomous province and municipal and city assemblies**⁴⁶. Since 2017, the Government of the Republic of Serbia is for the first time headed by a woman. A woman is the head of the Professional Service of the Government, while there are 14 women among State Secretaries. In the judiciary, traditionally the majority of employees are women, but it is also important to note that the National Public Prosecutor and War Crimes Prosecutor are also women. Also, the National Bank of Serbia is managed by a woman Governor. Compared to 2014, when there were 34% of women in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia (or 2008 when there were 21.2% of women), in 2016, they made up 35.6% of the parliament makeup, and in 2019 37.2%.⁴⁷ According to data for 2018, 14.4% of women were presidents of the assembly in municipalities/cities. 23.5% of women were vice presidents of the municipal/city assemblies.

44 <http://data.stat.gov.rs/>

45 For example, a special report of the Commissioner for Protection of Equality on discrimination against women (2015) http://ravnopravnost-5bcf.kxcdn.com/wpcontent/uploads/2012/11/images_files_Poseban_izvestaj_o_diskriminaciji_zena_priprema_korigovana-1.pdf; The Gender Equality in Local Governments survey (2017) <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rodna-ravnopravnost-u-jedinicama-lokalne-samouprave-presek-stanja-u-sprovođenju-preporuke-mera-jedinicama-lokalne-samouprave-za-ostvarivanje-rodne-ravnopravnosti/>; A separate report of the Ombudsman, The representation of women in decision-making and activities of local gender equality mechanisms in local government units (2018) https://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/5901/Zastitnik%20gradjan_srpski.pdf; Women in Parliament - quotas or real influence? http://www.mc.rs/upload/documents/istrazivanje/2014/Zene_u_parlamentu_Samo_kvota_ili_stvarni_uticaj.pdf; The role of the AP Vojvodina in the creation and supervision of the implementation of the regulations in the field of gender equality- analysis <https://ravnopravnost.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Analiza-o-rodnoj-ravnopravnosti-u-Skupstini-APV-1.pdf>; Special Report of the Provincial Ombudsman (2015) The situation of women in the national councils of national minorities <https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/index.php/istrazivanje/1144-polozaj-zena-u-nacionalnim-savetima-nacionalnih-manjina-u-srbiji>; For example, Blagojević M. Hewson, Мушкарци у Србији – друга страна родне (не)равноправности (Men in Serbia - the other side of gender (in) equality) (2017) http://www.iksi.ac.rs/izdanja/muskarci_u_srbiji.pdf; Čičkarić L. Democratization of Serbia through increased participation of women in politics; (2017) <http://www.ips.ac.rs/publications/demokratizacija-srbije-putem-veceg-ucesca-zena-u-politici/>; For example, the Academy's surveys of women's leadership on institutional gender equality mechanisms in Vojvodina <https://liderke.org/en/vojvodina-liderka-rodne-ravnopravnosti/>; Novi Sad School of Journalism, Monitoring the Election of National Minorities councils <http://www.novinarska-skola.org.rs/sr/monitoring-izbora-clanova-saveta-nacionalnih-manjina-2018/> etc.

46 COR 5.5.1. a and 5.5.1. b

47 www.parlament.gov.rs, Official data as of 8 April 2019

In 2012, 28.6%⁴⁸ of women were councillors in local assemblies, in 2016, there were 31.2%⁴⁹, while currently there are 32.7% of them. 18.6% of women are presidents of the parliamentary caucuses. This is largely due to the introduction of quotas for the less represented sex⁵⁰ as a special measure, in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia. The Gender Equality Index documents the progress made by Serbia in the area of power⁵¹. Compared to the measurement in 2014, the result rose to 37.3 compared to 28, a 9.3 point increase, mainly due to the progress in the sub-domains of social and political power⁵².

By contrast to the participation of women in the legislative power, which records growth, the participation of women in the executive branch is not satisfactory. 7.9% of women execute the office of mayor/president of municipality and 18.5% of women are in the positions of deputy mayor/president of municipality. 11% of women are members of local community councils, while 5% of women are in the position of president of the local community. Also, there is still an insufficient number of women in management and supervision, in public as well as in private institutions and companies. In order to overcome this situation, the new draft Gender Equality Law provides the responsibility of public authorities and companies to take action when there is a noticeably unbalanced gender representation.

48 SORS, <http://data.stat.gov.rs/Home/Result/07030502?languageCode=sr-Cyrl&displayMode=table>

49 SORS, <http://data.stat.gov.rs/Home/Result/07030602?languageCode=sr-Cyrl&displayMode=table&guid=88c7e95a-5037-4984-a613-58e9e4fe6004>

50 The Law on the Election of Members of Parliament, Article 40a, "RS Official Gazette", No. 35/2000, 57/2003 - decision of RSCC, 72/2003 - as amended 75/2003 - corr. as amended, 18/2004, 101/2005 - as amended 85/2005 - a28/2011 - CC decision, 36/2011 and 104/2009 - as amended, Provincial Assembly Decision on Elections (2014), Article 27, Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, "AP Vojvodina Official Gazette", No. 23/2014, the Law on Local Elections (2011), Article 20, Paragraph 3, 4 and 5, "RS Official Gazette", No. 129/2007, 34/2010 - decision and 54/2011

51 It measures the gender gap in participation in the political, economic and social power structures. The subdomain which refers to political power includes indicators measuring the share of women among persons who execute the office of government minister (the participation of women in the executive branch), as well as the share of women among the National Assembly MPs (the participation of women in the legislative branch). In addition, this subdomain includes the indicator on the representation of women in positions of local assembly councillors. The subdomain on economic power refers to the gap in the management of economic resources through management positions and includes indicators of women's participation in management or supervisory boards of the largest companies on the stock exchange and participation in the National Bank's executive committee. The subdomain on social power includes indicators measuring the share of women and men on the boards of the organization for financing research, their share on the boards of public broadcasting companies and their share among the members of the highest decision-making body of the national Olympic sports organizations. Social power is included in the gender equality index because of its symbolic effect on society and access to power positions and structures in various areas.

52 According to the index value in the area of power, Serbia is ranked 15th among the 28 EU Member States, between two Baltic countries - Lithuania and Latvia. Looking only at the political power subdomain, Serbia ranks 12th, between Austria and the United Kingdom. Source: 2017 Gender Equality Index

Priorities over the past five years

2. Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programmes?

a. Equality and non-discrimination in law and access to justice

The implemented policies foreseen in the NAP for the implementation of the Strategy for Gender Equality were aimed at strengthening the capacity of the public administration and local self-government for the development and implementation of gender policies, non-discriminatory action, prevention and eradication of gender-based violence, increasing women's safety from domestic and intimate partner violence, developing improved support services and greater empowerment of women, improving the gender statistics, increasing public awareness about the issue of gender discrimination and the importance of gender equality.

Access to justice has been improved through the adoption of the Law on Free Legal Aid⁵³, Which, among other things, stipulates that survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence are entitled to free legal aid, regardless of their nationality and financial status. The implementation of this law will start on 1 October 2019. Increasing access to justice for women and girls survivors of violence and human trafficking has improved through the implementation of a number of specialized trainings for police officers, public prosecutors, judges, health professionals and teachers in the area of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence against women. In 2017, 813 police officers completed a five-day training on combating violence against women, and 888 police officers completed short trainings⁵⁴. In the 2017/2018 school year, trainings were held for 1741⁵⁵ teachers, research associates, day-care teachers and leaders in education on gender equality, violence and discrimination. Programmes in the area of protection of survivors of trafficking for police officers were introduced. The module entitled "Providing support, protection and assistance to survivors" was included in the elementary police curriculum, which aims at delivering knowledge and skills for monitoring the criminal offence of human trafficking and working with survivors of violence. In 2014-2016, 1018⁵⁶ police officers attended this module, while 15⁵⁷ police officers attended the specialized training course on human trafficking. Public prosecutors are also undergoing gender-sensitive training in the area of human trafficking⁵⁸.

53 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 87 dated 13 November 2018) this Act shall enter into force on 1 October 2019

54 Sex-disaggregated data are not available.

55 Ibid

56 Ibid

57 Ibid

58 These trainings are conducted by the Judicial Academy, in cooperation with the Astra and Atina NGOs.

b. Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls

Through amendments to several laws⁵⁹ in the area of education, conditions were created for improving access to education and for continuing education for girls and women from vulnerable groups through improved procedure⁶⁰ and application of affirmative measures⁶¹ in education. These measures include: facilitation of the procedures for enrolment in primary school and increasing the coverage of Roma girls and boys with primary education, affirmative measures for enrolment in secondary schools and increasing the coverage of secondary education, individual education plan, teaching assistants, teacher training, scholarships, loans, accommodation and meals (10% of capacities for girls and boys from vulnerable groups); affirmative action for enrolment of Roma in higher education⁶².

At the level of outcome results, it was proved that affirmative measures contribute to a higher share of Roma children in the education system. The increase in the number of Roma children enrolled in the preschool curriculum amounted to 273%⁶³ in the period from 2006 to 2016, 146% in the first grade and on average 10% per annum for the secondary school⁶⁴. The end result is that 10,173 students were enrolled from 2005/06 to 2018/19, of whom 55% girls. A total of 1,623 Roma students were enrolled from 2003/2004 until 2017/18 of whom 51% were Roma girls. 930 children, of whom 65% girls receive scholarships from the budget of the Republic of Serbia for Roma secondary school students. Mentoring support has been provided to secondary school students who receive scholarships. Finally, 225 Roma teaching assistants have been hired in kindergartens and primary schools, and the share of women is 53%.

Rulebook on the Detailed Criteria for the Recognition of Forms of Discrimination by an Employee, of a Child, Student or Third Party in an Educational Institution (2016)⁶⁵ and Rulebook on the Institutional Action in Cases of Suspected or Established Discriminatory Behaviour and Insulting the Reputation, Honour and Dignity⁶⁶ have been adopted regulating the acting of educational institutions in cases of gender and other discrimination, sexual harassment and other acts of insulting and violating the dignity of students.

Capacity building has been implemented for 60 mentors to work in the area of prevention of digital violence, gender-based violence - domestic and sexual violence as well as for 88 advisers to work on the SOS helpline for reporting violence in schools. The Ministry of Education has implemented the programme on gender awareness and prevention of violence in kindergartens and 50 primary and secondary schools which included 1,600 students and 100 teachers.

59 The Law on the Foundations of the Education System, "RS Official Gazette", No. 88/2017, 27/18 - state. Law and 10/19, Law on Preschool Education, "RS Official Gazette", No. 18/10, 101/17 and 113/17 - as amended 95/2018 - as amended 10/2019 and, Law on Primary Education "RS Official Gazette", No. 55/13, 101/17 and 27/18 - st. law and 10/2019, Law on Secondary Education, "RS Official Gazette", No. 55/2013, 101/2017 and 27 / 2018- as amended, Law on Dual Education, "RS Official Gazette", No. 101/2017, Law on Textbooks, "RS Official Gazette", No. 27/2018.

60 Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, input for the preparation of a comprehensive review, March 2019

61 Introduced in 2009. Source <http://sociojalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Analiza-primene-afirmativnih-mera-u-oblasti-obrazovanja-Roma-i-Romkinja-i-preporuke-za-unapredjenje-mera.pdf>. 12

62 The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction team, Analysis of the application of affirmative measures in the education of Roma and recommendations for policy improvement, June 2016

63 Sex-disaggregated data are not available, but in practice, there is an insistence on a minimum 50% enrolment of girls. Source Ministry of Education.

64 Ibid. 30

65 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 22/2016)

66 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 65/2018)

c. Eliminating violence against women and girls

Continuous activities on combating violence against women and domestic violence have been implemented in Serbia for more than 15 years. There is a clear awareness and a political and social consensus about the need to improve the social response to violence against women, in order for the eradication of violence and protection of women from violence to become more effective and the indicator of this commitment is the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

The period after the adoption of the Convention was marked by intensive work on improving the strategic and normative framework of protection against gender-based violence and its harmonization with the standards of the Convention, so that the violence against women and domestic violence are defined in accordance with the Convention in the new laws and strategic documents at all levels, from national to local.

The National Strategy for Gender Equality from 2016 to 2020 designates violence against women as a violation of women's human rights, and its structural nature is emphasized by the attitude that violence against women constitutes gender-based violence and discrimination against women, and that achieving the *de jure* and *de facto* equality between women and men is the key element in the prevention of violence against women.

The evaluation of the NAP for Gender Equality has shown that the best results have been achieved in strengthening institutional protection of women from gender-based violence⁶⁷.

After the adoption of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, the Government established a Council for Combating Domestic Violence,⁶⁸ which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Law and improving the coordination and effectiveness of prevention and protection from domestic violence and other acts of gender-based violence which the law stipulates.

Furthermore, Ministry of the Interior has also set up a Working group on combating domestic violence, dealing with all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. The Working group comprises representatives of the Police Directorate dealing with violence against women, as well as representatives of the UN Women Office in Serbia and the Women's Platform for the Development of Serbia.

The Intersectoral Committee for Coordination, Monitoring and Assessment of the Effects of the Programme for the Protection of Women from Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence and other Forms of Gender-Based Violence in Vojvodina (2015-2020) has been operating in the AP Vojvodina since 2015.

In the local self-governments, the implementation and assessment of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the Convention is monitored by the local gender-equality mechanisms.

The justice statistics indicate an increase in the number of criminal charges and convicted persons in the period from 2015 to 2017, while the share of persons with a suspended sentence,

67 SeConS Final Report of the Evaluation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia, January 2018

68 The decision on the establishment of the Council for Combating Domestic Violence, "RS Official Gazette", No. 69/2017

though still high, declined during the same period⁶⁹. It is expected that the implementation of the law will further contribute to this positive trend.

Table 1. Justice statistics indicate an increased number of criminal charges for domestic violence⁷⁰.

Indicator	2015	2016	2017
Number of criminal charges	5040	7244	7795
Number of convicted persons	1778	2065	2713
Number of suspended sentences	671%	63.0%	639%

Source: Statistical Office, *Statistics Justice*⁷¹

A detailed overview of achievements in this area is given in the “Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes” chapter.

d. Women’s entrepreneurship and women’s enterprises

The Strategy to Support the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Companies, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period from 2015 to 2020, with its Action Plan⁷², recognises women’s entrepreneurship as one of the six key areas of development. This document provides the development and promotion of the entrepreneurial spirit and encouraging women’s, youth and social entrepreneurship, through the achievement of specific objectives, namely: the improvement of statistical monitoring and research of women’s, youth and social entrepreneurship, as well as policies and instruments to support women’s, youth and social entrepreneurship.

In order to systematically monitor women’s entrepreneurship, the business registration forms now include the gender of the founder to be checked.

The measures to support the development and promotion of women’s innovative entrepreneurship⁷³ are implemented through a special programme of financial support to this type of women’s entrepreneurship, which was adopted by the Serbian Government.⁷⁴ The objective of this programme is the systematic improvement women’s innovative entrepreneurship through the promotion of women’s innovative entrepreneurship, direct support to the accomplishment of their entrepreneurial ideas and the development of entrepreneurial skills and capacities. In addition,

69 NAP highlights the following limitation in interpretation: “Bearing in mind that the indicators are not quantified, that the increase is not presented in percentages and that it is expected during the first two years of the NAP implementation, we cannot precisely say to what extent the result has been achieved.”

70 Source: the Final Report of the Evaluation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia, SeConS 2018

71 <http://www.stat.gov.rs/oblasti/pravosudje/>

72 Conclusion of the Government 05 No. 023-3281 / 2015-1 dated 26 March 2015

73 Cabinet of the Minister without portfolio responsible for innovation <https://inovacije.gov.rs/programi/programme-podrske-razvoju-i-promociji-zenskog-inovacionog-preduzetnistva/>

74 (“RS Official Gazette”, No. 113/17)

the National Employment Service regularly offers a one-off lump sum⁷⁵ for self-employment in the form of subsidies for opening a shop, a cooperative, or other entrepreneurial business, as well as for the establishment of a company if the founder is employed in it. Women have priority in the granting of these self-employment subsidies⁷⁶.

The drafting of the gender analysis of economic and financial support measures through programmes and policies of the Development Agency of Serbia⁷⁷ and regional development agencies, local economic development support measures and programmes to support the development of innovative entrepreneurship implemented by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality is underway. This analysis should provide a clear insight into the outcomes of previous investments and will help identify the gender gap, the closing of which will require future efforts.

e. Gender-responsive budgeting.

The Budget System Law stipulates the gradual introduction of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) in the planning, execution and reporting of the budget at all government levels starting from 2016 and no later than 2020. The table shows the rate of the GRB gradual introduction at the national level and at the level of the APV from the 2017 budget until the 2020 budget.

National level	2017	2018	2019	2020
	28	35	40	47
Provincial level	2017	2018	2019	2020
	10	14	18	26

So far, the support for the gradual introduction of GRB which consists of training and mentoring with the budget beneficiaries included more than 1,000 public administration and local civil servants. As of 2020, the GRB should be fully implemented and become an integral part of the regular budget cycle. The gradual implementation of these reforms in public finance management requires all budget beneficiaries at the national, provincial and local levels to make continued progress. The process of introducing and improving GRB is coordinated by the Ministry of Finance, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Provincial Secretariat of Finance and the Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality. The law stipulates that no later than 31 March of the current year, Minister of Finance, Provincial Secretary of Finance and the authority responsible for finance in the local governments in cooperation with institutional mechanisms for gender equality, adopt the Annual plan of gradual introduction of GRB, in which they shall determine which budget beneficiaries are obliged to start implementing the GRB in preparing the budget for the following year. The plan guides the budget beneficiaries in the method of application, which is further confirmed by the budget preparation instructions.

⁷⁵ For 2019, the amount of RSD 200,000.00 per beneficiary, the National Employment Action Plan for 2019, Government Conclusion 05 Number: 101-12696 / 2018 dated 27 December 2018, p. 20

⁷⁶ With young people under 30 years of age, redundant employees, Roma and persons with disabilities.

⁷⁷ <https://ras.gov.rs/>

Measures to prevent the discrimination of women and girls from multiply discriminated groups

3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination?

a. Women living in remote and rural areas

Improving the situation of women in rural areas is one of the priorities in the field of gender equality. The **National Programme for Rural Development for the period 2018-2020**⁷⁸ has been adopted. It puts the diversification of the rural economy as one of its priorities, which is important for rural women engaged in the processing of products, rural tourism and service provision. By giving priority to women in the National Programme for Rural Development measures which will be implemented in the coming period, it is envisaged to increase the participation of women from rural areas in terms of their access to property ownership, employment, decision-making at the local level, etc.

The Amendments to the Law on Financial Support for Families with Children⁷⁹ has considerably increased the coverage of women beneficiaries of the right to salary benefit during maternity leave to include women who are not permanently employed, such as entrepreneurs and owners of agricultural holdings, who now have this right recognised for the first time.⁸⁰ Marking the International Day of Rural Women has increased the visibility of the problems faced by rural women. The national-level conference on rural women was held for two years in a row, in 2017 and 2018 which resulted in recommendations for developing public policies and taking specific actions.⁸¹ The conference "Women Living in Rural Areas" in 2019 marked the start of the eponymous campaign and a series of visits to rural areas and interviews with women who live and work in the rural areas, in order to draw attention to their situation and to enable their social and economic empowerment. There is an initiative to recruit 1,000 women and young people in rural areas in the business of making traditional handicrafts as corporate and diplomatic gifts.⁸²

The Commissioner for Protection of Equality has launched an initiative to amend the **Law on Incentives in Agriculture and Rural Development**, which would increase the availability of subsidies in agriculture for women and young people.⁸³ Support rural women has been planned through the development of women's cooperatives, promotion of social entrepreneurship, measures for equal

78 <http://subvencije.rs/tag/nacionalni-programme-razvoja-poljoprivrede-2018-2020>

79 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 113/2017 and 50/2018)

80 The Commissioner for the Protection of Equality has submitted to the Constitutional Court a Proposal to evaluate the compliance of certain provisions of this law with the Constitution and the law, which potentially discriminate the mothers and pregnant women who earn the most, women agricultural producers, parents with sick children, etc. The Constitutional Court has still not decided on the Proposal.

81 In 2017, "Rural women: Improving the quality of life in rural areas" organized jointly by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, UN Women and the Women's Platform for the Development of Serbia and in 2018 called "Women in Rural Areas – Equal Citizens of Serbia".

82 "Let's employ 1,000 women in rural areas", <http://1000zena.rs/>

83 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/inicijativa-za-dopunu-zakona-o-podstacajima-u-pol%20oprivredi-i-ruralnom-razvoju-cir/ref.No.011-00-00061/2018-02> Date: 12/17/2018

access to resources, providing grants for agricultural production and increased access to health care services and education.

b. Racial, ethnic or religious minority women

The strategic - institutional framework for the protection of minority rights has been improved. The Action Plan for Exercising the National Minority Rights⁸⁴ has been adopted and the Council for National Minorities,⁸⁵ Council for the Advancement of the Status of Roma and Implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion⁸⁶ and the Council for Population Policy⁸⁷ have been established. The special National strategy for social inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2025⁸⁸ and the accompanying Action Plan⁸⁹ for the systematic solution of this issue have been adopted. The Action Plan includes gender-sensitive indicators and measures targeting Roma women in the areas of education, health, housing, labour and social protection,⁹⁰ and the Coordination Body for Monitoring the Implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma in Serbia⁹¹ which coordinates the work of public authorities in the area of Roma inclusion has been established.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of Women and Children⁹² indicated that Roma girls are exposed to child marriages⁹³. That is why a National Coalition⁹⁴ to end child marriages has been established and the implementation of the pilot interventions for the elimination of child marriages in the community is underway. From 2016-2018, the Ministry of the Interior filed seven (7) criminal charges for forced marriages. Affirmative measures have been implemented with the aim for the Roma girls and boys to remain in the education system and out of the vicious circle of poverty⁹⁵. Through project support the employability and employment of women, including Roma women has been increased in various municipalities throughout Serbia.⁹⁶

The needs for support policies are still high, because 90% of Roma families have no employed family members and around 27,000 Roma men and women⁹⁷ are not employed⁹⁸. The share in total registered unemployment (618,827 unemployed persons) amounted to 4.3 percent in 2017. According to the National Employment Service, as at 31 December 2017, 26,456 members of the

84 March 2016

85 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 32/2015, 91/2016 and 78/2017)

86 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 46/2013)

87 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 107/2016)

88 ("RS Official Gazette" No. 26/2016)

89 Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2025, June 2017 - available on the Internet at: http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sites/default/files/prilog_fajl/akcioni_plan_za_primenu_strategije_za_socijalno_ukljufivanje_roma_i_romkinja_u_rs_2016-2025_za_period_od_2017_do_2018_godine.pdf

90 Report on the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2017-2018 is in preparation.

91 Government Decision on the establishment of the Coordinating Body for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2016 to 2025, "RS Official Gazette", No. 17/2017.

92 In 2014

93 According to the following parameters: a. nearly 60% of girls from Roma settlements marry before the age of 18, compared to 7% for girls in the general population; b. 1 in 5 girls from Roma settlements marry before the age of 15 and the number of girls from Roma settlements who marry before the age of 18, was constantly increasing - from 46% in 2005, to 54% in 2010, up to nearly 60% in 2014.

94 <http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/sr/%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B0%D0%D0%B8D1%86%BB8D0D1%98%B0-D0D0%B7%BA-D0%D0%BA%D0D0/>

95 More information on affirmative measures are provided in the answer to the previous question.

96 Poverty Reduction and Enhancement of Employment Opportunities of Marginalized and Vulnerable Population Groups with Focus on Roma Women in Serbia 2014-2017 or the 2018 Inclusion Initiative.

97 No sex-disaggregated data are available

98 "Human Rights in Serbia 2018 - law practice and international human rights standards"

Roma minority were registered as unemployed, of whom 12,411 women. In 2017, the assessment of employability was carried out and individual employment plans (including revisions) were concluded for 17,365 Roma, while 376 Roma used the National Employment Service professional orientation services and 5,140 unemployed Roma (2,252 Roma women) were covered by the active employment policy measures.

c. Women living with HIV/AIDS

The Strategy for the Prevention and Control of HIV infection and AIDS in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2025⁹⁹ was adopted during the reporting period. There is still great social distance towards people living with HIV and there are practical obstacles to their access to health care and social protection, education, employment and dignified life¹⁰⁰. The Union of organizations of people living with HIV (USOP), which also includes an organization of women living with HIV (Woman+) operates in Serbia. USOP is in the process of introducing the services that organizations of people living with HIV developed in cooperation with relevant ministries and international partners working in this field into the system.

During the period from 2012 to 2016, the monitoring of responses to HIV infection and AIDS was conducted in accordance with the "Plan for monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Response to HIV Infection and AIDS". During 2016, 8478 people were tested for HIV, out of whom 2890 women or 34.1%¹⁰¹. The women taking the test included women who use drugs, sex workers, women serving criminal sanctions, girls and young beneficiaries of social protection institutions, pregnant women and health professionals. Programmes of HIV prevention through outreach activities and in drop-in centres, which were implemented during 2016, included 286 people engaged in sex work all of whom are women.¹⁰²

d. Women living with disabilities

Women with disabilities are multiply discriminated against, poorer, they have a higher unemployment rate than men with disabilities and are often invisible in public life, they face barriers in exercising their rights and are often victims of physical and other types of violence. Discrimination based on disability is the third most frequent cause of complaint to the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality. Out of 390 complaints filed in 2016 for discrimination based on disability, about one third were for discrimination against women with disabilities.¹⁰³ The analysis of the implementation of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Serbia recommendations¹⁰⁴ focused on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee given after the consideration of the Initial Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia. The analysis of the alternative reports show that Serbia is working on the implementation of the 25 recommendations that require continuous implementation, while

99 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 61/2018)

100 The 2017 Commissioner for Equality annual report

101 Institute of Public Health of Serbia *Batut*, data for 2017 will be available in late April 2019

102 Report on activities implemented in the context of the response to HIV epidemic in the Republic of Serbia in 2016, with a comparative analysis for the period 2012-2016, page 23.

103 The 2016 Commissioner for Equality annual report

104 "Analysis of the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia", National Organization of Persons with Disabilities of Serbia (NOOIS), Belgrade 2018 - available on the website: http://noois.rs/images/Analiza_sprovođenja_preporuka_Komiteta_za_prava_osoba_sa_invaliditetom_u_Republici_Srbiji.pdf

continuously taking appropriate measures and that there are recommendations that have not yet been implemented in a satisfactory manner¹⁰⁵.

The Provincial Ombudsman conducted a survey entitled, *Reproductive Health of Women with Disabilities in Vojvodina*¹⁰⁶, the results of which show that women with disabilities face discrimination and prejudice related to their gender roles, sexuality, particularly in relation to marriage, family relations and parenting. The survey results indicate that women with disabilities are discriminated against in exercising their right to sexual and reproductive health and on many levels - from prejudice and stereotypes to unavailable and inaccessible services. They are invisible in public life, they are often victims of violence and are faced with obstacles in education, health care and social protection.

The Criminal Code¹⁰⁷ has been amended in the part which criminalizes sexual intercourse with a helpless person¹⁰⁸, which is most commonly experienced by women with disabilities, by prescribing a penalty which is equal to the penalty for the criminal offence of rape. Before the law amendments, there was a lesser penalty for sexual intercourse with a helpless person compared to the penalty prescribed for the criminal offence of rape.

In addition, Belgrade has purchased five (5) new gynaecological tables accessible to women with disabilities. Regarding shelters, only one is currently physically accessible to women with disabilities, so it is necessary to ensure accessibility of other shelters, as well as to improve support for users with disabilities and raise the level of knowledge of staff in charge of providing support to women with disabilities. It is also necessary to strengthen personal assistant service to persons with disabilities, which, according to the Law on Social Protection¹⁰⁹ is used by only 166 users in 10 cities in Serbia. Of this number, on average, 50.6% are women, while in the cities this percentage ranges from 20% to over 50% of women.¹¹⁰ The City of Belgrade has provided personal companions to 400 children, of whom 286 boys and 114 girls.¹¹¹ The Draft Strategy for Improving the Status of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia has been prepared, its public debate has been completed and its adoption is expected soon.

4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises—caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events—affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country?

NO

105 Regular annual report of the Commissioner for Equality for 2018

106 "Reproductive health of women with disabilities in the AP Vojvodina", Provincial Ombudsman - Ombudsman, Novi Sad 2018 - available on the website: <https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/index.php/istrazivanje/2125-istrazivanje-reproduktivno-zdravlje-zena-sa-invaliditetom.html>

107 ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 85/2005, 88/2005 - corr., 107/2005 - corr., 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014 and 94 / 2016)

108 Article 179.1 Anyone who performs sexual intercourse or an equivalent act taking advantage of mental illness, mental retardation or other mental disorder, disability or any other condition of that person due to which the person is not capable of resisting, shall be punished with imprisonment from five to twelve years.

109 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 24/2011)

110 Centre for Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities in Serbia, a licensed service provider.

111 The largest number in this group are children with intellectual disabilities and autism. There are more boys than girls in this group and the ratio in the population is 10: 1 in favour of boys

Priorities for the next five years

5. What are the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country in the next five years through laws, policies and programmes?

a. Improving the legal, strategic framework and measures for gender equality and empowerment of women

The first significant step would be the adoption of the new Gender Equality Law, which should regulate more appropriately the participation of women in decision-making in all fields and at all levels¹¹² and further strengthen the share of women in decision-making positions through quotas for executive public authorities. This law should clearly define the position and the role of institutional mechanisms that are now regulated by other laws and determine the instruments to implement the law which are absent from its current version.

What remains to be done is the development and adoption of a new Strategy for gender equality for the period after 2020, after the expiry of the existing strategy. It is necessary to further work on the synergetic connection of the different strategic documents and planning processes¹¹³ and on developing specific measures aimed at removing barriers to equal and balanced participation of women in decision-making in all areas of the society in which they are underrepresented. Multiple interventions of different types need to be planned that simultaneously or successively affect certain areas or issues, which would lead to better results and better effects for gender equality.

Also, it is necessary to strengthen institutional mechanisms for gender equality whose role and position should be clear and unambiguous. This is especially true for the national coordination mechanism, especially given the rising complexity of tasks related to the gender mainstreaming in all policies. The mechanisms for gender equality at all levels should improve their administrative and technical capacity and establish regular access to budget funds. It is necessary to strengthen and stabilize the functioning of gender mechanisms in the local self-governments. There is also a need to continue to invest in strengthening the mechanisms of horizontal and vertical coordination in order to achieve more rapid and significant success in the implementation of gender policies.

b. Eliminating violence against women and girls

It is necessary to accelerate the development and adoption of the National Strategy and Action Plan for preventing and combating domestic and intimate partner violence against women in order to complete the normative strategic framework in this area, and to further develop the necessary measures in accordance with the ratified Istanbul Convention. What also remains to be done is to amend the Law on Social Protection, which should define the services of national helplines and crisis centres for survivors of sexual violence. In addition to functional SOS helpline

112 The draft law suggested a quota of 40%

113 Based on the better integration of activities related to the implementation of the Law on the Planning System which formally requires the development of a gender analysis, a programme of economic reforms which also incorporates gender analysis, the future Gender Equality Law and the Budget System Law.

for the survivors of violence at the level of the Province of Vojvodina, it is necessary to set up a national helpline in accordance with the standards in this area. It is necessary to continue to work on measures related to the improvement of services in the system of legal protection of women against violence, as well as measures related to the improvement of the system of prevention and support to women survivors of violence, in accordance with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Also, it is important to consolidate records in the field of violence against women and girls. It is necessary to build the official statistics on femicide in order to comprehensively monitor this phenomenon and undertake appropriate measures to prevent it.

Finally, it is necessary to establish a broad partnership between different actors, donors, institutions and the non-governmental sector, to use all the resources, including resources of women's organizations that have expertise in the protection of women victims of violence, as well as in preventive action. It is necessary to include qualified and licensed organizations in providing services that are funded from the budget and to include civil society and the media in programmes to prevent violence against women and children.

c. Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights

It is necessary to improve access to health services and provide appropriate health prevention programmes, especially for Roma women, older women, women living in rural areas, women with disabilities, women and other vulnerable multiply discriminated groups.

Save for hospital admissions for spontaneous labour, the most common cause of hospital admissions of women in 2017 was breast cancer¹¹⁴. The burden of circulatory system and cardiovascular diseases has experienced a sharp rise in the transition countries. In recent years, Serbia has had an average of 55% people who died due to a disease from this group. In relation to all causes of death, during 2017, 24,362 men (45.4%) and 29,306 women (54.6%) died of cardiovascular diseases. The average cardiovascular diseases death rate in Serbia in the period from 2013 to 2017 was 754.2 per 100,000 inhabitants.¹¹⁵

In the last few decades there has been a continuous increase in the number of deaths due to cancers. The death rate for cancer has increased over the last five years from 294.4 in 2013 to 305.9 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2017. Based on the information from the Central Serbia Cancer Registry, in 2015, 27,867 people (14,582 men and 13,285 women) were diagnosed with cancer, while 15,224 people (8790 men and 6434 women) died of cancer. Cancers are the second most common cause of morbidity and mortality in the Republic of Serbia after cardiovascular diseases.¹¹⁶

Women's health at the primary level is ensured by the women's health clinics in the primary-level community health care centres. 532 doctors provided women's health care services in 2017, which is 6% less than in the previous year. Number of health professionals with college and

114 This disease in 2000 was not on the list of the ten most common causes hospitalizations of women with hospitalization rate of 1.4 per 1000 inhabitants. In 2008, the rate of hospitalization for breast cancer was 3.6 per 1000 population, and in 2010 it rose to 4.4 per 1,000 population, which remained in 2011 and it reached the highest value in 2013, of as much as 5.8 per 1000 population. Other common causes of hospitalization of women are senile cataracts, insulin-dependent diabetes, hip fracture and high blood pressure of unknown origin. Source: Selected health indicators for 2017, the *Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut* Institute of Public Health of Serbia; www.batut.org.rs

115 Selected health indicators for 2017 *Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut* Institute of Public Health of Serbia www.batut.org.rs

116 Selected health indicators for 2017, *Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut* Institute of Public Health of Serbia www.batut.org.rs

secondary education has also decreased, so that their ratio remained unchanged compared to the previous year and amounted to 1.4.¹¹⁷ The average annual number of visits per doctor in the observed period ranged from 3,246.00 in 2015 to 3,389.8 in 2016. When it comes to the average annual number of visits per woman aged 15 years and over, the highest number was registered in 2016 and the lowest in 2017. The first visits to the doctor constitute more than two-fifths of the total number of visits to the doctor in the surgery and the percentage in the observed period recorded an increasing trend, with a slight decrease registered in 2017. When it comes to the coverage of women with doctors in the women's health care clinics, we notice that, in the period between 2013 and 2017, it ranged from 5500 to 6000 women aged 15 and over per doctor, with the lowest coverage recorded in 2014 and the highest in 2015 and 2016.¹¹⁸

According to the Institute of Public Health of Serbia,¹¹⁹ in 2017, the percentage of beneficiaries from 25 to 69 years of age included in the targeted screenings for the early detection of cervical cancer was 15.8%. The percentage of beneficiaries aged from 45 to 69 years who were referred for mammography by their chosen gynaecologist in the last 12 months was 11.4%. In the future, it is indispensable to make health care more accessible to a larger number of women. Roma women living in Roma settlements should be more consistently included in preventive health examinations. It is necessary to introduce sexual and reproductive health education programmes for girls and boys.

d. Unpaid care and domestic work/work-family conciliation

In the future it is necessary to develop and implement new and additional measures to promote the balanced distribution of household tasks, as well as measures for the creation of affordable, alternative and new services, childcare, care of the elderly and dependent persons and family care.

Time Use Survey¹²⁰ was last conducted in 2015, while the next one is planned for 2020. The report on the Gender Equality Index published in 2018 with data for 2016 indicates that this is a significant area of gender inequality. According to the data, 67.9% of women cook and/or perform house work every day whereas only 11.5% of men do it. When it comes to taking care of the elderly, children and family members with disabilities, the gender gap is slightly smaller, but still very strong, because among women 18 years and over, 41.2% carry out these activities on a daily basis, compared to 29.5% men. The results in this field were not achieved in the past because the measures planned to achieve this objective were not specific enough and relied on "weaker" interventions, such as awareness-raising campaigns, and not on the "stronger" ones such as legal interventions¹²¹.

In October 2019, the European Institute for Gender Equality will launch its new annual Gender Equality Index which will thematically focus on balancing professional and private life. Since Serbia has joined the index, the discussion on this will draw an increased interest in the Republic of Serbia for a variety of measures that contribute to a fairer redistribution of housework. For now, the Republic of Serbia provides an opportunity for fathers to use their parental leave during the

117 Selected health indicators for 2017, *Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut* Institute of Public Health of Serbia www.batut.org.rs

118 Selected health indicators for 2017, *Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut* Institute of Public Health of Serbia www.batut.org.rs

119 http://www.batut.org.rs/download/publikacije/Pokazatelj_kvaliteta_2017.pdf

120 <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2011/pdf/G201120021.pdf>

121 Source: The final report of the evaluation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia, SeConS, 2018, p.59

first year of the child's life, starting from the third month, but a small number of fathers¹²² use this opportunity. In order to step up the changes in this area, it is necessary to consider taking bolder steps, such as the introduction of non-transferable parental leave during the first months after birth. This measure showed good results in other countries¹²³. A study on the conciliation of work and parenting¹²⁴ was published in Serbia in 2017. Additional activities that have been undertaken so far concerned the promotion of paternity and the role of men in parenting, schools for pregnant women and schools of parenting. A survey on women and gender relations in accordance with the international IMAGES (International Men and Gender Equality Survey) methodology¹²⁵ has been conducted.

e. Gender-responsive budgeting

It is necessary to continue work on strengthening GRB through enhancing institutional capacity and developing procedures for the implementation and monitoring of GRB within institutions. Further efforts are needed towards developing a system for quality assurance of GRB objectives and indicators, as well as strengthening the coordination of gender-responsive policies with budgetary sectoral priorities and the connection with the implementation of the Law on the Planning System¹²⁶. This law introduces a formal obligation to develop gender analysis and the process of improving the programme budgeting which refers to the effects of budget investments. Similarly, additional attention should be paid to the increased application of GRB at the level of local governments, where it is now just beginning to be introduced in the budget process. The process can be further improved by introducing changes in budgeting software at the national level¹²⁷ so that the GRB objectives and indicators have to be entered for budget beneficiaries to which the GRB obligation refers, as well as in order for the GRB objectives to be listed more easily. Finally, it is necessary to further strengthen the capacity of budget beneficiaries for monitoring results and reporting on the effects of gender policies, programmes and measures.

f. Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes

It is necessary to use all the opportunities for the affirmation of the culture of equality, tolerance and non-violence in the public discourse. The National Strategy for Gender Equality recognizes the importance of education at all levels in combating gender stereotypes and negative social norms. Strict implementation of the principles of gender equality in laws and strategies in all areas, more regular consultations and cooperation with civil society organizations which recognise as their priority objective the promotion of gender equality, as well as with the academia and the media, will contribute to further promoting gender equality. Initiatives for inclusion of male allies in order to expand the circle of support should be supported more firmly and it should be made clear that gender equality is not just a "women's issue". The prerequisite for changing the negative norms are further improvements in the field of gender statistics and all records. Thus, the business register data should be available by gender, as pointed out in the sub-goals related to improving gender statistics in the strategy to support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises,

122

123 For example, the "fathers' quota" in the Nordic countries, or mandatory parental leave for fathers in Portugal or in Spain

124 Cabinet of the Minister without Portfolio responsible for Demography and Population Policy, 2017

125 <https://images.edu.rs/preuzmi-istrazivanje/> This is one of the most comprehensive surveys on a national representative sample of households through which data were collected about the attitudes of men and women and different practices in the area of gender equality.

126 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 30/2018)

127 At the level of APV these changes have already been introduced

entrepreneurship and competitiveness for the period from 2015-2020¹²⁸. It is necessary to define the rules and procedures for the records of Roma women and men, persons with disabilities in different systems so that the data required for the development of affirmative action would be more readily available. Also, it is necessary to improve the availability of gender-sensitive publicly available data that can be cross-referenced by age groups and territorial distribution of women and men in all key areas. Finally, investment in research in the field of gender equality and gender analysis will also considerably contribute to the strengthening of a culture of equality.

In addition to numerous activities implemented by other public authorities already mentioned above, aimed at changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality has also given its contribution to improving the gender equality culture. In 2017 and 2018, a training programme was organized for labour inspectors throughout Serbia on the implementation of anti-discrimination regulations. In cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, training was provided to police officers within the programme on identifying and responding to discrimination. Judges were also trained and a series of seminars held for staff from local governments, where the citizens access the majority of their rights and where it is possible also to create various measures to support specific vulnerable groups and strengthen and motivate local governments to foster and promote the principle of equality. Also, a series of trainings was organized for civil servants, through the National Academy of Public Administration, as well as for students studying for professions that will encounter discrimination in their work, such as law, Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies, Faculty of Political Sciences, etc.

128 Government Decision 05 No. 023-3281 / 2015-1 dated 26 March 2015

SECTION 2: PROGRESS IN 12 KEY AREAS

Area 1 - Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

6. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?

a. Strengthened/enforced laws and workplace policies and practices that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and equal pay legislation

The Gender Equality Law¹²⁹, provides that if the representation of the less represented gender in any organizational unit, in managerial positions and in management and supervisory bodies is less than 30%, the public authorities are obliged to apply affirmative action in accordance with the Law on Civil Servants¹³⁰ and the Law on State Administration¹³¹.

On public advertising of vacancies and requirements for their performance and deciding on the selection of job seekers for the purpose of their employment or other form of engagement, it is not allowed to differentiate based on sex, unless there are justifiable reasons determined in accordance with the law governing labour¹³². The fact that a person is of one sex or the other cannot be a hindrance to their professional advancement¹³³. Absence from work due to the pregnancy and parenthood must not be a hindrance to being elected to a higher office, promotion, and professional development. The employer is obliged to take into account the fact that gender representation reflects the structure of employees. An employer who has employed more than 50 full-time employees is required to adopt a plan of measures to eliminate or mitigate unequal gender representation for each calendar year no later than 31 January. In addition, the employer must prepare an annual report on the implementation of the plan and submit it to the ministry in charge for gender equality.

The Labour Law stipulates that employees shall be guaranteed equal pay for the same work or work of equal value and that the employee shall be entitled to a compensation in case of a violation thereof¹³⁴. Over the last fifteen years, nominal pay growth has nearly tripled, but the pay gap between men and women increased as well. In almost all sectors, women have lower income than men. Broken down by level of education, women at all education levels earn 65-85%

129 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 104/2009, Article 14)

130 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 79/2005, 81/2005 - corr., 83/2005 - corr., 64/2007, 67/2007 - corr., 116/2008, 104/2009, 99/2014, 94/2017 and 95/2018)

131 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 79/2005, 101/2007, 95/2010, 99/2014, 47/2018 and 30/2018 - as amended)

132 Article 15

133 Article 16

134 Article 104.

of the salaries of their male counterparts and it is interesting that, in 2014, women with university education earned 76% of the salary of their male counterparts with the same level of education, although there are more women among the university educated population¹³⁵.

The labour inspection, which employs 247 labour inspectors, is in charge of the supervision of the of the Labour Law and the Gender Equality Law implementation in the part of the law relating to exercising rights and obligation, on the basis of gender equality, by employers and employees.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia continuously conducts training programmes to strengthen the capacity of labour inspectors in the field of application of anti-discrimination legislation, aimed at the full implementation of the law. Also, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, as an independent state body established under the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, is the key mechanism authorized to conduct the procedure on complaints in cases of discrimination against persons or groups of persons connected by the same personal characteristic. In 2018, the highest number of complaints of discrimination based on sex (33) was submitted in the field of labour and employment.

b. Introduced/strengthened gender-responsive active labour market policies

The policy of gender equality in the field of labour and employment¹³⁶ is being implemented through special measures, based on the Gender Equality Law¹³⁷, the Labour Law¹³⁸, the National Strategy for Gender Equality¹³⁹, the National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020 and the National Action Plan for Employment. Active employment policy measures are implemented by the National Employment Service (NES) and local governments.¹⁴⁰ The Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance¹⁴¹ provides the adoption of the National Employment Action Plan (NAP)¹⁴², an annual operational document in the field of employment which identifies the most important target groups¹⁴³. Women are identified as beneficiaries of measures for integration into the labour market¹⁴⁴. The Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities¹⁴⁵ regulates the incentives for employment of women and men with disabilities.

Furthermore, in 2017, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality developed a handbook titled "Equality Code of Practice – Guidelines for developing the Antidiscrimination Policy for employers in Serbia", as a unique tool and aid for employers to promote anti-discrimination and

135 Женe и мушкарци у Републици Србији (Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia) (2014); Tomanovic, S., Stanojević D. Ljubicić & M. (2016). Постајање родитељем у Србији (Becoming a parent in Serbia); Tomanovic, S. et al. (2012). Млади - наша садашњост. Истраживање социјалних биографија младих у Србији (Young people - our present. A survey of social biographies of the young people in Serbia). Belgrade: Institute for Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy.

136 The National Employment Action Plan is the main instrument for the implementation of an active employment policy, it is adopted annually and it should operationalise employment objectives laid down in the National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020.. This plan shall specify the category of less employable persons who will have priority in joining the active employment policy measures, as well as the necessary resources for the implementation of active employment policy measures in that year.

137 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 104/2009)

138 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 24/2005, 61/2005, 54/2009, 32/2013, 75/2014, 13/2017 – CC decision, 113/2017 and 95/2018 - authentic interpretation)

139 Specific objective 2.3. Improved economic status of women and the status of women in the labour market

140 The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, a contribution to the preparation of the report, March 2019th

141 ("Official Gazette" No. 36/09, 88/10, 38/15, 113/17- as amended and 113/17.)

142 The National Action Plan for Employment ("RS Official Gazette", No. 105/2018)

143 NAP for 2019 recognizes young people under 30 years of age, redundant employees older than 50 years, unskilled and low-skilled workers, people with disabilities, Roma beneficiaries of social assistance who are fit for work, long-term unemployed (registered for more than 12 months and in particular the unemployed looking for work for more than 18 months), young people living in residential placement, youth in foster care, youth in guardian families and victims of domestic violence.

144 The National Employment Action Plan for 2019, p. 14

145 ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 36/09 and 32/13)

improve equality. The handbook should enable the implementation of the equal opportunities principle in recruitment procedures and in the workplace, as well as improve employers' operational processes.

The Republic of Serbia has carried out gender analysis of employment measures¹⁴⁶ which shows that in the period 2015-2017 measures of active employment policy covered 452,080 unemployed¹⁴⁷, out of whom 241,569 or 53% were women. Analysis by type of measures shows that women were mostly included in the active job search measures¹⁴⁸ (53.65%), additional training and education (55.22%), employment subsidies (45.97%), and in public works (44.06%), whereas the funds spent to include women amount to 50.4 % of the total funds spent¹⁴⁹. Gender analysis still recognizes the need for greater inclusion of women in other measures and updating of measures that would better respond to the needs of this target group. Data on registered employment show that, in 2018, women accounted for 975 thousand employees, or 46%¹⁵⁰ of the total number of 2,131,000 employees. In 2018, 583,099 unemployed persons were registered on average in the Republic of Serbia, of whom 308,490 women, of whom 12,405 Roma women and 5,716 women with disabilities, who constitute a particularly vulnerable group of women.¹⁵¹

In the period from 2014 to 2017, the activity rate of women rose from 55.3% in 2014 to 59.6% in 2017, but is still lower than that of men, which in 2014 amounted to 63.3% and in 2017 to 66.7%. Meanwhile, there has been an increase in the employment of women from 43.7% in 2014 to 50.8% in 2017. The data indicate that the youth employment rate increased from 14.9 in 2014 to 20.9 in 2017. The employment rate of young women rose less than in young men (4.7% compared to 7.1%). There were 26.1% employed young men in 2017 compared to 15.3% of young women.

7. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?

c. Included unpaid care and domestic work in national statistics and accounting

In the last five years, the problem of unpaid work and care is recognized and visible primarily thanks to the Survey on Time Use¹⁵² conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. The data from surveys conducted in 2010 and 2015 show that, regardless of whether they are employed or not, women perform most of the household work. Women spend an average of nearly four and a half hours a day on unpaid work, while men spend a little more than two hours.

146 Participation of women in active employment policy measures and the assessment of the expenditure of funds for these purposes in the period 2015 - 2017, UN Women 2019.

147 2015 (150,953), 2016 (146,891), and 2017 (154,236)

148 Which includes: a job-seeking fair, job-seeking club, training for active job search, motivation-activation training for unskilled and low-skilled persons, self-efficiency training, workshops for coping with stress due to loss of job and training for developing entrepreneurship

149 Out of a total of EUR 95 million invested in active measures for the period 2014-2017, 46 million was spent on measures which included women, which amounts to 48%

150 <http://data.stat.gov.rs/Home/Result/24021106?languageCode=sr-Cyrl&displayMode=table&guid=86458a57-0e6f-4ab9-86e7-d9d3e9a403fb>

151 Annual Report of the National Employment Service for 2018, No. 0011-101-8/2019 of 4 March 2019.

152 The legal basis for conducting the survey on the use of time is the Ordinance on the Establishment of Specific Statistical Research, which was published in the "RS Official Gazette", No. 110/2009. This study included the Development Strategy of Official Statistics of the Republic of Serbia in the period from 2009 to 2012 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 7/2009)

This means that women spend twice as much time doing household, unpaid work than men¹⁵³. The use of time, the effort parents invest in balancing parenthood and work and available time remaining to men and women for studying and personal development, influence largely their current position at work, as well as their prospects on the labour market. Campaigns aimed at raising awareness in order to encourage greater participation of men and boys in unpaid work in the household and care tasks have been recognized as necessary. However, the situation is different in the younger generation and young men participate more equally in the division, until the birth of their child, when patriarchal patterns are resumed¹⁵⁴. What helps in balancing family life when it comes to the conciliation of work and parenting is a network of preschool institutions. According to the SORS,¹⁵⁵ the number of preschool institutions has increased from 2492 in 2014 to 2682¹⁵⁶ in 2016. The system of preschool education (PE) in the Republic of Serbia in 2017 covered 212,719 children aged 6 months to 6.5 years (109,808 boys and 102,911 girls), which is 20,714 children more than in 2014.¹⁵⁷ The number of preschool teaching staff increased from 16,584 in 2014 to 18,661 in 2017.¹⁵⁸

d. Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave

The current Labour Law¹⁵⁹ contains a number of relevant solutions for the conciliation of work and parenthood. It stipulates that employed women are entitled to maternity leave and absence from work for child care for a period of 365 days. The father also has the right to use absence from work for child care, even when the mother is not employed. The latest amendments to the Law on Financial Support for Families with Children¹⁶⁰ recognise all kinds of work contracts outside employment as a condition for receiving other cash benefits based on birth and child care and special care, but paid leave during pregnancy and maternity leave cannot be the basis for obtaining a cash benefit. The data indicate that a total of 300 fathers used the possibility of leave in order to care for the child. The Republic of Serbia has conducted a survey on the conciliation of work and parenting¹⁶¹ to determine what obstacles and opportunities exist, both from the perspective of working parents, as well as from the perspective of employers. Only 17% of employers said that there were examples of the use of parental leave by fathers in their company. The survey has shown the need for the conciliation of parenting and family life.

The Birth-Promotion Strategy¹⁶² advocates for the achievement of the following goals: mitigating the economic cost of raising a child; conciliating work and parenthood; lowering the

153 Women spend most of their time in activities related to preparing meals - almost an hour and a half, while men, on average, spend only about 10 minutes on average doing this. This is followed by activities related to household maintenance and cleaning of the apartment or the courtyard, women spend more than an hour on these activities, while men spend only a quarter of an hour. Regarding care of their minor children, women on average spend twice as much time as men - 38 compared 17 minutes. As for washing and ironing, women spend half an hour on average, while men do not deal with these activities (1 minute on average). When it comes to taking care of other people, women are "more diligent" there as well- 20 minutes, as opposed to seven minutes for men. Women aged 15 and older, on average, have almost six hours of free time a day, while men have one hour more - seven hours. When looking at free time by day type, on workdays, that is, from Monday to Friday and on weekends, women again have less free time compared to men.

154 Tomanovic, Smiljka & Associates. 2016. Постајање родитељем у Србији - социолошко истраживање транзиције у родитељство (Becoming a parent in Serbia - a sociological study of the transition to parenthood). Belgrade: Faculty of Philosophy University of Belgrade. On page 114 there is a table with the redistribution of housework after childbirth.

155 Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

156 <http://data.stat.gov.rs/Home/Result/11010701?languageCode=sr-Cyrl&displayMode=table&guid=40f72fcb-7d25-4dee-a781-be45b383b9e4>

157 National Report on the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction

158 Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the data obtained on 11 April 2019. The education by age and sex table

159 ("RS Official Gazette" No. 24/05, 61/05, 54/09, 32/13, 75/14 and 13/17)

160 Article 16 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 113/17).

161 Balancing work and parenting, Cabinet of the Minister without Portfolio responsible for Demography and Population Policy, in cooperation with the National Institute of Statistics, with financial support from the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2017

162 ("RS Official Gazette" No. 25/2018)

psychological price of parenthood; preserving and improving reproductive health; solving the issue of infertility; working towards a healthy motherhood; population education and activation of the local government. Since 2017, the Cabinet of the Minister without Portfolio responsible for Demography and Population Policy has been allocating funds in its budget for co-financing the population policies in local governments. These grants are intended to co-finance the policies aimed at mitigating the economic cost of child raising and conciliation of work and parenthood.

8. Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?

e. Conducted impact assessment of austerity/fiscal consolidation for women and men

Through the arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in early 2015, the Government of the Republic of Serbia began a three-year fiscal consolidation programme, which provided, in addition to the budget austerity, comprehensive structural reforms, and in accordance with the Law on the Maximum Number of Employees in the Public Sector,¹⁶³ the obligation of rightsizing the number of employees in the public authorities, public services, in the autonomous province and local self-governments. The programme included cuts in wages and number of employees in the public sector, pension cuts and the reform of the early retirement system. At that time, Serbia had a gender gap in the employment rate (around 15 percentage points) as well as a gender pay gap (about 14 percentage points). Due to the better characteristics of women working in the public sector, the gender pay gap is smaller there and amounts to about 5.4%.

The assessment of the impact of austerity measures on women and men was carried out subsequently¹⁶⁴ and showed that pay and employment levels of women were particularly vulnerable to austerity measures, because women represent the majority of the workforce in the public sector. In addition, the position of women in the labour market in Serbia could be further aggravated through the reduced availability of informal child care (grandparents' help) due to the amendments in the pension legislation, which took place immediately before the introduction of the fiscal consolidation programme, primarily in the form of actuarial penalty¹⁶⁵ for early retirement. The reduction of salaries in the context of austerity measures was 10 percent for public sector workers earning more than RSD 25,000. Given that women are the majority among those who earn RSD 25,000 or less, it was expected that these measures would reduce the gender pay gap. The key findings of an independent expert analysis shows that there is a slight increase in the pay gap due to different levels of implementation of the reforms in specific government sub-sectors. The general government sector (public administration, health, education, social protection), which mainly employs women, fully implemented the reforms, but this was not the case with public companies in which the majority of employees are men. Reducing salaries encouraged younger women and women nearing retirement to leave the public sector and move into the unemployed or inactive category. Such effects were not observed with men. Most young women (under 30 years of age) moved into the unemployed category. Most older women (close to the fulfilment of the years of service for retirement) moved to the inactive category. It was found

163 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 68/2015, 81/2016 - Constitutional Court decision and 95/2018)

164 <https://www.fren.org.rs/sites/default/files/articles/attachments/Policy%20Brief.pdf>

165 Penalties for early retirement.

that women who have children are more likely to opt to remain in the public sector, despite low wages. It has not been determined that either men or women move into the private sector due to the pay cut.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ The Commissioner for the Protection of Equality has submitted an initiative to the competent ministry to amend Law on the Maximum Number of Employees in the Public Sector on 22 March 2019, having in mind its effects to the functioning of public services (in the areas of health, education, social protection, social care of children, science and culture), as well as the effects on the position of women and efficient and continuous functioning of public administration.

Area 2 – Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

9. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

a. Promoted poor women's access to decent work through active labour market policies

Unemployed women from particularly vulnerable categories are included in the active employment policies, namely: single mothers, older women who have lost their jobs (women over 45), young women with no work experience (30 years), beneficiaries of social assistance and Roma women. According to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, in order to activate the beneficiaries of financial social assistance during 2017, the active employment policy measures included 10,767 beneficiaries of financial social assistance (5,466 women), which makes up a share of 7.41% of the total the number of unemployed persons involved in active employment policy measures. The active employment policy measures in 2017 included 78,235 women, amounting to a share of 53.82% in the total number of unemployed persons involved in active employment policy measures.¹⁶⁷

The National Employment Service (NES) has a special public call for applications for subsidies for self-employment for the Roma. 140 Roma men and women were supported to start their own businesses in 2017¹⁶⁸ using a self-employment subsidy. During 2017, active employment policy measures covered 5,140 unemployed Roma (43.8% of women), which represents a share of 3.5% in the total number of unemployed included in these policies.¹⁶⁹ In 2017, 5,663 women completed the entrepreneurship training¹⁷⁰ (45.4% of the total number of participants), self-employment subsidies were granted to 1,848 women (50.2% in total), 44 of whom were women with disabilities, while 251 women owners benefited from the mentoring programme.¹⁷¹

b. Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services

The Law on Housing and Building Maintenance¹⁷² introduces the concept of housing support, which is defined as any form of assistance for housing to persons who, due to social, economic and other reasons cannot solve the housing needs using their own funds under the market conditions, for themselves and their family household. Among the selected and listed vulnerable categories of persons mentioned, the users of housing assistance are also survivors of domestic

167 RS Government, Report on the implementation of the National Employment Action Plan for 2017

168 Through a special public call by the National Employment Service, regular public call by the National Employment Service awarding subsidies for self-employment and co-funding active labour market programmes or measures provided in local employment action plans.

169 The Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2014-2017, Republic of Serbia, page 114, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team <http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/sr/>, P. 129

170 "How to become a successful entrepreneur" for 2 days, which was organized by the Palilula municipality Youth Office in cooperation with the National Employment Service

171 The Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2014-2017, Republic of Serbia, page 114, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team <http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/sr/>, P. 130

172 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 104/2016)

violence. According to the Ordinance on Determining the Order of Priority for the Allocation of Housing Support¹⁷³, single parents who exercise their parental rights are awarded five additional points. In the reporting period, particular attention was paid on improving the housing conditions of Roma men and women. Projects worth a total of EUR 14.1 million¹⁷⁴ were implemented using the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). A GIS database¹⁷⁵ of 583 substandard Roma settlements was developed. This database is essential for efficient and effective making of investment-action decisions by the line ministry with regard to the improvement of living conditions in Roma settlements.

The Law on the Procedure for the Registration in the Real Estate and Power Lines Cadastre,¹⁷⁶ in its Article 7, Registration of Ownership, provides that joint ownership of the immovable property shall be registered in the name of all members of the union. Joint property arising from the acquisition during marriage shall be entered in the real estate cadastre for the whole property or in the co-ownership share in the property. If the immovable property is already registered in the cadastre as property of only one spouse, the joint property shall be subsequently entered in the cadastre based on the statements by both spouses that it is the case of a joint ownership.

c. Supported women's entrepreneurship and business development activities

The funds allocated for the implementation of the Programme to support the development and promotion of women's innovative entrepreneurship are provided by Article 8 of the Law on the Budget of the Republic of Serbia for 2018¹⁷⁷ in the total amount of RSD 100,000,000.00. The programme is implemented by Cabinet of the Minister without Portfolio responsible for Innovation and Technological Development. The funds have been allocated for programmes promoting women's innovative entrepreneurship at the national and local level. This programme relied on data from the National Strategy for Gender Equality for the period from 2016 to 2020 with the Action Plan for the period from 2016 to 2018¹⁷⁸. The programme is aimed at reducing the under-representation of women in the business sector in managerial positions and in the role of owners and founders of small and medium-sized companies (22.1%) and greater representation among entrepreneurs (34.3%). The priority of the programme is to support women's innovative entrepreneurship and encourage the raising of social awareness and creating conditions for the change in the business environment and to have women increasingly appear as founders, owners or shareholders of business entities in the companies' business operations and as entrepreneurs. The objective of the Programme¹⁷⁹ is to raise awareness of the importance of women's innovative entrepreneurship, increase the level of awareness of the policies which the Government of the Republic of Serbia is carrying out in support of women's innovation entrepreneurship, as well as to achieve a more significant role of women entrepreneurs in the labour market through the development of their business operations, hiring more people and earning higher and more

173 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 75/2017)

174 European support for Roma inclusion, EUR 4.8 million (IPA 2012), Let's Build a Home Together, EUR 3.6 million (IPA 2009) and EUR 1.5 million (IPA 2014), Roma Housing EU support for Inclusion of the Roma (IPA 2013) and Support to the Inclusion of the Roma (IPA 2016) in the amount of EUR 4.2 million. Source: The Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014 - 2017

175 GIS is geographic information system for monitoring the situation in sub-standard Roma settlements in Serbia. This database enables the competent Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, as well as local governments in Serbia, to monitor key indicators of the situation in sub-standard settlements, and simple GIS data search and analysis of living conditions in them, with the aim to make appropriate strategic decisions and create strategies to improve living conditions of the Roma community at the national and local levels, more at: <https://www.osce.org/sr/mission-to-serbia/309401?download=true>

176 ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 41/2018 and 95/2018)

177 ("RS Official Gazette" No. 113/17)

178 Government decision on the basis of Article 45 Paragraph 1 of the Law on Government ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 55/05, 71/05 - correction, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11, 68/12 - US, 72/12, 7/14 - CC and 44/14)

179 <https://inovacije.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2.-Programme.pdf>

sustainable income.¹⁸⁰ In December 2018, 44 micro and small women-owned businesses and entrepreneurial activities in Novi Sad received the support of this programme. The programme continued in 2019. The example of continued support to the access to finances for women entrepreneurs comes from the AP of Vojvodina, which has set up a Guarantee Fund of Vojvodina¹⁸¹ which includes a special programme for women and youth¹⁸². The programme for women entrepreneurs and business owners there exists since 2004¹⁸³, and, in the period 2004-2017, they issued 223 guarantees to women company-owners and opened 825 new jobs¹⁸⁴.

10. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection of women and girls?

d. Improved processes of granting cash transfers

The legislative framework in the field of social and child protection primarily consists of the Law on Social Protection¹⁸⁵, the Law on Financial Support for Families with Children¹⁸⁶ and the Family Law¹⁸⁷. The Law on Social Protection regulates the financial benefits aimed at the poor (financial social assistance, one-off assistance) and benefits for people with disabilities (allowance and increased allowance for assistance and care of another person). By-laws that were important for the social inclusion of beneficiaries of social assistance were adopted in 2016: the Decree on Earmarked Funds Transfers in Social Welfare¹⁸⁸ and the Decree on Measures of Social Inclusion of Beneficiaries of Financial Social Assistance¹⁸⁹. Financial social assistance (FSA) is a minimum income type of benefit. Other social security services that exist at the local self-government level are home care for the elderly and adults, day care for children with disabilities, personal companion, counselling, day care for people with disabilities, household help for children with disabilities, personal assistants, shelter for survivors of violence and assisted housing. Households in which all members are unfit for work and single-parent families are entitled to 20% increased FSA.¹⁹⁰

In Serbia, 383,130 women and 352,200 men are beneficiaries of social security services¹⁹¹.

180 The specific objectives of the programme are: 1. Introduce a communication framework that will contribute to promoting women's innovative entrepreneurship and encourage entrepreneurial initiative among women in the Republic of Serbia; 2. Improve knowledge and skills of women in the field of innovative entrepreneurship; 3. Raise awareness among women about the possibilities of creative, innovative and entrepreneurial activities, as well as improve the business potential of women involved in innovative entrepreneurship; 4. Improve business capacities of women entrepreneurs through the provision of direct financial support aimed at realizing their entrepreneurial ideas; 5. Establish a large number of companies whose founders, co-founders and/or authorized representatives are women and through the implementation of innovative business ideas and 6. The exchange of knowledge and experience among potential and existing entrepreneurs. Organisations which apply together with their local self-government unit, as well as local self-government units themselves are entitled to use the grants from Item 1.

181 The Fund was established with a mission to facilitate access to financial markets and provide more favourable loan terms than those offered by banks. The Fund performs this duty through its core business activity, issuing guarantees to banks as collateral for due repayment of bank loans.

182 <http://garfond.rs/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D1%83%D0%B7%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B5/>

183 for support to the programme for non-working women, to finance the purchase of equipment for women entrepreneurs and women founders of small businesses who have been in business for less than three years, <http://garfond.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/ip2014.pdf>

184 <http://garfond.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/izvestaj-o-poslovanju-garancijskog-fonda-2017.pdf>

185 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 24/11)

186 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 16/02, 115/05 and 107/09)

187 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 18/05 and 72/11)

188 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 18/16, "RS Official Gazette", No. 112/14)

189 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 112/14)

190 For a family of more than six members, the amount of assistance does not increase and households in which the majority of members are fit for work cannot exercise the right for more than nine months in a calendar year.

191 The total number of beneficiaries of social protection by gender registered with the Centre for Social Welfare, 2017 Source: The National social Welfare Institute.

11. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

e. Improved access to health services for women through the expansion of universal health insurance and public health services

The Law on Health Care¹⁹² and the Law on Health Insurance¹⁹³ regulate free health care for all insured persons, as well as different groups of citizens, including women in relation to family planning, as well as during pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood up to 12 months after childbirth; persons with disabilities, as well as persons with mental disabilities; persons in relation to treatment of HIV infection; Roma who due to their traditional lifestyle do not have permanent or temporary residence in the Republic; survivors of domestic violence; survivors of human trafficking; persons covered by mandatory immunization in accordance with the regulations on the health care and protection of the population from infectious diseases; persons covered by targeted preventive medical examinations, or screenings according to the respective national programmes; single parents with children up to seven years of age whose monthly income is below the determined income in accordance with this Law¹⁹⁴. The percentage of population covered by compulsory health insurance is a good indicator of health care accessibility. According to data from the Insurance Database of the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), 97.2% of the population was covered by compulsory insurance in 2016, slightly higher than in 2012 when it was 95.8%.¹⁹⁵

The health of Roma women is in special focus. According to the Health Care Law, as part of the improvement of health and health care of the population groups exposed to an increased risk of disease, the Ministry of Health has supported the introduction of health mediators to the Republic of Serbia's health system. The role of health mediators is to keep record of the health status of residents of informal settlements, to work with them on raising awareness about the necessity of vaccination of children, as well as the importance of proper diet and hygiene habits. The health mediators should provide the health care facilities with a better insight into the state of these settlements, and point out the importance of timely medical checkups to their residents. The health mediators¹⁹⁶ are not health professionals (doctors, nurses), they connect the health system with the citizens of informal settlements. In selecting the health mediators, the Ministry of Health gave priority to Roma women who are mothers and who live in the Roma settlements. Given the fact that they come from the Roma community and maintain daily communication with it, they contribute considerably to the operation of the Roma inclusion mobile team. In

192 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 107/2005, 72/2009 - as amended, 88/2010, 99/2010, 57/2011, 119/2012, 45/2013 - as amended 93/2014, 96/2015, 106/2015, 113/2017 - as amended and 105/2017 - as amended), Article 11

193 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 107/2005, 109/2005 - corr., 57/2011, 110/2012 - Constitutional Court Decision, 119/2012, 99/2014, 123/2014, 126/2014 - Constitutional Court Decision, 106/2015 and 10/2016 - as amended)

194 As well as persons belonging to the portion of the population that is exposed to an increased risk of disease; persons whose health care needs are related to prevention, control, early detection and treatment of diseases of greater socio-medical importance and persons who are in the category of socially vulnerable population, as well as children under the age of 18, school children and students until the end of prescribed education, no older than 26 years of age, according to the law; persons over 65 years of age; except for HIV infection and other infectious diseases that are regulated by a separate law which governs the protection of the population against infectious diseases, cancers, haemophilia, diabetes, psychosis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, people with end-stage chronic renal failure, cystic fibrosis, systemic autoimmune disease, rheumatic fever, addiction, suffering from rare diseases; as well as persons covered by the health care system in connection with donating or receiving tissues and organs; monks and nuns; materially unsecured persons receiving social assistance or beneficiaries of family disability assistance, according to the regulations on social protection, and the regulations on the protection of veterans, disabled veterans and civilian invalids of war, beneficiaries of permanent financial assistance as well as assistance for finding accommodation in social welfare or in other families, according to the regulations on social protection; the unemployed and other vulnerable groups whose monthly income is below the income determined in accordance with this Law; beneficiaries - members of families whose breadwinner is doing military service

195 The Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2014-2017, Republic of Serbia, The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team <http://socijalnoukljuivanje.gov.rs/sr/>.

196 Health mediators have provided personal documents and health cards for 16,330 people; they helped 28,003 Roma citizens to choose a doctor; they influenced the increase in the number of vaccinated children (30,018) and adults (2,719), as well as the improvement of health check-ups for 4,500 pregnant women and mothers; and helped 11,177 women to choose their gynaecologist, and 12,617 of them to be included in screenings.

organizing workshops and other activities of the Roma inclusion mobile team, they connect the team with families and individuals from the community who need help¹⁹⁷. In terms of health care for women with disabilities, the City of Belgrade has obtained 5 gynaecological tables for women with disabilities.

The first national programme for maintaining and improving sexual and reproductive health of the citizens of the Republic of Serbia has been adopted.¹⁹⁸ As one of the three objectives, special emphasis is put on the guarantee of access to sexual and reproductive health care and respect of everyone's sexual and reproductive rights without discrimination.

The percentage of beneficiaries from 45 to 69 years of age who were referred for mammography to the chosen gynaecologist in the past 12 months is 11.4%.

12. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?

f. Taken measures to increase the girls' access to, their retention in and completion of education system and programmes for professional staff improved

Due to the amendments to several laws¹⁹⁹ in the field of education, conditions were created for improving access to education and for continuation of education for girls and women from vulnerable groups through an improved procedure and application of affirmative measures²⁰⁰ in education. These measures include facilitation of procedures for enrolment into primary school and an increased coverage of Roma girls and boys in primary education, affirmative action for enrolment into secondary school and an increased coverage of Roma girls and boys in secondary education, individual education plans, teaching assistants, teacher training, scholarships, loans, accommodation and food (at 10% of capacity for boys and girls from vulnerable groups), and affirmative action for enrolment of Roma girls and boys into institutions of higher education²⁰¹. At the level of output, it was proven that affirmative measures contribute to greater representation of Roma children in the education system. The increase in the number of Roma children who enrol in preschool programmes amounted to 273% in the period from 2006 to 2016, 146% for first grade of primary school, and for secondary school an average of 10% per year²⁰². 930 children receive scholarships from the budget of the Republic of Serbia for Roma secondary school students, 65% of whom are girls. Mentoring support is provided to secondary school students

197 Source <http://www.inkluzijaroma.stat.gov.rs/sr/%D0%B7%D0%B4%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B5%BD%D0%D0%B5%B4%B8%D0%98%D1%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%80%D1%D0%BA%D0%B5>

198 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 120/17)

199 The Law on the Foundations of the Education System ("RS Official Gazette", No. 88/2017, 27/18 (I) - as amended 27/18 and (II) - as amended), the Law on Preschool Education ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 18/10, 101/17 and 113/17 - as amended), the Law on Primary Education ("RS Official Gazette", Nos. 55/13, 101/17 and 27/18 - as amended), the Law on Secondary Education ("RS Official Gazette", No. 55/2013 and 101/2017), the Law on Dual Education ("RS Official Gazette", No. 101/2017), the Law on Textbooks ("RS Official Gazette", No. 27/2018)

200 Introduced in 2009. The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team, Analysis of the application of affirmative measures in the education of the Roma and recommendations for improving the measures, June 2016, p. 12 <http://sociojalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Analiza-primene-afirmativnih-mera-u-oblasti-obrazovanja-Roma-i-Romkinja-i-preporuke-za-unapredjenje-mera.pdf>

201 The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team, Analysis of the application of affirmative measures in education of the Roma and recommendations for improving the measures, June 2016

202 Sex-disaggregated data are not available, on enrolment insistence is to have a minimum 50% of girls. Source: the Ministry of Education

who receive scholarships. Finally, 225 Roma teaching assistants have been hired in preschool institutions and primary schools, and the participation of women is 53%.

One of five priority areas of mandatory training of teachers, determined in the Ordinance on Continuous Professional Development for Teachers, Educators and Research Associates²⁰³, is the creation of a tolerant and non-discriminatory environment for each individual, as well as the prevention of violence, prevention of discrimination and inclusion of children from marginalized groups. In the Catalogue of the Continuing Professional Development Curriculum for Teachers, Educators and Research Associates for the 2015/16, 2016/2017, and 2017/2018 school year²⁰⁴, 19 programmes in the area of gender equality and protection from violence and discrimination were approved. The Catalogue of the Continuing Professional Development Curriculum for Teachers, Educators and Research Associates was also adopted for 2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021.²⁰⁵ A total of 32 programmes dealing with human rights are provided in the Catalogue.

g. Promoted safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environment for women and girls

For protection against discrimination and sexual harassment in educational institutions, the Ordinance for Institutions in Cases of Suspected or Established Discriminatory Behaviour and Violation of an Individual's Reputation, Honour and Dignity²⁰⁶ (2018) was adopted. Although there is no legal obligation to adopt such acts, some universities have adopted their own ordinances. For example, the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade adopted the Ordinance for Employees Regarding Prevention and Protection from Sexual Harassment and Blackmail of Students²⁰⁷, and the Union University²⁰⁸ adopted the Ordinance on Protection from Sexual Harassment and Blackmail.

In 2016, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development²⁰⁹ issued a manual for the education system entitled "Protecting Students from Human Trafficking"²¹⁰, the "Digital Violence - Prevention and Response" manual²¹¹ and the "Prevention of Gender-Based Violence" manual²¹². The "School without Violence" programme is a special programme for prevention of gender-based violence which has been adopted by 50 schools²¹³.

203 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 81/17)

204 <http://zuov.gov.rs/katalozi-programa-stalnog-strucnog-usavsavanja/>

205 <https://zuov.gov.rs/katalog-programa-strucnog-usavsavanja-za-skolsku-2018-2019-2019-2020-i-2020-2021-godinu/>

206 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 65 of 24 August 2018)

207 <http://www.fpn.bg.ac.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pravilnik-o-ponasanju-zaposlenih-u-vezi-sa-prevenijom-i-zastitom-od-seksualnog-uznemiravanja-i-ucenjivanja.pdf>

208 <http://pravnofakultet.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Pravilnik-o-zastiti-od-seksualnog-uznemiravanja-i-ucenjivanja-22.03.2019..pdf>

209 in cooperation with the Centre for Protection of Human Trafficking Victims and UNITAS Fund

210 <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Prirucnik-Zastita-ucenika-od-trgovine-ljudima-Protected-002-1.pdf>

211 <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/priru%C4%8Dnik-interaktivni.pdf> within the programme for Development of the Capacity of the System to Combat Violence, Abuse and Exploitation of Children via the Internet, which was implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, the Pedagogic Society of Serbia and UNICEF, with the financial support of the UK Government. The publication is also part of the Stop Digital Violence project implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Republic of Serbia, UNICEF and Telenor.

212 <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Prirucnik-za-preveniju-RZN.pdf> in cooperation with UNICEF, 2015

213 Ibid. 96.

The first national study on the social problem of sexual abuse of children in the Republic of Serbia was conducted.²¹⁴ The national study was conducted in 97 schools, 61 of which were primary and 36 secondary schools in 51 cities in Serbia. The study included a total of 2,053 children and students. The overall objective of the national study was to evaluate the degree of presence of sexual violence against children in the Republic of Serbia's education system.

214 The implementing agency, the owner and commissioner of the National Study: The Incest Trauma Centre - Belgrade, partners: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, Violence Prevention Unit, Department for Protection from Violence and Discrimination, and the Women's Health Promotion Centre in Belgrade, October 2015

Area 3 – Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

13. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?

a. Improved response to intimate partner violence/domestic partner violence, including sexual violence and marital rape

The action of authorities in preventing domestic and intimate partner violence has improved. The Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence²¹⁵ introduced urgent protective measures, such as temporary removal of the perpetrator from the home, temporary ban to the perpetrator from contacting the survivor of violence and restraining orders. The measures are imposed by a specialized police officer, based on risk assessment, for a period of 48 hours, while the acting public prosecutor has the authority to request a 30-day extension of protective measures from the court. Violation of protective measures is punishable by a 60-day misdemeanour prison sentence. Short legal deadlines are prescribed for government action. In the period June 2017 - June 2018, there were 44,728 reported cases of domestic violence. During 2017, the police imposed 28,026 urgent protection measures, 8,751 of which were measures of temporary removal of the perpetrator from the home, 19,275 measures of temporary prohibition of the perpetrator from contacting the victim and restraining orders. Courts have extended the duration of urgent measures in 15,373 cases. In 2017, the police received 7,106 criminal charges for domestic and intimate partner violence, which is 88% more than in 2014.²¹⁶ From 2014 to 2017, 8,268 persons were convicted of the criminal offence of domestic violence and 809 persons were convicted of crimes against sexual freedom, including 213 persons charged with rape, while 232 persons were convicted of the crime of establishing common-law marriage with underage girls²¹⁷.

Also, within the Ministry of Interior's project on the development of forensics and crime scene investigations, special rooms for vulnerable categories were renovated and equipped. The rooms were equipped with furniture, IT, photography and forensic equipment, in accordance with the standards implemented in police services in other countries to serve as interview rooms for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. The appearance of the said rooms is different from standard police offices with specially selected furniture, wall colours and with special corners for children (with toys) aimed to make the victims of violence feel safer and more comfortable when they give statements, and in this way avoid secondary victimization.

Multisectoral cooperation has improved in the area of protection and support for survivors of domestic violence and other acts of gender-based violence to which women and girls are most commonly exposed. A cooperation and coordination group has been established in every basic public prosecutor's office comprising representatives of the public prosecutor's office, the acting

215 Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence "RS Official Gazette", No. 94/2016. The law came into force on 1 June 2017

216 Republic of Serbia's report submitted in accordance with Article 68, Paragraph 1 of The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Study of the initial state) <https://www.rodnaravnopravnost.gov.rs/sites/default/files/2018-08/%D0%93%D0%A0%D0%95%D0%92%D0%98%D0%9E%20%D0% B8% D0% B7% D0% B2% D0% B5% D1% 88% D1% 82% D0% B0% D1% 98.pdf>

217 <http://www.stat.gov.rs/sr-Latn/oblasti/pravosudje/punoletni-ucinioci-krivicnih-dela>

police department and the social welfare centre. The groups in prosecutors' offices develop individual plans of protection and support for each survivor of violence, in the development of which the survivors of violence themselves can participate. All rules on cooperation between authorities and institutions in preventing domestic violence and providing assistance and support to survivors also apply to other acts of gender-based violence, including rape, stalking, sexual harassment etc. In every police department, basic and higher public prosecutor's office, basic and higher court and the social welfare centre, there are persons appointed as liaison officers, who share, on a daily basis, the information and data relevant for violence prevention, detection, prosecution and trial and for providing protection and support to survivors. From June 2017 to June 2018, 10,503 individual plans for the protection of survivors were developed²¹⁸. Pilot-centres for survivors of sexual violence were established on the territory of AP Vojvodina, and Operational Guidelines in Cases of Sexual Violence for Centres for Survivors of Sexual Violence were developed²¹⁹.

b. Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment and violence in public places and in employment

New criminal offences of gender-based violence, such as stalking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual harassment were introduced.²²⁰ Sentences for criminal offences of sexual violence were significantly increased, and the sentence for the crime of sexual intercourse with a helpless person, to which women with disabilities are most commonly exposed, was made equal to the sentence for the crime of rape. It is prescribed that the prosecution of all criminal offences of gender-based violence, including marital rape and other acts of sexual violence should be prosecuted ex officio, except for sexual harassment, which is prosecuted on request. Although prostitution has still not been decriminalized, the new Law on Public Peace and Order²²¹ introduced a misdemeanour penalty for persons who use prostitution services.

The Labour Law prohibited harassment and sexual harassment²²². In the case of discrimination, a person seeking employment or an employed person may launch proceedings for protection against discrimination before the acting court, which includes compensation from the employer²²³. The provisions of The Law on Prevention of Harassment at Work, which are also applied to cases of sexual harassment²²⁴, prescribe protection from abuse at work provided by the employer and judicial protection from abuse and sexual harassment.

In 2018, the Labour Inspectorate received 62 requests from employees to exercise their rights in connection with abuse at work (53 requests were submitted by women, and 9 by men). Upon executed inspection, 17 decisions and 15 conclusions were reached, 25 notifications were

218 www.iskjuccinasilje.rs

219 "Stop-protect-help" <http://projekti.zdravstvo.vojvodina.gov.rs/o-projektu/>

220 The Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code ("RS Official Gazette", No. 94/2016) - Article 138a, Article 121a of the Criminal Code and Article 182a CC.

221 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 6/2016 and 24/2018)

222 ("RS Official Gazette" No. 24/2005, 61/2005, 54/2009, 32/2013, 75/2014, 13/2017 –Constitutional Court decision, 113/2017 and 95/2018 - authentic interpretation), Article 21.

223 Ibid, Article 23.

224 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 36/10), Article 3.

delivered to applicants, which inform them how to exercise their rights, and 5 requests for launching misdemeanour proceedings were submitted²²⁵.

14. What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

c. Strengthened institutional framework and adopted laws, regulations and guidelines on violence against women

The institutional framework for combating violence against women and domestic violence has improved. The Council for Prevention of Domestic Violence has been established to monitor implementation of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence²²⁶ and give recommendations for better cross-sectoral cooperation and more effective work of authorities and institutions in prevention and protection from domestic violence and other acts of gender-based violence. In 2015, the Intersectoral Committee for Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Effects of Measures of the Programme for Protection of Women Against Violence was formed in AP Vojvodina. Prosecutors who deal specifically with cases of human trafficking and act as focal points were appointed in higher public prosecutors' offices. In 2017, The Ministry of the Interior established a working group for combating violence against women in order to strengthen the Ministry's cooperation with specialized women's NGOs that provide services to women in situations of violence.

In addition to the above-mentioned Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, the following by-laws, manuals and operational guidelines for cases of violence against women have been adopted: The Special Protocol for the Judiciary in Cases of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence²²⁷; The Risk Assessment Tool for Acting in the Cases of Domestic Violence; The Manual on the Implementation of Obligations of the Social Welfare Centres in the Application of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence²²⁸; The General Mandatory Instruction of the National Public Prosecutor's Office on the Establishment of Coordination and Cooperation Groups and the Method of Collecting and Submitting Data on Law Enforcement²²⁹; The General Mandatory Instruction of the National Public Prosecutor's Office on the Appointment of Focal Points in Charge of Working, Monitoring and Cooperation with other Institutions and Authorities in Relation to Criminal Offences against Sexual Freedom, Marriage and Family (2015); The National Public Prosecutor's Office Instruction on Keeping Special Records in the Appellate, Higher and Basic Public Prosecutors' Offices; The Operational Guidelines for Public Prosecutors, Police Officers and Staff in Social Welfare Centres for Cases of Domestic Violence; and The Manual on Prevention of the Secondary Victimization of Victims and Improvement of Gender Responsiveness and Procedures in Cases of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence²³⁰.

225 Report on work of the Labour Inspectorate for 2018.

226 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 94/2016)

227 <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sites/default/files/2018-11/Posebni%20protokol%20MRZSP%20nasilje%20u%20porodici.pdf>

228 <https://www.paragraf.rs/dnevne-vesti/210717/210717-vest10.html>

229 <http://www.rjt.gov.rs>

230 Report on the implementation of recommendations No. 17 and 23 from the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in relation to the second and third periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sites/default/files/dokument_file/izvestaj_o_primeni_preporuka_17_i_23.doc.

d. Strengthened support services for survivors of violence

Service provision for survivors of violence has improved. A national SOS helpline for women who experienced violence (0800 222 003), the method of operation of which should harmonized with national and international standards, was set up in 2018. The Ministry of Interior operates a free line for reporting domestic violence (0900/100-600) which is available 24/7. Any form of domestic violence can be reported, regardless of sex and age of the victim and perpetrator.

A unique SOS helpline has been operating successfully in AP Vojvodina (0800/101010) since 2012. In women's NGOs, there are 22 SOS helplines for women survivors of violence, 4 of which are licensed. Two NGO women's SOS helplines specialise in human trafficking victims, four are specialized for women with disabilities and three are available in the languages of national minorities. Women survivors of violence have access to 15 safe houses/shelters, five of which are in Vojvodina and three in Belgrade within the Counselling Centre Against Domestic Violence in Belgrade, which is funded through the city's budget.

In order to improve the operation of departments that provide services to women survivors of violence, training for professionals in police, judiciary, social protection and health care institutions has been introduced. In 2017, 813 participants attended a mandatory training on gender-based violence and violence against women for a period of five days, and 888 officials from the Ministry of the Interior completed 48 practical trainings and 35 theoretical trainings. In the period from February 2017 to December 2018, specialized trainings were conducted; a total of 51 seminars²³¹ attended by 2,218 judges and prosecutors. Additionally, 150 representatives of institutions that participate in multi-sector groups were trained, and the Ministry of Justice provides consultative support for multi-sector groups on the territories of those municipalities which have been observed to have difficulties in work and fewer reported and prosecuted cases of violence. In addition, 200 professional representatives of the police, social welfare centres, health care institutions and the prosecutors' offices completed specialized training for dealing with specific forms of violence, such as sexual harassment, stalking and rape. In the period 2014-2017, a total of 96 trainings according accredited programmes were conducted in the area of violence against women and children, which were attended by 1,922 participants. A methodology was developed for training health professionals on gender-based violence and on providing an appropriate response to gender-based violence. During 2016 and 2017, training of trainers for health professionals was carried out in order to improve the knowledge and skills of health professionals to identify and document cases of gender-based violence. After participating in elementary and advanced trainings of trainers, seven health institutions developed and accredited their own trainings. Around 400-500 health professionals at the local level have been trained in the field of health sector response to gender-based violence. After participating in the elementary and advanced training of trainers, seven health institutions have developed and accredited their own trainings. Around 400-500 health professionals at the local level have been trained in the field of the health sector's response to gender-based violence.

231 22 two-day and 29 one-day seminars

15. What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

e. Public awareness raising and changing of attitudes and behaviours toward violence against women and girls

In 2016, the Ministry of Justice implemented the “Turn off the Violence” campaign, in cooperation with partner institutions, through online channels, social networks and media, to raise the awareness of all stakeholders in society about domestic violence and violence against women. A website was designed targeting the professional and general public to raise awareness and to encourage citizens to report violence. The website has a FAQ section, reveals misconceptions, stereotypes, the most common reasons used as a justification for violence against women, and debunks the belief that women victims of violence make false claims against their abusers. The campaign has been effective, as evidenced by 81 news agency features, 143 features in print media, 288 features in electronic media, 366 online features, and 700,000 views of six YouTube and Facebook video clips.

In AP Vojvodina, a **domestic and intimate partner violence awareness campaign** was carried out to raise public awareness about domestic violence, protection measures, as well as contacts of relevant services. Fifty thousand fliers were distributed with information in the Serbian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovak and Romani languages, as well as “Stop violence against women” brochures with information about the types of violence, legislation, survival tactics and about the role of relevant institutions. Also, 15,000 promotional fliers were printed in Serbian, Hungarian, Slovak and Romani. A campaign was implemented to promote gender equality, which envisaged media events, public appearances and press releases, with the aim of eradicating gender stereotypes of female and male roles and responsibilities in the family and society.

In 2018, a **global gender equality campaign** was launched for the first time in Serbia – “*HeForShe*”²³², involving numerous actions on social media, putting up billboards, and drawing graffiti and street art. Thirty-six news reports on the campaign were recorded, as well as five guest appearances in the media, and the information reached 27,000 people through social media. The Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the Red Star Football Club launched a campaign to raise public awareness of the need to combat violence against women and girls. Throughout 2018, a banner with the slogan “Stop violence against women” was displayed at all Champions League matches played at the Rajko Mitic stadium. The message that violence is unacceptable was seen not only by fifty thousand football supporters present at the stadium²³³, but reached an even wider audience of viewers. For the purpose of raising public awareness about violence against women, at the proposal of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the Women against Violence Network²³⁴, the Government declared 18 May as the Remembrance Day for Domestic Violence Victims.

The Ministry of Interior, with support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, is implementing a project on child safety, educating primary school pupils on safety risks and threats they are exposed to, ways to prevent them and skills to achieve protection. During the academic year 2017/2018, the project was implemented in all primary schools in the

232 <https://www.heforshe.org/en>

233 <https://www.rodnaravnopravnost.gov.rs/sr/press/vesti/koordinaciono-telo-i-crvena-zvezda-ne-nasilu-nad-zenama>

234 <http://civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82/%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82.74.html?newsId=812>

Republic of Serbia in fourth and sixth grades, through a total of 49,013 lectures, with average attendance of 54,815 pupils in 4th grade and 56,150 students in 6th grade on each of the 8 topics. Among the topics, we would like to emphasize “Violence as negative social phenomenon”, aiming to transfer knowledge on forms of violence, ways to respond to violence and mechanisms to overcome negative effects of violence. In cooperation with the OSCE, a handbook on child safety was produced, targeting fourth and sixth grade primary school pupils, which was distributed during the above-mentioned academic year. This activity included the distribution of 117,557 copies in Serbian, as well as 6,430 copies in national minority languages (Hungarian, Romanian, Slovakian, Rusyn, Bosnian, Croatian and Albanian).

The lecture on the topic “What police do and together against violence”, a colouring book was distributed “ABC for first graders’ safety – What a police officer does” to first-grade pupils, produced in 60,000 copies in Serbian, as well as in eight national minority languages (Bosnian 1,450, Bulgarian 50, Hungarian 1,450, Romanian 100, Rusyn 50, Albanian 600, Slovakian 350 and Croatian 50).

16. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual distribution of intimate images)?

f. Introduced online safety measures for children

The year 2016 saw the adoption of the **Regulation on child safety and protection when using information and communication technologies**²³⁵, regulating preventive measures for the safety and protection of children when they use information and communication technologies, in other words the Internet, and the procedure in cases of violation of, or threat to the child’s security online. The objective of the Regulation is to raise awareness and knowledge about the advantages and risks associated with the use of the Internet, and about safe Internet use, to improve the digital literacy of children, students, parents or guardians and teachers, and to improve interdepartmental cooperation in the domain of children’s online safety and protection.

In 2016, the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications established a **National Contact Centre for Online Safety of Children**, tasked with advising children, parents, students and teachers about the advantages and risks associated with the use of the Internet and about the safe use of new technologies. It allows callers to report harmful, inappropriate or illegal content and behaviour on the Internet, in other words, any violations of the rights and interests of the child. Other relevant institutions and services are involved in processing these reports, depending on whether the illegal content or behaviour is harmful to the mental or physical integrity of the child (threats of violence, stalking, harassment, child pornography and similar), or whether it violates the rights, health status, wellbeing, and overall integrity of the child, and similar. From the day it became operational, the National Contact Centre has received over 3,000 calls, and/or online reports. To raise the awareness of parents, children and teachers about the dangers associated with internet use, educators from the National Contact Centre designed and delivered

235 RS Official Gazette No 61/2016)

interactive trainings targeted to children and parents in 31 primary schools, attended by over 3,200 pupils and 850 parents.²³⁶

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, in cooperation with the Serbian Pedagogical Society developed an accredited **training programme on safeguards against online child abuse**, intended for practitioners of social welfare centres, and local interdepartmental teams for the protection of children from neglect, violence, harassment and abuse.²³⁷ Twenty trainers,²³⁸ 6,000 students and around 1,900 educators were trained to recognize and address situations of digital violence, including gender-based violence, and in the safe use of the Internet. A handbook on Digital Violence – Prevention and Response was developed and disseminated to all schools. A Facebook SOS application was created to help students in situations of digital violence. Trainings were delivered to 160 educational counsellors on **Empowerment of school administration staff to assist the school in protecting students from digital violence**, to enable them to provide support to schools in addressing situations of digital violence. A Facebook page and campaign were created under the slogan “**Your words have weight, stop the hate**”, to raise awareness about the safe use of digital media. Instruction on how to prevent digital violence was delivered to 3,784. In 2015, the #ThinkFirst one-year campaign was conducted with the aim of preventing cyber violence against youth. The campaign was launched with a competitive quiz about positive role models of online and social networking behaviour and communication²³⁹. Also, within the Ministry of Interior project on child safety, implemented with support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, an educational mobile phone app on child safety was developed, available on GooglePlay and AppStore.

17. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?

g. Enacted legal reforms and introduced binding regulation for the media, including the advertising, to combat gender bias in the media

The following media laws were adopted: the **Law on Public Information and Media**²⁴⁰ (2014), banning media from publishing ideas, opinions, or information that instigate discrimination, hatred or violence against individuals, or groups, because they are (or are not) a particular sex, because of their sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics, irrespective of whether such publishing resulted in a criminal offense; the **Law on Electronic Media**²⁴¹, prescribing that media services shall be delivered in respect of human rights, and in particular personal dignity, that all media content must respect human dignity and rights, and that scenes of degrading treatment, violence and torture must not be broadcast unless there is editorial and artistic justification, which is within the purview of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media; **Law on Advertising**²⁴², which bans advertising messaging that arouses hatred or intolerance, or encourages behaviour

236 <http://pametnoibezbedno.gov.rs/rs-lat/kontakt-centar>

237 Developing the system's capacity for combating online violence, abuse and ill-treatment of children, UNICEF

238 <http://obuka.virtuelnopostajestvarnost.org/o-obuci/>

239 <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/prvo-razmisli-borba-protiv-digital/>

240 RS Official Gazette No 83/2014, 58/2015 and 12/2016.

241 RS Official Gazette No 83/2014 and 6/2016.

242 RS Official Gazette No 6/2016.

that endangers the health or safety of the recipient of the advertising message, and, in particular, showing content that might arouse fear or aggression, the portrayal of sexual harassment as acceptable, desirable or normal social behaviour, showing minors in a sexual context, as well as showing men and women as boys or girls with the sexual characteristics of adults.

In 2015, the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (REM) adopted a **Rulebook on the protection of human rights in the media services sector**²⁴³, prescribing a set of rules relevant for media reporting. Thus, it prescribes that the media service providers are required to report on tragic events without sensationalism, and with respect for the privacy and dignity of the victim, as well as the victim's relatives or other close persons. Also, media are banned from publishing content that openly or covertly incites discrimination, hatred or violence against individuals or groups because of their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and other personal characteristics, and/or media content exalting, justifying or minimizing gender-based and other forms of discrimination. The REM also produced a publication titled "How to make a stand against violence – the media's role",²⁴⁴ and in 2018, a "Handbook for journalists – domestic violence",²⁴⁵ providing guidance to the media on how to report on domestic violence in a systematic, comprehensive and well-informed fashion, designed to bring about a change in public awareness, to reduce biases and increase the accountability of the system's institutions, and society at large. It is also important to mention two publications by the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality: "Media, Gender and Reporting in Emergency Situations" (2017) and "Media Manual – Fighting for Equality" (2016).

18. Has your country taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?

h. Introduced measures to support women with disabilities, Roma women, rural women, women survivors of sexual violence

Based on the results of the Baseline Study and Survey on the Status of Rural Women Survivors of Violence, conducted by the AP Vojvodina Institute for Gender Equality in 2015, the AP Vojvodina Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality developed a training programme to promote the knowledge and understanding of practitioners on how to provide efficient protection services to women from marginalized groups survivors of violence. Subsequently, 200 professionals from the police, social welfare centres, healthcare facilities, prosecutor's offices, underwent an accredited training programme to improve access to institutions and institutional protection of women from vulnerable groups (Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities, women living with HIV/AIDS). The professionals underwent a specialized training on how to proceed in cases of special forms of violence, such as sexual harassment, stalking and rape. Seven centres for victims of sexual violence were established in AP Vojvodina in 2017, under the AP Vojvodina Health Secretariat, of which six are located in general hospitals and one at the Gynaecology and Obstetrics Clinic in Novi Sad.

In 2018, the centres' operational procedures and guidelines were analysed and proposals were provided for their amendment to respond to the specific needs of women with disabilities. It is

243 <http://rem.rs/uploads/files/Pravilnici/4970-Pravilnik%20o%20zastiti%20judskih%20prava%20S%D0%90%D0%88%D0%A2.pdf>

244 <http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/sr/home/library/poverty/kako-protiv-nasilja--uloga-medija.html>

245 <https://www.womenngo.org.rs/publikacije/razvoj-dobrih-praksi/857-vodic-za-novinarke-nasilje-u-porodici-ii-izdanje-2018>

expected that the proposed amendments will be passed by the AP Vojvodina Health Secretariat in 2019. In 2018, a project was launched for the empowerment of rural women by raising their awareness about domestic violence and possibilities for their protection, by strengthening the service providers' capacities to respond to the specific needs of women in rural areas and raise public awareness about their status. To encourage Roma women to report violence, in 2017, the Ministry of Justice, with the support of women's NGOs, produced a special video clip about gender-based violence against Roma women to raise public awareness about this issue. With the support of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Novi Sad Women's Shelter was reconstructed to enable access to women with disabilities.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ <http://portalinvalidnosti.net/2017/05/podrska-ministarstva-gradevinarstva-saobracaja-i-infrastrukture-poboljsanju-pristupacnosti-sigurne-zenske-kuce-zenama-sa-invaliditetom/>

Section Four - Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

19. What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

a. Reformed laws and regulations that promote women's participation in politics, especially at decision-making level, including electoral system reform and adoption of temporary special measures, such as quotas

Special measures, i.e. gender quotas, were introduced through electoral legislation, prescribing a minimum 30% quota for the under-represented sex, every third seat on the electoral list is reserved, and the mandates are distributed according to the rank order of the candidates on the list for election to representative bodies at national²⁴⁷, regional²⁴⁸ and local level²⁴⁹, as well as for the election of national councils of national minorities²⁵⁰. The introduction of the gender quota led to an increase in women's representation in the National Assembly (34%)²⁵¹, AP Vojvodina Assembly (35%)²⁵², local level assemblies (32.7%)²⁵³. The quota resulted in the formation of women's parliamentary and local government council networks, which are a type of informal platform for action for women MPs and councillors from various political parties²⁵⁴ on key gender equality issues²⁵⁵. There are no legislated quotas for executive bodies, or for senior management positions in the state, regional and local administration. The Draft Gender Equality Law prescribes a 40% quota for the under-represented sex in directly elected representative bodies and all public agencies, as well as in senior management positions in public agencies²⁵⁶.

b. Implemented measures to strengthen women's capacities and develop their skills, and improved availability of data on women's political participation

Progress was made in strengthening the capacities and knowledge of managers in public agencies in the area of gender equality, through amendments to the by-law enabling the modification of the curriculum for the professional state examination so as to include a course on gender equality and prevention of discrimination. The same was done with respect to the continuous training of lawyers and prosecutors delivered by the Judicial Academy. This intervention is far-reaching,

247 Law on the Election of Members of Parliament (2009), Art. 40a. https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_izboru_narodnih_poslanika.html

248 AP Vojvodina Parliament Decision on Elections (2014), Art. 27, paragraphs 3, 4 and 5. <http://www.skupstinavojvodine.gov.rs/Strana.aspx?s=aktapv9&j=SRL>

249 Law on Local Elections (2011), Art. 20, paragraphs 3, 4 and 5. https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_lokalnim_izborima.html

250 Law on National Councils of National Minorities (2014), Art. 72, paragraph 5. https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_nacionalnim_savetima_nacionalnih_manjina.html

251 In the current legislative term of the Parliament, after the elections, women's representation stood at 37.2%, but later declined to 34% (e.g. some women were elected as ministers and consequently withdrew from the MP's function)

252 <http://www.skupstinavojvodine.gov.rs/Statistika.aspx?s=poslanici&r=1>

253 For instance, the Speaker of Parliament is a woman, and one of the five Deputy Speakers is a woman. Women preside over 9 out of 20 parliamentary working groups, but there are no women chairing parliamentary caucuses.

254 The Women's Parliamentary Network (2013) <https://zpmrsrbija.wordpress.com/>, in the AP Vojvodina Parliament (2016) <http://www.skupstinavojvodine.gov.rs/Strana.aspx?s=zenskamreza&j=SRL> and in the local government councils.

255 For instance, The Democratization of Serbia Through Greater Participation of Women in Politics (2017) <http://www.ips.ac.rs/publications/demokratizacija-srbije-putem-veceg-ucesca-zena-u-politici/>

256 Draft Gender Equality Law <https://www.paragraf.rs/dnevne-vesti/300817/300817-vest15.html>

considering that future public officials will be acquiring competencies in the area of gender equality as part of their regular curricula required for acquiring qualifications.

Data on women's political participation were collected, including women in appointed and elected positions. The biggest gender disparity is present among the highest-ranking and lowest-ranking positions, in towns and municipalities, in local community councils and public enterprises²⁵⁷. For instance, the head of the Government of Serbia is a woman, one of the deputy heads of government is a woman, and women are at the helm of 4 out of 20 ministries; in the Government of AP Vojvodina out of 14 departments only 2 have women at the helm, and there are no women holding the position of head or deputy head of the Vojvodina Government. There are only 7.1% women Mayors, and 17.1% women Deputy Mayors. In local community councils, women are represented with 10.7%.²⁵⁸ After a successfully implemented cycle of elections for national minority councils²⁵⁹ in 2018, in 23 national minority councils operational on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, six women were elected presidents of these bodies. Also, women are at the helm of various working bodies within national minority councils, such as executive committees, committees for culture, education, information, etc. Since 2005, the Statistical Office of Serbia issues a special publication once in three years, titled "Women and Men in Serbia", which presents gender disaggregated statistical data, including data on women's political participation²⁶⁰.

20. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

c. Introduced vocational education and training in media and ICTs

Various institutions provide trainings for women editors-in-chief and journalists, including the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality²⁶¹ and the AP Vojvodina Institute for Gender Equality. A handbook was prepared for media on how to report on domestic violence and violence against women²⁶², as well as a Handbook on how to report on persons with disabilities.²⁶³ Gender equality is among the topics of the regular annual trainings organized by the civil sector²⁶⁴, and journalists are involved both as participants and lecturers. There are surveys on media coverage of gender equality²⁶⁵, various other areas relevant for gender equality (e.g. vulnerable groups, reporting on women electoral candidates, etc.), as well as scientific papers in this field²⁶⁶. The Women Journalists Against Violence Against Women group has been active since 2018. The

257 In 2017, based on the findings of a survey of the progress made towards gender equality, the Commissioner for Equality circulated special recommendations for the improvement of gender equality to local governments <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/preporuka-mera-za-ostvarivanje-ravnopravnosti/>

258 Equality Commissioner's Survey (2017): gender equality in local government units <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/rodna-ravnopravnost-u-jedinicama-lokalne-samouprave-presek-stanja-u-sprovođenju-preporuke-mera-jedinicama-lokalne-samouprave-za-ostvarivanje-rodne-ravnopravnosti/>

259 Normally, national minority councils represent the national minority in the area of education, culture and information in the national minority language and official use of the language and script, participate in decision-making processes or decide on issues in these areas.

260 <http://socijalnoukijucivanje.gov.rs/rs/republicki-zavod-za-statistiku-objavio-publikaciju-zene-i-muskarci-u-republici-srbiji-2017/>

261 Media attitude towards discrimination (analysis) (2018) <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/kakav-je-odnos-medija-u-srbiji-prema-diskriminaciji/>

262 [http://www.medijskapismenost.net/dokument/Prirucnik-za-medijsko-izvestavanje-o-nasilju-u-porodici-i-nasilju-nad-zenama-\(PDF\)](http://www.medijskapismenost.net/dokument/Prirucnik-za-medijsko-izvestavanje-o-nasilju-u-porodici-i-nasilju-nad-zenama-(PDF))

263 http://socijalnoukijucivanje.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Prirucnik_izvestavanje_o_osobama_sa_hendikepom_Lana_Nikolic.pdf

264 For instance: Regular annual seminar for politicians (BFPI), Women's Leadership Academy (BFPI, CMB, CPŽ)

265 Media and teaching – media literacy (2017) <http://www.novinarska-skola.org/sr/mediji-i-nastava-medijsko-opismenjavanje-2017/>

266 "Formal and non-formal education and the professional status of women journalists in Vojvodina – gender perspective" (doctoral thesis). <http://nardus.mpn.gov.rs/bitstream/handle/123456789/7785/Disertacija8103.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications has been working to improve girls' and young women's access to and use of ICT since 2010, with the aim of affirming digital skills in education and closing the digital divide between boys and girls. In March 2019, this Ministry adopted a Programme for the empowerment of women in the information and communication technologies sector for the period from 2019 to 2020²⁶⁷. The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications celebrates the International Girls in ICT Day every year, in cooperation with relevant institutions, establishments and companies. This activity is implemented to familiarize girls with ICT through age-appropriate activities, and to highlight the advantages of using ICT tools in the new digital age.

21. Do you track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

d. Gender-responsive budgeting

The Republic of Serbia is one of the few countries in the world that incorporated the obligation to strengthen gender equality in the public finance management reform through the Budget System Law²⁶⁸, relying on the gradual introduction of gender responsive budgeting (GRB). Pursuant to this Law, all budget beneficiaries are required to contribute to the achievement of the four budgeting aims, one of which is "allocation efficiency, which entails the earmarking of budget funds for the purpose of improving gender equality"²⁶⁹. Out of 53 direct budget beneficiaries at national level, 47²⁷⁰, as well as all 26 direct budget beneficiaries in AP Vojvodina, will be involved in the gradual introduction of GRB in the budget for the year 2020. Local governments are also making progress with the gradual introduction of GRB. The annual progress report on the gradual introduction of gender-responsive budgeting in the public finance management system in Serbia is available to all budget beneficiaries participating in this process, as well as to the expert community, as of 2019²⁷¹. The introduction of GRB resulted in the improvement of institutional records and statistic²⁷², and sector gender analyses²⁷³, while examples of the transformational impact of GRB on gender equality were collected to further improve the GRB process and cooperation was strengthened between financial authorities at all levels and institutional gender equality mechanisms.

Pursuant to the Budget System Law, entities receiving funds from the budget of the Republic of Serbia are required to monitor and report on the effects of the programme. The first annual reports on the effects of the programme were prepared for the year 2017, as well as the first half-yearly report for the first six months of 2018. In the context of these reports, data are collected about indicator values achieved in the reporting period and these are then compared with the target values (including gender-responsive objectives and indicators that adequately measure

267 <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/prikaz/371444>

268 (RS Official Gazette No 54/09, 73/10, 101/10, 101/11, 93/12, 62/13, 63/13 – rev. 108/13, 142/14, 68/15 – as amended, 103/15, 99/16 and 113/17).

269 *Ibid*, budget objectives, Article 4.

270 <http://www.mfin.gov.rs/pages/article.php?id=13643>

271 The expert community include the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, the academic community, women's organizations and other civil society organizations working on improving gender equality.

272 Pursuant to Article 40 of the Gender Equality Law

273 Sector gender analyses were prepared by the following budget beneficiaries: AP Vojvodina Secretariat for Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry, the Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure, the Ministry of State Administration and Local Government (ongoing), the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Protection of Personal Data, Ministry of Environmental Protection.

the contribution of the objective to improving gender equality), explanations are provided for any deviations, and the progress made toward the achievement of target values. Furthermore, Article 79, paragraph 1, item 1) of the Budget System Law²⁷⁴ prescribes that the final account contains the annual financial report on budget execution, which in turn contains an annual report on the effects of the programme, including the effects on improving gender equality, with additional notes, explanations and statement of reasons. In 2019, for the first time a separate report will be drafted on the effects on gender-responsive goals for budget beneficiaries that introduced gender-responsive budgeting in 2018 (36 institutions at national, and 18 at provincial level).

What is the estimated proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

Estimations are not feasible as the funds are allocated by budget programme. Budget appropriations are linked to programmes and programme activities, not goals. This makes it difficult to assess the share of funds invested in promoting gender equality under each programme. The Finance Ministry has started working on a methodology for upgrading the budget software to make this feasible. The funds invested in ensuring access to services and goods in all the sectors, as well as special measures designed to offset the disadvantaged position of the under-represented sex, currently women. The Coordination Body for Gender Equality and Finance Ministry monitor progress and notify budget beneficiaries as well as gender equality focal points about the findings in the Progress Report on the gradual introduction of gender-responsive budgeting. The report will also be made available to the expert/academic community, and the plan is to make it available to the general public in the future.

22. As a donor country, does your country track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

Not applicable.

23. Does your country have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?

e. Adopted the National Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan

The Government of Serbia adopted its third National Gender Equality Strategy for the period from 2016 to 2020, with Action Plan for the period from 2016 to 2018²⁷⁵. The Strategy has three overarching goals: 1. changed gender patterns and improved gender equality culture²⁷⁶;

274 Article 79, Paragraph 1.1

275 Government Decision pursuant to Art. 45, para. 1 of the Government Law (RS Official Gazette No 55/05, 71/05 – revised, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11, 68/12 – CC, 72/12, 7/14 – CC and 44/14), <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/lat/dokumenti/nacionalna-strategija-za-rodnu-ravnopravnost-za-period-od-2016-do-2020-godine-sa-akcionim>

276 5 specific objectives: 1.1 increased capacities and knowledge of managers and staff in the public administration about gender equality; 1.2. Gender-sensitive formal education; 1.3. development of knowledge and visibility of academic results in the field of gender studies; 1.4. raised public awareness about the importance of gender equality; 1.5. increased protection of women from gender-based, domestic and intimate partner violence.

2. increased equality of women and men through the implementation of equal opportunities policies and measures²⁷⁷; and 3. systematic mainstreaming of gender equality in passing, implementing and monitoring public policies²⁷⁸. An independent evaluation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for the period from 2016 to 2018 was implemented to gain systematic insight into the implementation process and outcomes, as well as to formulate recommendations for the second phase of Strategy implementation. Currently, a NAP is being developed for the period 2019–2020.

Key evaluation findings indicate that a lot has been done in the area of gender-based violence (primarily domestic violence), while some other areas have seen less progress, for instance, economic empowerment and redistribution of unpaid care activities. Taking into consideration that interventions target regulatory reform and capacity building, effective changes in legislation are in place, still, there is a need to improve impact monitoring mechanisms, introduce new services, change practices, increase employment, entrepreneurship, and remove structural barriers. The process is visible, many activities are underway, there is a shift in awareness, and the importance of gender equality has been recognized. The Law on the Planning System of the Republic of Serbia²⁷⁹ should contribute to the improvement of the new NAP as it requires all activities to be intersected with the budgets of the relevant ministries and partly with donor funding. Taking the evaluation of the NAP 2016–2018 as a basis, the focus in drafting the NAP 2019–2020 will be on planning the activities and implementation instruments, defining the status and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in the implementation, coordination, funding, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

Strategies and action plans important for improving gender equality and combating gender discrimination have been adopted. The Strategy for the Prevention of and Protection from Discrimination (2014–2018)²⁸⁰ lays down a harmonized system of public policy measures, conditions and instruments that Serbia has to implement to prevent or reduce discrimination in all its forms, as well as special cases of discrimination, especially against certain vulnerable social groups exposed to a higher risk of discrimination, such as: (1) members of national minorities; (2) women; (3) LGBT persons; (4) persons with disabilities; (5) the elderly; (6) children; (7) refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable migrant groups; (8) persons on the basis of religious beliefs and (9) persons whose health condition could give rise to discrimination. The Strategy and related Action Plan for its implementation²⁸¹ envisages numerous measures for the prevention of discrimination of women and their protection, including measures for specific groups of women who are exposed to multiple and intersectional discrimination.

The National Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2018)²⁸² envisages measures and activities for the improvement of women's security in society, with focus on improving the position and security of women at local level. The Strategy

277 7 specific objectives: 2.1. equal participation of women and men in parenting and the care economy; 2.2. women and men equally participate in decision-making in the public and political life; 2.3. improved economic position of women and status of women on the labour market; 2.4. enhanced role of women in the security system; 2.5. women and men in rural areas actively and equally contribute to development and have equal access to development outcomes; 2.6. improved position of groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination and vulnerability; 2.7. improved women's health and equal access to healthcare services.

278 7 specific objectives: 3.1. established functional gender equality mechanisms at all levels; 3.2. gender perspective is incorporated in all policy documents; 3.3. gender analysis of programmes, policies and measures; 3.4. gender-sensitive statistics and records; 3.5. gender-responsive budgeting; 3.6. established cooperation mechanisms with associations; 3.7. established international and regional cooperation and exchange of good practices.

279 <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2018/2386-17%20lat.pdf>

280 http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sites/default/files/dokument_file/strategija_jul_2013.pdf

281 http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sites/default/files/dokument_file/akcioni_plan_-_srpski.pdf

282 <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/zakljucak/2018/9/1/reg>

for the Improvement of the Status of Persons with Disabilities is in its final stage of drafting (by 2020), as well as the action plan for its implementation²⁸³, and is expected to be adopted soon.

24. Does your country have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?

f. Established a Council and drafted an Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations of United Nations human rights mechanisms, including CEDAW and UPR

On 28 February 2019, at the 72nd session of the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Republic of Serbia submitted its Fourth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), having gone through the third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) cycle in January 2018. Our country received a total of 190 recommendations from 74 UN member states, out of which 175 were accepted, with 36 relating to women, elimination of violence against women and gender equality.

With the aim to fulfil the recommendations from the second UPR cycle, and to efficiently monitor their implementation, in 2014, the Government of the Republic of Serbia established the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of the Recommendations of the UN Human Rights Mechanisms. The Council is chaired by the Director a.i. of the Office for Human and Minority Rights, and it includes representatives of the ministries of interior and foreign affairs, justice, labour and social affairs, health, education, public administration and local self-government, culture and European integration. The sessions of this body are attended also by the representatives of the Parliamentary Committee for Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality, independent institutions and civil society organizations.

This body aims to monitor received recommendations more efficiently, but also to improve intersectoral cooperation in their implementation. The Council is another firm basis for further strengthening of the cooperation with UN Human Rights Mechanisms. The Council's work is based on the principles of inclusion and transparency. Inclusion entails that, in addition to executive authorities, the representatives of the Parliament, independent bodies, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders are included in its work. So far, twelve civil society organizations have signed memoranda of cooperation with the Council. Transparency entails the openness of the Council's work, as well as the entire process.

The Council has initiated the establishment of the Platform of Civil Society Organizations for Cooperation with UN Human Rights Mechanisms, which currently includes 18 civil society

²⁸³ <http://noois.rs/o-nama/aktivnosti/123-zakoni-i-propisi-u-proceduri/strategija-unapredenja-polozaja-osoba-sa-invaliditetom-u-republici-srbiji-za-period-do-2020-godine?layout=>

organizations, including a segment on monitoring recommendations related to the rights of girls and women.

The Council has developed a Plan for the implementation of all recommendations from UN Human Rights Mechanisms to the Republic of Serbia. This plan contains the status, aim, timeline for fulfilling recommendations, as well as authorities responsible for the implementation of each individual recommendation, including CEDAW Committee recommendations. For more efficient monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations, the Council is developing indicators. Indicators are being developed in cooperation with the civil society, independent government institutions and the Parliament, with support of the UN and OSCE in Serbia. The plan is to link the implementation of each UN Mechanism recommendation with the fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goals, under the Agenda 2030.

25. Is there a national human rights institution in your country?

e. National human rights institutions (NHRI) are in place

In Serbia, the NHRI is the Ombudsman, accredited by the International Coordination Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights with the highest "A" status²⁸⁴. The Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia is an independent and autonomous government authority introduced in the Serbian legal system in 2005 with the Law on Ombudsman.²⁸⁵ The position of the institution was considerably strengthened by the 2006 Republic of Serbia Constitution²⁸⁶, when the Ombudsman became a constitutional category. The Ombudsman protects and promotes human and minority freedoms and citizens' rights and controls the legality and regularity of operations of government authorities and organizations with public mandate. There is no right or freedom not included in the Ombudsman's roles of protection, control and promotion. The activities in the area of gender equality are performed in the Department for Child Rights, Gender Equality and Rights of Persons with Disabilities. One of the four Deputy-Ombudsman is responsible for gender equality²⁸⁷. Activities in the field of gender equality are reported in the regular annual reports²⁸⁸.

At regional level (AP Vojvodina) there is a Provincial Ombudsman²⁸⁹, and one of the deputies is elected for gender equality issues, and actions taken toward gender equality are reported in regular annual reports.

The Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, established in 2010 under the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, plays a key role in the sphere of protection from discrimination. The Commissioner is an autonomous, stand-alone, Ombudsman-like public body, designated as the central independent national body in the legal system, specialized for the prevention of and protection from discrimination and promotion of equality. The Commissioner acts on complaints filed by citizens, adopts recommendations in cases of gender-based discrimination, alerts the

284 <http://ennhri.org/The-Protector-of-Citizens-of-the-Republic-of-Serbia>

285 ("RS Official Gazette", No. 79/05 и 54/07)

286 Art. 138 of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia.

287 Art. 6 of the Law on the Ombudsman

288 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/godisnji-izvestaji/5671-2017>

289 <https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/index.php?lang=sr-RS>

public about typical and serious cases of gender-based discrimination, files misdemeanour charges and may file strategic discrimination lawsuits.²⁹⁰ Regular annual reports contain an overview of all activities of the Ombudsman, as well as recommendations for improving equality.²⁹¹ In 2015, the Commissioner prepared a Special Report on Discrimination of Women, highlighting the key challenges in combating gender discrimination, including multiple discrimination of highly vulnerable groups of women, and providing recommendations to state authorities on measures to be taken to achieve gender equality and create equal opportunities.

Another important actor is the Office for Human and Minority Rights, which provides technical assistance to the Government and Ministries in the human rights domain, monitors the alignment of national legislation with international instruments on gender equality, proposes amendments to national legislation, strategies and action plans, and prepares regular periodic reports on the implementation of international human rights treaties. The Office initiated the establishment of the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of the Recommendations of the UN Human Rights Mechanisms to which it is providing expert and administrative support. The Office for Human and Minority Rights coordinated the development of the Strategy for the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for the period 2014-2018 and its Action Plan. It is the first strategic document dedicated to the fight against discrimination among nine vulnerable social groups, including women. A number of relevant civil society organizations participated in the development of this document. The Office also initiated the establishment of the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of the Action Plan on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, to which it provided expert and administrative support, and which was headed by the Office Director a.i. This very mechanism has become a good practice example for monitoring the achieved results and implementation of strategic documents. The Office has enhanced the work of this body by appointing and training focal points in relevant sectors as well as a number of local government representatives, which helped achieve capacity building of both central and local government authorities.²⁹²

f. Improved gender equality through the activity of national human rights institutions

The Office for Human and Minority Rights translated the text of the CEDAW Convention and Optional Protocol into 16 national minority languages living in the Republic of Serbia, including Romanian, Rusyn, Macedonian, Hungarian, Czech, Albanian, Bosnian, Montenegrin, Croatian, Slovakian, Bulgarian, Romani, Bunjevac, Ukrainian, Vlach and German languages. All General Recommendations adopted by the CEDAW Committee thus far, have been translated into Serbian. The Office has also translated into Serbian the Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women regarding the Fourth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW/C/SRB/CO/4) and submitted to all key legislative, executive and judiciary institutions at the national, provincial and local levels. All of the above documents are available to citizens at the Office for Human and Minority Rights website.

Through its activity, the Ombudsman promoted gender equality, which is evidenced by a series of its reports, such as the Ombudsman's Report on Women's Representation in Decision-Making

290 Art. 33 of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination.

291 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/izvestaji/>

292 <http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/>

Positions and Activities of the Local Gender Equality Mechanisms in Serbia (2018)²⁹³; Selected Recommendations of the Ombudsman on the Protection of Women from Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence (2016)²⁹⁴; Special Report (2016) on Trainings for Acquiring and Improving Knowledge and Competencies for Protecting Women from, Preventing and Combating Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence (2016)²⁹⁵; Special Report on the Implementation of General and Special Protocols on the Protection of Women Against Violence (2015)²⁹⁶ as well as special reports on certain vulnerable groups (protection of the reproductive health of Roma women, 2018²⁹⁷, rights of persons with disabilities, 2018²⁹⁸, rights of the LGBT population 2012²⁹⁹, rights of the child 2018³⁰⁰ and other).

The Ombudsman developed the Model Gender Equality Law³⁰¹ and sent it to competent authorities, which was initiated in 2014, indicating the necessity to adopt a regulation that would ensure full implementation of the gender equality principle, which was also repeated in regular annual reports. Also, the 2016 amendments to the Criminal Code were in most part in line with the Initiative of this authority to amend the Criminal Code in the area of legal protection of the victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, submitted initially to the Ministry of Justice in 2011³⁰², as well as with the recommendations in regular annual reports to harmonize the Criminal Code with the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. In its regular annual reports and recommendations³⁰³, the Ombudsman has indicated that the Criminal Code is still not fully harmonized with this Convention and repeated recommendations for its complete harmonization. Also, in line with numerous recommendations of this authority, identifying normative and practical gaps in the system of protection of women from violence (study conducted in 2014 and Special Report on the Implementation of General and Special Protocols on the Protection of Women Against Violence with recommendations published³⁰⁴; study conducted in 2015 and Special Report on Trainings for Acquiring and Improving Knowledge and Competencies for Protecting Women from, Preventing and Combating Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence with recommendations published; a number of systemic recommendations sent in 2016 because of mistakes in actions of authorities in 47 cases of domestic and intimate partner violence and abuse and neglect of children³⁰⁵ and in 12 cases of femicide³⁰⁶), the legislative framework in the area of prevention of violence against women has been improved and the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence has been adopted. This law contains norms that can contribute to better protection of victims of domestic violence and to

293 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebnii-izvestaji/5901-p-s-b-n-izv-sh-z-sh-i-ni-gr-d-n-z-s-uplj-n-s-z-n-n-s-i-dluciv-nj-i-p-zici-i-ivn-s-i-l-nih-h-niz-z-r-dnu-r-vn-pr-vn-s-u-dinic-l-l-n-s-upr-v-u-srbi-i>

294 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/5032/Protection%20of%20women%20against%20domestic%20and%20intimate%20partnership%20violence%20Selected%20recommendations%20of%20the%20Protector%20of%20Citizens.pdf>

295 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/4613/Poseban%20Izve%C5%A1taj%20Za%C5%A1titnika%20gra%C4%91ana%20o%20obukama%20SRPSKI.pdf>

296 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebnii-izvestaji/3710-2015-02-24-13-35-38>

297 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/5536/Poseban%20izvestaj%20ZG%20Rep%20zdravlje%20Romkinja%2011.pdf>

298 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebnii-izvestaji/5893-p-s-b-n-izv-sh-z-sh-i-ni-gr-d-n-pris-up-cn-s-z-sv>

299 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebnii-izvestaji/2107-2012-01-12-14-02-53>

300 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebnii-izvestaji/5949-p-s-b-n-izv-sh-z-sh-i-ni-gr-d-n-s-nju-pr-v-d>

301 http://www.zastitnik.rs/attachments/3621_druga%20verzija%201.pdf

302 <https://ombudsman.rs/index.php/zakonske-i-druge-inicijative/1529-2011-10-14-09-40-39>

303 <https://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/5671/Godisnji%20izvestaj%20za%202017.%20godinu.docx>

304 <http://www.zastitnik.rs/index.php/lang-sr/izvestaji/posebnii-izvestaji/3710-2015-02-24-13-35-38>

305 <http://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/5032/Protection%20of%20women%20against%20domestic%20and%20intimate%20partnership%20violence%20Selected%20recommendations%20of%20the%20Protector%20of%20Citizens.pdf>

306 <http://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/5032/Protection%20of%20women%20against%20domestic%20and%20intimate%20partnership%20violence%20Selected%20recommendations%20of%20the%20Protector%20of%20Citizens.pdf>

Ombudsman's recommendation published in the regular annual report for 2016³¹⁶ and Opinion of the Ombudsman.³¹⁷

The Provincial Ombudsman prepared numerous relevant publications, such as: a Special Report on the Protection of the Reproductive Rights of Women with Disabilities (2018)³¹⁸; on the Implementation of Affirmative Action in the Area of Primary Education for Roma Men and Women in AP Vojvodina (2017)³¹⁹; Standard Operating Procedures for Institutions in Cases of Domestic Violence; Application of the Gender Equality Principle in Local Governments in AP Vojvodina (2015)³²⁰; Coordinators for Roma Issues in AP Vojvodina (2014)³²¹ and other, which cover the human rights situation, particularly of vulnerable groups, in AP Vojvodina.

The activities of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality in the field of protection from gender-based discrimination are reflected by the data in the Selected Opinions, Recommendations on, and Warnings about Discrimination on the Basis of Gender and Gender Identity (2014)³²²; Special Report on Gender Equality at Local Level, with Recommendations for Improving Gender Equality (2017)³²³; and special reports on vulnerable groups: national minorities (2014)³²⁴, Roma men and women³²⁵ children³²⁶, persons with disabilities (2013)³²⁷ and (2014)³²⁸, women (2015) and other.

316 <http://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/godisnji-izvestaji>

317 Opinion of the Ombudsman, No. 183-25/2017 reg. no. 37867 of 13 October 2017.

318 <https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/index.php/o-nama/34-news/vesti/2105-2018-12-03-reproduktivno-zdravlje-zena.html?lang=sr-YU>

319 <https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/attachments/article/1900/Afirmativne-mere-Romi.pdf>

320 https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/attachments/article/1827/Primena_principa_rodne_ravnopravnosti_2015.pdf

321 https://www.ombudsmanapv.org/riv/attachments/article/1650/2015_Romski_koordinatori.pdf

322 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/izvestaji-i-publikacije-rs/publikacije-lat/page/4/>

323 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/preporuka-mera-za-ostvarivanje-ravnopravnosti/>

324 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/za-srbiju-bez-diskriminacije-vodic-kroz-institucionalnu-zastitu-od-diskriminacije-nacionalnih-manjina/>; <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/zastita-ravnopravnosti-prirucnik-za-nacionalne-savete-nacionalnih-manjina/> Numerous informational and educational publications of the Commissioner are published in national minority languages <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/izvestaji-i-publikacije-rs/publikacije-lat/>

325 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/izvestaj-jednake-sanse-za-bolje-mogucnosti-jacanje-roma-i-romkinja-u-borbi-protiv-diskriminacije/>

326 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/zbornik-misljenja-i-preporuka-poverenika-za-zastitu-ravnopravnosti-postupanje-po-prituzbama-koje-se-odnose-na-diskriminaciju-dece/> as well as a special report on discrimination of children <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/poseban-izvestaj-o-diskriminaciji-dece/>

327 http://ravnopravnost-5bcf.kxcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/images_files_Poseban_izvestaj_o_diskriminaciji_zena_priprema_korigovana-1.pdf

328 <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/publikacije-o-zastiti-od-diskriminacije-prilagodene-osobama-sa-ostecenim-vidom/>

Section Five – Peaceful and inclusive societies

26. What actions has your country taken in the last five years with the aim to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?

a. Adopted and implemented a National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

The Government of Serbia adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for the 2010–2015 period³²⁹. The NAP was prepared with significant support from the civil society and the international community, and civil society organizations were consistently involved in the oversight process and in reporting on the implementation of the NAP. The Government of Serbia established four institutional bodies responsible for managing the NAP: 1) the Government's Political Council, a high-level political body tasked with ensuring the political conditions for implementing the NAP goals and activities; 2) the Government's Multisectoral Body, overseeing the implementation of the NAP objectives and tasks; 3) the Supervisory Body for the implementation of the NAP, as a supervisory mechanism formed by the National Assembly, consisting of representatives of the relevant committees of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and gender equality mechanisms; and 4) analytical groups or research teams, which are institutional bodies established in some security system institutions for the purpose of planning and monitoring the implementation of activities, implementing gender analyses and reporting on the effects of NAP implementation, on the basis of the set indicators. At the level of the local government units, civil society organizations, scientific and research institutions and media, the tasks of planning and monitoring the implementation of activities, gender analyses and reporting are delegated to appointed individuals, i.e. focal points for NAP implementation. In addition, the mechanism of "The Person of Trust" was established, envisaging peer support in cases of discrimination. Furthermore, the NAP envisaged the appointment of gender equality advisors in all civil and military missions and the introduction of gender-responsive planning and gender-responsive maintenance of records on human resources. The implementation of the first action plan focuses on the formation of institutional mechanisms and improving the status of women in the defence and security sector. The Defence Ministry was responsible for monitoring the implementation of the NAP and prepared the annual NAP Progress Reports for the 2010–2015 period³³⁰.

The second National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 for 2017–2020³³¹, adopted in 2017, sets as its overarching goal Enhancing the security of women in society through the integral application of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in the areas of prevention, participation, protection and recovery, along with a greater involvement of the local community. In addition to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of all stakeholders, institutional bodies and mechanisms tasked with the

329 http://www.upravacarina.rs/cyr/Informacije/Documents/akcioniplanovi/Nacionalni_akcioni_plan_za_primenu_Rezolucije_1325_SB.pdf

330 <http://www.mod.gov.rs/lat/4352/akcioni-planovi-4352>

331 Government Decision pursuant to Art. 43, para. 3 of the Law on the Government (RS Official Gazette No 55/05, 71/05 – revised, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11, 68/12-CC and 44/14).

implementation of the NAP, and strengthening prevention mechanisms, one of the specific objectives of the NAP is increased women's representation, inclusion and decision-making in all processes related to the preservation of peace and security, improvement of normative conditions and institutional capacities for the accessible and effective protection of women, as well as the improvement of the support system for the recovery of women who have experienced any kind of threat to their security in a post-conflict society, in crisis and emergency situations. The tasks of this Multisectoral Body, later renamed as Operational Body, are performed by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia, which produced a report on the implementation of NAP activities in 2017-2018.

b. Integrated women, peace and security commitments into key national and inter-ministerial policy, planning and monitoring frameworks

The Women, Peace and Security area is integrated into the National Gender Equality Strategy for the period from 2016 to 2020³³², which particularly emphasizes the importance of the active role of women in preserving peace and security, points to the consequences of armed conflict on women and girls and the importance of the active role of women in peacebuilding and the country's post-conflict recovery. The area of Women, Peace and Security, i.e. the application of CEDAW's General Recommendation No 30 is part of Serbia's reporting to the CEDAW Committee. Moreover, the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life³³³ signed by 73 municipalities, recognizes the need to develop local policies with the aim of improving security of women and men, especially safety and security in the local community and combating gender-based violence.

A legal framework was created and categories of citizens defined to be trained by the Defence Ministry and Serbian Armed Forces for national defence needs. Among these categories are also women conscripts. The Defence Ministry has been actively working to increase the representation of women in the Defence Ministry and Serbian Armed Forces, by supporting human resources departments to increase the employment and advancement of women in the defence system, as well as supporting trainings in the field of gender equality, and the introduction of gender equality focal points.

Significant progress was made in mainstreaming gender in the Ministry of Interior (MI) operations through activities³³⁴ that aim to achieve adequate gender representation at all levels (ranks, titles, specialities) in proportion to the share of women in the working age population³³⁵. So far, six senior managers completed a mentorship programme for gender equality, and in the second generation 10 chiefs of police administration are working with women gender equality experts on mainstreaming gender in their field of activity. In late 2018, a **Women's Police Officers Network** was established with the aim to affirm the role, position and importance of women police officers in the MI³³⁶. **Guidelines were adopted for the implementation of measures for**

332 Government Decision pursuant to Art. 45, paragraph 1 of the Law on the Government (RS Official Gazette No 55/05, 71/05 – revised, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11, 68/12 – CC, 72/12, 7/14 – CC and 44/14),

333 <https://ravnopravnost.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Evropska-povelja-o-rodnoj-ravnopravnosti-na-lokalnom-nivou.pdf>

334 Development of a Gender Agenda in the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia 2016-2018 and SPAP II follow-up

335 http://www.mup.gov.rs/wps/wcm/connect/dda00b81-9a19-4c7f-96c2-0d6d490dda77/Projekat+Rodna+agenda_mart+2018.+LAT.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CID=m8-QNQK&CID=m8-QNQK

336 http://www.mup.gov.rs/wps/portal/sr/baner-sadrzaj/mreza%20zena%20u%20policiji/ut/p/z1/pZHLbslwEEV_JSxYRp44xI6XKYXwSIHF18Qb5DwAl-KE NEDh62varqCveGNPdL1zLizEUclxJU4yrWoZaHETtcrJ0sLM9yZfRj5M9oFL6CD7mRK-9YEozniiCeqlusNispDvJPJMjIXcqcTYiFyqrvy3gTaXUR2ybkVX YRxiV TwjgYZaGVoiuvfcpEpigiGJMWWI7JwAazBdQx41UqzBYDmhJGnDiJUfgJBjeOB4jf5470f3pTEAAKjzI7oZkqqlzvYfJPvB78nDCeP2HwLIdA--XVghF-cMLgL4c60rnd77mn8yIUnb3XaPFQQLohroJ2sNacot6YUq0KtPhdG17daL4xC4jIAX76pKPtV1L2POy4tqv38yW4k2CZ5659NqPB8XSarvLQrVL7TUaH7saKM0I/dz/d5/LOIDUmITUSEhL3dHa0FKRnNBLzROV3FpQSEhL3NyX1JTXYNMXYRu/

achieving gender equality in Serbia's MI through the human resources management system, along with the Instruction with guidelines for the prevention of and protection from gender-based discrimination and discrimination based on other personal characteristics in Serbia's MI, from 2018.

The MI formed a working group for combating violence against women in cooperation with representatives of international organizations and civil society networks³³⁷. All these activities have been given adequate visibility to promote the role of women in the MI and establish a group of male allies in the battle for gender equality.

27. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at all decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

c. Promoted women's meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements in humanitarian action and crisis response

Serbia ensured the equal participation of men and women in international military cooperation activities and a significant participation of women in peace processes. Within the frame of gender-responsive budgeting, the Defence Ministry (DM) has been monitoring the participation of women in multinational operations for four years now, and found that it has been steadily increasing. The Gender Issues in PKO³³⁸ training has been integrated in the education and training plan of the Defence Ministry and Serbian Armed Forces, and 418 persons deployed in peacekeeping operations were trained, specifically: 87 commissioned officers (86m/1f), 100 non-commissioned officers (m), 145 professional soldiers (139m/6f) and 86 military administrative staff (32m/54f).

In the period since the adoption of the NAP until present, the percentage of women employed in the DM and SAF has been steadily increasing.³³⁹ Rather than being given priority in the recruitment process, women candidates were assessed on an equal footing with other candidates, exclusively based on the professional qualities. The Defence Ministry also actively worked on increasing the number of women in missions.³⁴⁰ The Defence Ministry carried out a gender analysis of the candidates for voluntary military service under arms and a Course for reserve officers in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. Moreover, curricula were prepared for the final year of secondary school to ensure that all secondary school students (both boys and girls) acquire knowledge in the aforesaid fields on an equal footing.

337 UN Women and the Women's Platform for the Development of Serbia

338 PKO – Peacekeeping operations

339 The share of women in the DM and SAF increased from 20.53%, as on 31 December 2017, to 21.02%, as on 30 November 2018. The share of women in managerial/command positions in DM and SAF stood at 5.77% on 31 December 2017, and 6.44% on 30 November 2018.

340 In 2017, a total of 656 persons participated in peacekeeping operations, of which 579 men (88.3%), and 77 women (11.7%). In 2018, a total of 559 persons participated in peacekeeping operations, of which 480 men (85.9%), and 79 women (14.1%).

Remarkable progress has been made in promoting women in the Serbian Armed Forces (SAF). Specific media content was created to promote the equal role of women in the security sector. Recognition of women's achievements in the Military Academy class of officers³⁴¹ and a campaign encouraging girls to enrol³⁴² contributed to increasing the number of applications and admissions of women cadets to the Military Secondary School and Military Academy of Serbia, as well as the share of women in the defence system, and women's empowerment and influence in senior management positions in the DF and SAF.

Serbia carried out a Gender Assessment of the Refugee and Migration Crisis³⁴³ on the so-called Balkan route³⁴⁴. Analysis has established that various gender-sensitive practices were integrated into the response to the crisis, serving as good practice examples of gender mainstreaming of humanitarian interventions. For instance, both men and women were involved in reception activities, data are available and disaggregated by sex and age, separate toilets for men and women were made available, a mother and baby corner (MBC) and a playroom for children were set up in reception centres, special hygiene kits for women and clothes for women, men, girls and boys were distributed, and psycho-social support was delivered, along with occupational therapy. Also, a mechanism was established to monitor and provide support to women, men, boys and girls exposed to, or at risk of gender-based violence, through standard operating procedures for providing support in cases of violence.

28. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

d. Taken measures to combat illicit arms trafficking

In 2015, amendments were passed to the Arms and Ammunition Law³⁴⁵, introducing two important changes. The first one concerns firearms licensing, and envisages that, in addition to security background checks, a medical suitability certificate, a criminal record certificate, and a certificate of a completed practical training course in firearm handling and shooting, an applicant shall also be required to provide a valid reason for purchasing a firearm, i.e. evidence to prove that this is warranted by personal security concerns, or that they needed firearms because of the nature of their job. The other change concerns the medical suitability of the applicant for a firearm license, which will need to be proven every 5 years by means of a medical certificate. Furthermore, upon issuing a firearm license, the MI shall inform the chosen doctor that his patient was issued a firearm license and the doctor shall be required to report any changes in (or suspicions of) changes in the medical condition of the patient that could have an impact on firearm handling³⁴⁶.

341 For instance: <https://www.vice.com/rs/article/4xwdqq/upisala-sam-vojnu-akademiju-i-postala-najbolja-u-klasi> и <http://www.politika.rs/sr/clanak/338118/Drustvo/Tri-najbolja-kadeta-su-kadetkinje>

342 <http://www.va.mod.gov.rs/cms/view.php?id=7192>

343 Gender Assessment of the Refugee and Migration Crisis in Serbia and FYR Macedonia, UN Women, Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, January 2016 Prepared by Galit Wolfensohn (Lead Researcher) with the support of the research team comprised of Anica Milkovic (Research Consultant Serbia), Mirjana Nedeva (Research Consultant FYR Macedonia), and Faten Tibi (Programme Manager Economic Empowerment of Syrian Women, UN Women Regional Office Arab States, Cairo).

344 The biggest refugee crisis in Europe since World War Two, over a million asylum-seekers

345 RS Official Gazette No 20/2015 and 10/2019

346 Purusnat to the new Arms and Ammunition Law (RS Official Gazette No 20/2015 and 10/2019)

These two requirements were introduced to reduce the misuse of arms that are legally owned by citizens. Finally, the possession of pepper spray and electrical stun guns has been allowed, which will contribute to increasing the security of citizens (for self-defence purposes), while in some sectors (private security), meaningful switches can be made from guns to tasers.

e. Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children

Serbia improved its institutional and strategic frame for combating trafficking in women and children. A Centre for the Protection of Human Trafficking was established that consists of a shelter and support services. Serbia adopted the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, in Particular Children and Women, and Protecting Victims (2017–2020) along with the Action Plan for 2017–2019, and allocated funds for the implementation of the Action Plan. A specialized helpline was introduced to provide support to human trafficking survivors, as well as preventive educational information.

Serbia intensified efforts by consolidating the judiciary and delegating the exclusive jurisdiction for the investigation of human trafficking crimes to the Criminal Police Administration, and by establishing the independent Office of the National Coordinator. Within Public Prosecutor's Offices, internal specialized training was implemented, by designating prosecutors – focal points for cases of human trafficking crimes in all higher public prosecutor's offices.

The Law on Foreigners was adopted,³⁴⁷ allowing a temporary stay of up to 90 days to foreigners presumed to be human trafficking survivors, providing for their safety and protection, accommodation, psychological and material support, access to healthcare, counselling and information about their rights. A person identified as a survivor of human trafficking shall be granted a temporary residence permit of up to a year, with the possibility of extension, if necessary for their protection, recovery and safety. Human trafficking survivors also have the right of access to the labour market, training and educational programmes, and if unable to cover the expenses of any treatment they need, they are provided with medical and other required support. Their rights are not conditional on testifying in court as a victim. Human trafficking victims with foreign citizenships may be granted a work permit for the period of validity of their temporary residence permit.³⁴⁸ Great efforts were invested to improve identification of survivors, especially among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors. The Criminal Code forbids trafficking in human beings for sexual and labour exploitation.

In 2016, a training programme was implemented on the **protection of children and youth in education from human trafficking** which was attended by 125 teachers and specialist non-teaching staff in schools. In the same year, a handbook on Protection of Students from Human Trafficking was distributed to schools.³⁴⁹

All employees in the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration working in asylum and reception centres undergo regular training for the identification of potential victims of human trafficking, gender-based violence and similar, with the aim to provide adequate support to migrants and asylum seekers and prevent different forms of violence.

347 RS Official Gazette No 24/2018

348 Law on Employment of Foreigners (RS Official Gazette No 128/2014, 113/2017 and 50/2018)

349 <https://rm.coe.int/greta-2017-37-frg-srb-en/16807809fd>

29. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?

f. Taken measures to combat negative social norms and practices and increased awareness of the needs and potential of girls

The Law on Foundations of the Education System³⁵⁰ regulates in detail the prohibition of discrimination, the prohibition of any violations of a person's reputation, honour, and dignity, and the obligation of authorities and individuals to respond to situations of discriminatory behaviour in educational institutions. The Rulebook on detailed criteria for recognizing all forms of discrimination by staff members, children, students or third parties in the school setting, was adopted in February 2016,³⁵¹ and the Code of practice for institutions in case of suspected or confirmed discriminatory behaviour and damage to the reputation³⁵², honour or dignity of a person entered into force in September 2018. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity were incorporated in the Law and both rulebooks as separate grounds of discrimination. The rulebooks governing identification and response to discrimination regulate possible discriminatory situations in education, such as discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, exclusion, or insufficient inclusion in the education process, discrimination of Roma children and children with disabilities, and segregation in education. The following examples are illustrative of good practices in this area: a. the second all-girls rock camp, launched by a group of young women activists and musicians, was funded by the state budget³⁵³, prompted by the desire that no girl should feel alone because of her interests, whether it is dance, sport, or – playing in a rock band; b. in response to the fact that there are more girls in Serbia graduating from secondary schools and college than boys, but fewer women in decision-making positions later on in life, and that the gender pay gap still persists, even though it is smaller than the one at EU level, Serbia is implementing the Inspiring Girls global campaign³⁵⁴ with the participation of women MPs, women from the academic, private, public and non-profit sector. The goal is to fight gender stereotypes, and motivate girls to never give up on their dreams; c. several associations celebrate the International Girls in ICT Day³⁵⁵ every last Thursday in April. The aim is to empower girls to explore career opportunities and be guided by their personal interests and talents, not succumbing to stereotypes. So far 6,500 girls have had the opportunity to get acquainted with professions in the ICT sector³⁵⁶.

g. Implemented policies and programmes to reduce and eradicate child, early and forced marriage

New criminal offences were introduced through the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence³⁵⁷ and amendments to the Criminal Code³⁵⁸, including forced marriage. The Multiple Indicator Cluster

350 RS Official Gazette No 88/2017, 27/18 (I) – as amended and 27/18 (II) – as amended, Article 110

351 RS Official Gazette No 22/2016

352 RS Official Gazette No 85/2018

353 Under the FEMIKS programme, more at: <http://www.femix.info/>

354 <http://inspiringgirls.rs/cilj-kampanje/>

355 <http://poslovnezene.org.rs/2018/03/telenor-dan-devojica-2018/>

356 <http://poslovnezene.org.rs/2018/03/telenor-dan-devojica-2018/>

357 RS Official Gazette No 94/2016, entered into force on 1 June 2017

358 RS Official Gazette No 85/2005, 88/2005 - revised., 107/2005 - revised, 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014 and 94/2016)

Survey (MICS)³⁵⁹ indicated that Roma girls are at greater risk of child marriage³⁶⁰, consequently, a National Coalition³⁶¹ was formed to end child marriages, coordinated by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality. The Coalition for Ending Child Marriages aims to contribute to ending child marriages in Serbia, especially among the Roma population, through targeted and coordinated action of relevant stakeholders. Their modus operandi is advocating for the removal of institutional and social barriers to the implementation of relevant legislative and strategic frameworks, as well as the promotion of good practice examples implemented in local community partnerships, between the non-governmental, public and private sector and media. The Coalition is a community of individuals, institutions and organizations working together to strengthen freedom of choice for Roma girls and ensure that Roma women and men, boys and girls are empowered to change existing child marriage practices.³⁶² Activities were launched to empower girls and boys, especially in the Roma community, and pilot interventions were implemented to eliminate child marriage in the community.

359 <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/media/6496/file>

360 Ibid

361 <http://sociojalnoukijucivanje.gov.rs/sr/%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%BE/>

362 Ibid

Section Six – Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

30. *What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?*

a. Improved gender perspective in environmental policies

In its budget for 2019, the Ministry of Environmental Protection earmarked funds for the preparation of a gender analysis aimed at mainstreaming the gender perspective in the Ministry's environmental policies and activities. In addition, a new strategic document is in the pipeline for the planning of EU pre-accession funds in the area of environmental protection and energy, which, for the first time, also includes a gender perspective. A gender gap was identified and recommendations were provided for measures to be included in the action documents. Environmental protection is an area with a high share of women. Women account for 68% of the Ministry's staff, of which 33% are in decision-making positions and make up 68% percent of the Environmental Protection Agency staff³⁶³. Drawing on the research on the impact of chemicals on women's health, the updated National Implementation Plan (NIP) for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants³⁶⁴ foresees a number of measures and activities aimed to improve gender-disaggregated record-keeping, dissemination of information among women and mothers on the impacts of chemicals and hazardous waste on reproductive health, as well as staff training on gender equality in the area of chemicals management. Over the past 5 years, the Ministry delivered a number of training sessions on the subject of gender equality for its employees.

In the course of 2018, the Ministry of Environmental Protection conducted a research on Gender Perspective of household waste management in Serbia, with the aim to assess Serbian citizens' practices and attitudes toward the environment, waste treatment and recycling, as well as to identify the similarities and differences in the attitudes of men and women on these issues. It examined the existing attitude and habits in managing waste at the household level, as well as attitudes and willingness to improve these habits, including recycling. The research findings revealed that women are key drivers of current waste separation for recycling (68%), as well in terms of changing present practices (61%).

Gender mainstreaming³⁶⁵ implies a range of activities shaping the rules related to gathering and gender-disaggregation of data, women's roles as consumers and decision-makers in the context of climate change, gender mainstreaming of processes, indicators, goals and results, taking into account the gender equality dimension as a criterion in project evaluation, as well as the preparation of the manual on gender equality and climate change. Finally, ongoing activities also

363 <https://ravnoopravnost.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Publikacija-%C5%BDene-u-odr%C5%BEivoj-energetici.pdf>

364 <http://chm.pops.int/default.aspx>

365 "Second Biennial Update Report and Third National Communication under the UNFCCC" (gender mainstreaming in line with the UNEP/GEF toolkit, data disaggregated by sex, role of women as consumers and decision-makers in the context of climate change – mitigation and adaptation), as well as the project "Establishing the National Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement" (integration, planning and monitoring progress of the gender equality dimension in climate change mitigation processes, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction).

include integrating, planning and tracking progress of the gender dimension in the processes of climate change mitigation planning, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

31. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience enhancement and mitigation?

b. Improved gender perspective in disaster risk reduction programmes

The Republic of Serbia introduced provisions on gender equality in the Law on Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management³⁶⁶. The Republic of Serbia Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Disaster Risk Management Programme³⁶⁷ (2016–2020) strictly sets activities that entail record-keeping through the establishment of database; empowerment activities specifically targeting women; development of training curricula for women NGOs that advocate participation of women and vulnerable groups of male/female citizens in risk reduction and women safety management and planning in crisis situations; plan preparation that takes women into account; as well as the requirement to ensure the availability of women's healthcare system preparedness plans.

Through project support, the Ministry of Environmental Protection³⁶⁸ prepared the first study on gender equality and climate change in Serbia³⁶⁹ whose objective was to capture gender equality issues in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation. In 2018, the Ministry of Environmental Protection launched two calls inviting proposals for solutions to climate change-related issues which included gender equality criteria. Furthermore, through nine events staged across Serbia, the Ministry of Environmental Protection worked on capacity-building of 381 male/female representatives of local government units, civil society, private companies, etc. to recognize the importance of gender mainstreaming in tackling climate change. Specifically, 252 women and 129 men have been provided with the skills to identify potential activities in the domain of gender equality and climate change. The Ministry also developed the first Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change³⁷⁰, as a basis for a three-day training delivered for 19 representatives (16 women and 3 men) of the Ministry, local government units and NGOs, which resulted in a 30% knowledge increase on the issue of gender roles, gender stereotypes and their impacts on the design and implementation of policies and measures in tackling climate change. The Ministry also provided mentoring to selected project proposals on further elaboration of their gender components, with a total of five (5) projects identified as good practice examples in terms of gender mainstreaming in tackling climate change.

366 RS Official Gazette No. 87/2018

367 <http://vs3836.cloudhosting.rs/strateg/79/obr/AP%20DRR%20-%20final.pdf>

368 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/serbur1se.pdf>

369 <http://www.klimatskepromene.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/First-Study-on-Gender-and-Climate-Change-in-the-Republic-of-Serbia.pdf>

370 <http://rs.one.un.org/content/unct/serbia/en/home/publications/gender-and-climate-change--training-handbook.html>

c. The first national gender perspective report for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change prepared

In line with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Action Plan on Gender Equality³⁷¹, the Ministry of Environmental Protection prepared the first Voluntary National Review including gender-disaggregated data on climate change outcomes for women and men, with particular attention paid to local communities; mainstreaming gender equality issues in the activities and measures of adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building, as well as technology and financial policies; and included future plans and progress achieved in strengthening gender balance in the national climate delegations. The Republic of Serbia is the seventh country in the world that submitted its report in this domain.

Activities carried out in the course 2018 were acknowledged as an international good practice example and hence, the Ministry of Environmental Protection presented the results achieved at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24 UNFCCC), held in Katowice, Poland, as well as at the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), held in Geneva in 2019.

371 https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/cp23_auv_gender.pdf

SECTION THREE: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

32. What is your country's current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government.

During the reporting period and following the adoption of the PPA, the Republic of Serbia has established gender equality mechanisms at all government levels: legislative, executive, as well as independent supervisory mechanisms at the national, provincial and local level, as an ongoing effort since 2002.

At present, national-level, executive power, institutional support to gender equality and empowerment of women in the Republic of Serbia is provided by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and Sector for Anti-Discrimination Policy and Improvement of Gender Equality within the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs.

The Coordination Body for Gender Equality was founded by the Government's Decision on 30 October 2014³⁷². The Coordination Body deliberates on all issues and coordinates the work of the public administration bodies in relation to gender equality, with the aim of promoting gender equality in Serbia³⁷³. Its principal task is to initiate and monitor the implementation and drafting of the national strategic framework on gender equality and empowerment of women. The Coordination Body is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure. The Coordination Body submits its proposals, opinions and technical explanations to the Government, ministries, specialized agencies, other bodies and professional organizations with mandated with gender equality³⁷⁴. It is supported by the Coordination Body Expert Group which performs specialized services on current issues pertaining to gender equality³⁷⁵. Its positioning at the top of the Government, within the cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister, sends a clear message about the importance of gender equality.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs established the Sector for Gender Equality in 2014 (replacing the Gender Equality Directorate established in 2008), which, on 1 June 2017, became the **Sector for Anti-Discrimination Policy and Advancement of Gender Equality**³⁷⁶. The Sector's responsibilities include analysing the situation and recommending measures for improving anti-discrimination policies and gender equality; drafting and implementation of the

372 Government Decision on the establishment of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 1 of the Decree on the Principles for Internal Organisation and Classification of Posts in the ministries, special Government organisations and services (RS Official Gazette No. 81/07, consolidated version, 69/08, 98/12 and 87/13)

373 Government Decision on the establishment of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality

374 Rules of Procedure of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, Article 2: <https://www.rodnaravnopravnost.gov.rs/sites/default/files/2016-12/P%D0%BEsl%D0%BEvnik%20%D0%BE%20r%D0%B0du%20K%D0%BE%D0%BErdin%D0%B0ci%D0%BEEn%D0%BEg%20t%D0%B5%D0%B0%20z%D0%B0%20r%D0%BEdu%20r%D0%B0vn%D0%BEpr%D0%B0vn%D0%BEst.pdf>

375 Ibid, Article 3

376 Pursuant to Article 43, paragraph 2 of the Law on Public Administration (RS Official Gazette No 79/05, 101/07, 95/10, 99/14, 30/18 – as amended, and 47/18) and pursuant to Article 46 of the Law on Civil Servants (RS Official Gazette No 79/05, 81/05 – corrigendum and 83/05 – corrigendum, 64/07, 67/07-corrigendum, 116/08, 104/09, 99/14 and 95/18), and Article 4, paragraph 2 of the Regulation on the Principles of internal organization and classification of job positions in the ministries, special Government organizations and services (RS Official Gazette No. 81/07-consolidated version, 69/08, 98/12, 87/13 and 2/19)

relevant national strategic documents; drafting of legislation and other regulations in this area; promotion of gender equality, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination.

The main horizontal mechanism for gender mainstreaming and gender equality policy coordination with the Government of the Republic of Serbia, alongside the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, is the network of gender equality focal points in all line ministries and key institutions. Gender-responsive budgeting teams were created in all budget funded entities, while IPA units act as gender equality bodies within the IPA programming process.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia established the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU) in July 2009. SIPRU, under the Office of the Prime Minister, is in charge of strengthening Government capacities to develop and implement social inclusion policies based on good practice examples from Europe and providing support to line ministries to develop and implement social inclusion policies, in regular consultations with civil society organizations.³⁷⁷

For the purpose of implementing the National Action Plan for the application of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2010–2015), four institutional bodies were created, specifically: the Political Council of the Government of Serbia for the Implementation of the National Action Plan, the Multisectoral Coordination Body of the Government of Serbia for the implementation of the 1325 National Action Plan³⁷⁸, Analysis Groups and research teams for monitoring, analysing and reporting on the implementation of the plan to the relevant public administration authorities and the Republic of Serbia National Assembly Commission for the monitoring of the implementation of the 1325 National Action Plan. In the security sector, gender equality mechanisms have also been established at the level of individual public administration bodies for gender mainstreaming purposes: the Gender Equality Advisor to the Minister/Director, Gender Advisor to the Commander of national contingents in multinational operations, “persons of trust”, the peer assistance mechanism, the mechanism for gender-responsive staff records and gender-responsive statistics and gender-responsive budgeting mechanism. At the time of submission of this report, the Political Council is about to be created, after an interval of several years. The Multisectoral Body has been renamed into Operational Body and its duties are performed by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality.

Within the Statistical Office of Serbia there is a **Division for Social Indicators, Judicial and Gender Statistics**, dealing with the development of methodology, collection, processing, release and analysis of data from statistical surveys in the areas of judiciary, gender statistics, organizing and performing the development of methodologies for uptake and preparation of data necessary for the socioeconomic indicators.

There are also independent government authorities, Ombudsman and Commissioner for the Protection of Equality (see more under question 25). The Ombudsman was introduced under the Law on the Ombudsman. It is an independent government body that protects and promotes citizens’ rights by controlling the legality of the work of bodies and organizations exercising public authority. Gender equality protection is one of the institution’s work areas. To further his work, the Ombudsman established the Gender Equality Council in 2012, as its specialised advisory body. The Commissioner for Protection of Equality is an independent, autonomous and specialized state authority established on the basis of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination

377 <http://sociojalnoukijucivanje.gov.rs/sr/>

378 http://www.upravacarina.rs/cyr/Informacije/Documents/akcioniplanovi/NacionalniLakcioni_plan_za_primenu_Rezolucije_1325_SB.pdf

with the aim to prevent all forms, types and cases of discrimination, to protect the equality of natural persons and legal entities in all spheres of social relations, to oversee the enforcement of anti-discrimination regulations and to improve the exercise and protection of equality.

At the level of AP Vojvodina, the following mechanisms are operational: the Committee for Gender Equality of the Assembly of AP Vojvodina (established in 2003), the Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality, the Gender Equality Council and Gender Equality Institute. Also, there is an independent body at APV level, the Provincial Ombudsman, with a Deputy in charge of gender equality, because it is one of the key areas of activity of this institution.

Local gender equality mechanisms are created pursuant to the Gender Equality Law³⁷⁹, which stipulates that a standing body should be set up or an employee assigned for gender equality issues in the bodies of local government units. To date, gender equality mechanisms have been created in 130 local government units (boards, committees, elected individuals). Although nearly 90% of local government units have local gender equality mechanisms, their operability varies, they lack capacity, funds allocated for gender equality policies are inadequate and procedures are not standardized, hence, their mandates are not fully stable.

1. Is the head of the national mechanism a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committee)?

By Decision of the Government³⁸⁰, an Interministerial Working Group for the Implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been created³⁸¹. The Working Group's tasks are to:

1. monitor, in cooperation with the relevant ministries, the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted on 25 September 2015 at the UN Headquarters in New York;
2. consolidate and coordinate stances and activities of all relevant ministries regarding the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
3. recommend procedures for the adoption of the national sustainable development strategy and the manner of its financing that would consolidate all individual strategies and harmonize the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 goals with the requirements that the Republic of Serbia needs to meet in order to fulfil its other international commitments and successfully finalize its pre-accession negotiations with the European Union;
4. propose the baselines for the statistical monitoring of goals and targets;
5. prepare periodic reports on the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Republic of Serbia;

379 RS Official Gazette No 104/2009), Article 39

380 Pursuant to Article 33, para.2 and 3 of the Law on Government (RS Official Gazette No 55/05, 71/05 – corrigendum, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11, 68/12 – CC, 72/12, 7/14 – CC and 44/14)

381 RS Official Gazette No 113/15, 67, 95/17, 120/17, 104/19,

6. through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continuously inform the United Nations Resident Representative in the Republic of Serbia and the United Nations system of the results of the Working Group's activities and implementation of United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals and targets.

The Chairperson of the Working Group is the Minister without portfolio responsible for demography and population policy. The Deputy Chair is Ambassador, Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs. Members are appointed from the following institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Culture and Information, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Ministry of Mining and Energy, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Ministry of European Integration, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Office for Kosovo and Metohija, National Statistical Office, National Public Policy Secretariat, Public Investment Management Office and Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team³⁸².

Specialized and administrative-technical tasks for the purposes of the Working Group are performed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Cabinet of the Minister without portfolio responsible for demography and population policy.

The Voluntary National Report on the Agenda 2030 implementation is under preparation. Through a public call³⁸³, civil society organizations have been invited to submit their inputs on the Agenda implementation.

2. Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

a) Which of the following stakeholders participate formally in the national coordination mechanisms established to contribute to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (BDPA) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

³⁸² ("RS Official Gazette", no. 113 of 30 December 2015, 67 of 7 July 2017, 95 of 25 October 2017, 120 of 30 December 2017, 104 of 28 December 2018, 8 of 8 February 201.)

³⁸³ <http://civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/vest/javni-poziv-za-dostavljanje-priloga-za-potrebe-izrade-dobrovoljnog-nacionalnog-izve%C5%A1taja-o-primeni-agende-2030.37.html?newsId=1054>

Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action civil society organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • women's rights organizations • academic institutions and expert teams • religious organizations • parliaments/parliamentary committees • private sector • United Nations system • other stakeholders, trade union 	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • civil society organizations • women's rights organizations • academic institutions and expert teams • religious organizations • parliaments/parliamentary committees • private sector • United Nations system • other actors, please specify: local government unit
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Although not fully formalized, regular progress monitoring in the thematic areas related to the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action is conducted by existing mechanisms, including the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, line authorities' focal points for gender equality, Sector for Anti-Discrimination Policy and Gender Equality of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and the Office for Human and Minority Rights which reports on international treaties and universal periodic reviews. The preparation of the Report on the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action involves different actors including civil society organizations, women's organizations, academic institutions and male/female experts, employers' association and the representative trade union.

As regards the 2030 Agenda, the mapping exercise of Serbia's strategic framework vis-a-vis the Sustainable Development Goals shows coherence with all of Serbia's strategic documents. A document has been prepared, titled Serbia and the 2030 Agenda³⁸⁴, mapping the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to the national strategic framework and the process of negotiating chapters for accession to the European Union. In collaboration with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and other partners, a number of activities were delivered, including the development of the Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) document, the Mainstreaming, Acceleration, Policy Support Mission (MAPS), the organization of the Sub-regional Conference on "Promoting Progress in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda". Activities aimed at increasing the visibility of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda are also planned, to bring them closer to the broadest possible audience and every individual in Serbia, especially at the level of cities and municipalities. All these activities preceded the drafting the first Voluntary National Report on the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, to be presented by the Republic of Serbia in July 2019 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Stakeholder consultations have been initiated but will intensify in the coming period. So far, the SeConS Development Initiative Group and Centre for Advanced Economic Studies (CEVES) have been involved as think-tank organizations.

b) Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes?

The Coordination Body for Gender Equality also coordinates the work of the Coalition to End Child Marriage which works on options of safe choice and empowerment of girls and boys, especially in the Roma community. Within the 2030 Agenda, the Council for Children's Rights, chaired by the Minister without portfolio responsible for demography is involved in the consultation process, and children are invited to attend and participate in the Council's sessions. Also, under the 2030

384 <https://rsjp.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Agenda-UN-2030.pdf>

Agenda, Roma organizations that are part of the National Coalition to End Child Marriage will be invited to provide their input regarding the position and priorities of Roma women within the scope of the SDGs. A broader consultation process is also planned.

c) Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.

Consultations were held at two levels. The first level includes gathering of information on the current state in the areas concerned and establishing links between public policy intentions and public policy outcomes for the lives of women and men from different backgrounds and groups. The second level are consultations on the priorities in each area, as well as the main gender equality priorities in Serbia. Stakeholders took note that the consultations were not binding. They contributed by providing empirical data, presentations of their own research findings, pointing to the situation of underrepresented groups (e.g. elderly women, women with disabilities, Roma women, LGBT and other groups of women). In the scope of the PDPA report preparation, stakeholders were consulted on the issue of major progress made in the last five (5) years, as well as on challenges for the next five (5) years. The formats of their involvement included consultations in smaller groups, individual and online consultations.

3. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development expired in 2017. The drafting of the new strategy is planned.

SECTION FOUR: DATA AND STATISTICS

1. What are the top three areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

Laws, regulations, and statistical programme/strategy were developed setting out the development of gender statistics. At its session held on 24 June 2015, the Serbian Parliament adopted a Decision on the Official Statistics Programme for the period from 2016 to 2020³⁸⁵. Furthermore, the Government of Serbia enacted a Regulation Setting Out the Official Statistics Plan for 2019³⁸⁶. These documents prescribe the obligation to collect, process, publish and disseminate sex-disaggregated data on persons.

New surveys were conducted to produce national baseline information on specialized topics e.g. time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, and disability. The first Time Use Survey³⁸⁷ was implemented in 2010, and in 2015, a Seasonal Time Use Survey³⁸⁸. The next time use survey in Serbia is scheduled for 2020.

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) has been conducted in Serbia since 2008, while the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) has been conducted since 2013. Both these surveys are fully aligned with Eurostat requirements and represent important data sources. Selected sex-disaggregated data from both of these surveys are published in the publication “Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia”.³⁸⁹

Administrative/alternative data sources have been improved to address shortcomings in the area of gender statistics.

2. Out of the following which are your country's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?

The following are among the country's top priorities: a. design of laws, regulations or statistical programme/strategy promoting the development of gender statistics (the drafting of a new law on statistics, as well as official statistics regular annual plans); b. use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policies and implementation of programmes and projects (the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – MICS will be conducted in 2019 for the 6th time among the general and Roma population); c. conduct new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g. time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability). All of the aforementioned surveys, as well as the population Census scheduled for 2021.

385 http://www.stat.gov.rs/media/2282/program_2016-2020.pdf

386 <http://www.stat.gov.rs/media/3901/uredba-o-utvrdivljanju-plana-zvanicne-statistike-za-2019-godinu.pdf>

387 <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2012/Pdf/G20126015.pdf>

388 <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2016/Pdf/G20166006.pdf>

389 <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2014/Pdf/G20146008.pdf>; <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2017/Pdf/G20176008.pdf>,

3. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs³⁹⁰?

A national set of indicators for monitoring progress towards the SDGs has not been defined.

For now, there are 25 SDG indicators for which sex-disaggregated data are available: 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 3.1.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.5.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1, 5.4.1, 5.5.1, 5.6.1, 8.5.1, 8.5.2, 8.6.1, 8.7.1, 16.3.1, 17.8.1)

<http://devinfo.stat.gov.rs/diSrbija/diSDG.aspx>

4. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?

The collection and compiling of data on indicators for SDG5 on gender equality, as well as gender-specific indicators for other SDGs has begun.

More information about the collected and published indicators available at:

<http://sdg.indikatori.rs/>

40. The following disaggregations are routinely provided by major surveys in the Republic of Serbia:

- Geographic location
- Gender
- Age
- Education
- Marital status

390 Sustainable Development Goals

