

“On the Road”

Project description

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SERBIAN YOUTH ON THE ROAD TO THE FUTURE

Problem description - The decades behind us, scarred by **wars, sanctions and transition**, have brought up new generations of young people who are in a way collateral damage of these misfortunate events, simply because, for the most part, these young people were left to themselves.

Inexperienced and without support of wider community, in a family environment that was concentrated on bare survival, they were left alone to decide on the type and level of education they will pursue, often choosing professions without insight into real needs of present and future Serbia and without insight into career and livelihood opportunities that their chosen paths will provide. The Reform of education system that took place after October, 2000 has largely attuned our education system with European standards, but some problems remained. **The structure of education system was not adjusted to current and projected labor market needs**, which is one of the most important causes of high unemployment among young people. According to recent data, the unemployment rate in the population from 20 to 24 years of age is 26.5%. The fact remains that a lot of young people are leaving Serbia. It has been estimated that in the last five years 339.000 young people left Serbia.

The labor market itself is not completely open to young people, and it is in discordance with the standards and best practices that come from the European Union. There is a need for introduction of new instruments and incentives for employment of young people, as well as better enforcement of those that already exist. The need to change the mind-sets of entrepreneurs is also apparent. Entrepreneurs have to realize that to intensify youth employment does not only mean a social responsibility in terms of obligations to the community, but it also means reaching the true development potential of a company.

The events that took place in Belgrade on 10 October 2010, and increasing **bullying and violence at sport events**, suggest **the need to firmly link these problems to already adopted and future strategies in the field of security**. It is necessary to intensify efforts towards regulating issues and problems related to school sport and recreation, as an alternative form of channeling young people's energies, and it is imperative to employ their capabilities towards a new and better way of living.

Also, **young people were setting their personal and collective value criteria on their own, largely leaning on information they gained from the media and the Internet**, with little regard for tradition and culture of environment they live in, often forgetting valuable experience of previous generations.

All of this allows us to conclude that members of this young generation are not in such a good position when it comes to realization and utilization of their professional, educational and cultural resources and capacities. For this very reason, the need for a broader social action is arising. An action which includes all relevant actors, aimed at addressing this problem and improving the position of young people as the future pillars of our society.

Target groups / participants

1. **Young people** (students, volunteers, children), as the primary target group

2. **EU representatives** (European Commission officials, Members of European Parliament, representatives of various business and professional associations based in Brussels), who will have the opportunity to share European experiences, as well as standards assumed by the EU in this domain
3. **Representatives of relevant ministries and the Government of Serbia**, who will present intentions and strategies of their institutions in this area
4. **Representatives of universities and experts**, who will speak about the reform of the education system and curriculum reform as a way for the education system to properly correspond to the system of labor market
5. **Representatives of companies and the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia**, who will speak about youth employment
6. **Representatives of civil society organizations dealing with youth**, who will present their experience gained while working on projects related to this population
7. **Representatives of international organizations and donor programs**, whose activities are focused on issues related to youth
8. **Media representatives**, who will actively report about the event and who will after the event be provided with materials and who will be given the opportunity to interview all relevant participants

„ON THE ROAD“ PROJECT

„On the Road“ project is focused on young people and it is a beginning of a long term campaign whose goal is to change how the whole society in Serbia relates to members of this target group, who indeed are future cornerstones of social, political and cultural development of Serbia. ”On the Road” is a regional and multimedia project set up to, via a series of events, point at problems of young people, gather all factors that could help in finding solutions to these problems and influence the public in terms of raising awareness about the issue. The project is dedicated to young people of Serbia and to possibilities and prospects regarding their education, employment and secure personal existence. In addition to the project’s main activities, ”ON THE ROAD” will also include multidisciplinary meetings between economy, Government, educational and EU institutions on one side, and young people on the other side.

The first in a series of events will take place in Belgrade, on the 7th and 8th of February, 2011 in “Sava” Center. Its main goal is to make a significant contribution by initiating a wide discussion about the position of young people and to gather the most important factors and actors relevant to the matter of young people in Serbia. We are planning to address the problems that dyslexic persons face, especially in regard with their position in the education system. Also, we will strive towards affirmation and acknowledgment of volunteerism. Although, throughout the world it is very much valued as something very important for professional and ethical development of young people, in Serbia the concept of volunteerism has not yet been regulated by law or socially recognized. The round table meetings within the **„On the Road“ project** that are yet to come will deal with other aspects regarding the position of young people, as well as monitor the implementation of strategies that should lead to improvement of the status of youth.

„ON THE ROAD“ PROJECT GOALS

1. **To initiate a campaign aimed at changing how the whole society in Serbia relates to young people**, who represent future cornerstones of social, political and cultural development of Serbia. This includes a campaign which aims to attune existing national strategies with European practice and domestic problems, by adopting new strategies and by securing a more consistent implementation of existing ones.
2. **To include young people in society and business world** (by connecting them to esteemed and accomplished individuals who rule the domains of business, sport, culture and art; by organising lectures and educational workshops in purpose of guiding the youth towards right choices when it comes to choosing professional orientation which is in tune with needs of Serbian economy, science, culture, media, etc...).
3. **To steer the public's attention towards existing problems of young people** and by doing so, put an additional positive pressure on policy makers and executives to act in directions that will provide solutions to the problems.

Goals of the first event within „On the Road“ project

1. **To create initial conditions for starting a nation wide campaign which is aimed at improvement of life conditions of young people**
2. **To create a network and connect all relevant parties** that are engaged in reaching these goals.
3. **To steer the public's attention towards problems and position of young people** in Serbia
4. **To announce future events within „On the Road“ project** and to gain public support and interest in these events.

EXPECTED EFFECTS AND OUTCOMES OF „ON THE ROAD“ PROJECT

1. **The wider community changes attitude towards young people**, their problems
2. **Strategies and relevant national legislation is changed in a way** that it has a positive impact on the position of young people in Serbia
3. **The public becomes more sensitive to the position of young people** and keeps a close eye on changes in their position and possible problems occurring during the changes

Expected effects of the first event within „On the Road“ project

1. **Initial conditions for starting the campaign** (aimed at improvement of the position of young people in Serbia) are created.
2. **A network and connection between all relevant institutions and organizations** (that deal with these issues) is set up.
3. **All participants of the process agree upon and sign a declaration**, as proof of their intentions to devote themselves to the problem.
4. **The public becomes familiar with the goals, character and dynamics of the project.**
5. **Further project support is obtained.**

MAIN SEGMENTS OF THE FIRST EVENT:

1. ROUND TABLE: „SERBIAN YOUTH ON THE ROAD TO EUROPE“

Goals: The main goal is to bring together in one place representatives of all relevant institutions and organizations that are in one way or another tied to young people in Serbia (the Government, line ministries, companies, Serbian Chamber of Commerce, educational institutions, NGOs, international organizations and donor programs); to give them the opportunity to publicly state (and thus commit to) all actions they will undertake in order to improve the situation of young people in Serbia; to draw public attention to the position and problems of youth;

Effects: All actors will agree upon and sign a Declaration and thus publicly commit to taking certain actions regarding the matter of Serbian youth; Public attention will be more focused on problems of the youth and on ways to solve those problems;

2. “YOUTH CITY”

Goals: To affirm volunteering in eyes of the wider public, as a way of gaining first experiences in the field of labor, social activism and social responsibility; to bring companies and young people in direct contact, in order for the potential of young people to be recognized and appreciated through voluntary service or possible employment.

Effects: The event itself, which aims to affirm the idea and practise of volunteerism, will gather **4.500** representatives of NGO's, private companies, Government and academic institutions who share the same interest of addressing the issue of young people in Serbia.

3. MUSICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE EVENT

The event promotes authentic and contemporary musical creativity, musical documentary film and video art. Above everything else, it is set to promote the field of "world music" as an authentic artistic expression of our time in Serbia.

The event includes two theatrical productions, the first of which is "Alice in Wonderland" performed by Little Theatre Dusko Radovic, expected to be seen by 3000 children from different social groups (ages 7 to 14), and the second being "Rastibudilizovane klejbežable" by Milan Vukotic, performed for young people by Belgrade "Levo Theatre".

4. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE EVENT

There will be a **press conference**, which will be attended, in addition to organizations behind the event, by representatives of European institutions, the Government of Serbia, Serbian Chamber of Commerce, companies and other relevant participants. **It is expected that this event will be covered by all relevant local electronic and print media.** Media representatives from the region and EU will also be invited. **There will be a live broadcast of all events over the Internet**, via social networks (Facebook, Youtube, Twitter), as well as a live coverage, i.e. live streaming at the official web site of the event (www.ontheroad.rs).

YOUTH CITY

It is a known fact that our youth lives in a world in which tangible and physical motivators and especially money are almost only drivers of any activity. Volunteerism and activities based on intangible rewards are not adequately represented and promoted in order to enable a real boom of voluntary activities, which this country and its young people need.

Short description:

The main goal of Youth City is to gather in one place all entities that value volunteerism, in a sense of engaging young volunteers (private companies, Government institutions, academic institutions), and in a sense of spreading the idea of youth volunteerism and bringing together young people from all over Serbia (Volunteer service of Serbia, Volunteer center of Vojvodina, Belgrade volunteers and so on).

In the main hall of building B in “Sava” center we plan to improvise streets, where all participants will be able to find their preferred corner or room, according to their age and range of interest. In this way we will build the **Youth City**.

Activities:

The main activities of **Youth City** are its streets, constructed to make it the most unique city in Serbia.

Additional activities include presentations and programs of NGOs.

Student union of Serbia, the organization behind the Youth City concept will present its current and ongoing mega project called **1000 STUDENT INTERNSHIPS**. Each student that visits the city will be able to hand over their own CV and look for a desirable internship opportunity.

“I can too” street

“**I can too**” is a street that promotes volunteerism as such, and its basic idea and concept. Its visitors will be kids up to ten years of age. The street will be a hang out place, where little boys and girls will play brain games and will for the first time be introduced with the idea of volunteerism.

“I know how” street

“I know how” street will host organizations that partially or completely operate within the domain of volunteering. In the street, they will have the opportunity to exhibit and explain how, through their practical knowledge, peer education and concrete projects they managed to fit in volunteer work with concrete tasks and how they managed to provide opportunities for young people to gain certain experience, for instance in a company that they will work for in future.

This street will also serve as encouragement for all “younger” NGOs of the same direction, to conduct their activities in accordance with positive goals that we are setting up for young people and their participation in the community.

“We care for young people” street

In this street, companies, Government and academic institutions will show how exactly big the objective need for volunteer work is. They will also provide information about places that are in immediate need for volunteer recruitment. This is where potential volunteers can come in direct contact with recruiters and find suitable volunteering positions.

Youth street

The Youth Street will host twenty **Youth offices** coming from different Serbian towns. The youth offices that have been operational for several years already will be able to initiate various activities and to drive Serbia’s youth in a direction of youth activism and volunteerism that will become exemplary in the Region and the whole Europe.

By bringing together young people from both Serbia and all over Europe, Youth Offices will demonstrate their role in society and how much progress was reached since their doors were opened all regions of Serbia.

One of many initiatives that will arise from the Youth city will be a plan for each town in Serbia to have a Youth street. The organization behind the initiative is Student union of Serbia, a national student organization that has been for more than ten years representing young people of Serbia in Europe, through channels of European students’ Union and through other European institutions.

All youth organizations that will participate in this “On the road” event will join the initiative. The synergy will once again revive the youth spirit of Serbia.

EVENT SCHEDULE

The project's opening event and the first in the series of events will take place in Belgrade, on the 7th and 8th of February, 2011 in "Sava" Center, with the goal to promote Serbia's potential and Serbia as the new development epicenter of young people in this part of Europe.

Monday, February 7, 2011.

SAVA CENTER GREAT HALL:

11.00-12.00 **Theatre production "Alice in Wonderland"** by Little Theatre Dusko Radovic, expected to be seen by children from different social groups (ages 7 to 14)

SAVA CENTER AMPHITHEATER:

14.30-17.30 **Presentation of creative solutions** on "Young people today" topic (selected photographs, video material, presentations, films, theatre installations and music material)

SAVA CENTER, ART café:

12.00-21.00 **VIP cocktail event**

SAVA CENTER, BUILDING B, MAIN HALL:

10.00-20.00 **Youth city**

17.00-18.15 "Rastibudjilizovane klejbežable" **theatre production** by Milan Vukotić, performed by Belgrade Levo Theatre

18.30-20.00 Musical performance by various Serbian bands

Tuesday, February 8, 2011.

SAVA CENTER AMPHITHEATER:

12.00-12.45 **Press conference**

13.00-16.00 **Round table meeting** on the following topic: "SERBIAN YOUTH ON THE ROAD TO EUROPE" – **improvement of status of young people, tuning and adjustment of education so it is able to meet the needs of society and employment process.** The meeting will be attended by Government, EU, Higher education and Economy representatives.

SAVA CENTER, BUILDING B, MAIN HALL:

10.00-17.00 **Youth city**

SAVA CENTER, ART café:

12.00-21.00 **VIP cocktail event**

16.00-17.00 **working lunch**

ORGANIZATIONS BEHIND THE EVENT

The project is being carried out by Independent organization for development and promotion of Serbia, "Art & Blues" artist association and Student union of Serbia, as well as 10 other non-governmental organizations.

Independent organization for development and promotion of Serbia

Independent organization for development and promotion of Serbia "On the Road" is a group of innovative people with vast professional experience in different spheres of business. This group of people teamed up with intent to contribute to Serbia's development and is doing so by encouraging and supporting Serbian companies and individuals to build networks, connect with the right people from all around the world and to build solid partnerships.

The road towards development and promotion of Serbia ought to be paved by organizing special events that have been recognized as an informal meeting place of industry representatives, foreign investors and EU representatives. Such events also serve as encouragement to young and creative individuals and to supporters of a healthy lifestyle.

"Art & Blues" artist association

"Art & Blues" artist association was formed on July 12, 2002 in Belgrade in order to round up various artists, promote their work and organize different manifestations and creative workshops. The main goal of the association is to use the language of art, which is easily understood by each nation and culture, and start a process of transforming negative energy into creativity. The association also seeks to establish contacts and cooperation with similar organizations at home and abroad, especially from the Balkan countries.

"Art & Blues" artist association brings together over 400 members (artists of all profiles), and their so far work was conducted on a voluntary basis in creative workshops. These workshops were all about visual communication, typography and calligraphy, literature, comics, architecture, as well as dramatic, musical and applied art. The workshops were attended by children and young people (7-18 years of age), students and adults, while the oldest participant was 72 years old. So far, the association organized numerous cultural events: eight painting exhibitions (solo and group), over a hundred concerts, literary evenings, debates...

The Association has established a fruitful cooperation with ART TV. This particular broadcaster produced and aired the third cycle of the "Art & Blues" serial (140 episodes), which deals with affirmation of a certain type of musical expression, long known and respected throughout the world, but little known in the Balkan region. Many members of the association took part in creation of this serial. They were hosted in the "Portrait Workshop" part of the serial or otherwise contributed to the production. The man behind it is Miodrag Mika Pavlovic, president of "Art & Blues" artist association.

On the 13th International Festival of Local Television "Golden Beggar" in Kosice-Slovakia, the documentary Art & Blues, won the special prize of the international jury.

The Association was an active member and executive producer of "Mirijevo summer evening" cultural event, which was sponsored by the municipality of Zvezdara. Citizens of this part of Belgrade had the opportunity to enjoy performances of more than 150 artists. The performances were held in the open and included literature, art and music workshops, as well as hosted renowned artists such as Moma Dimic, Djordje Marjanovic, Rasa Popov...

The first and second World Art & Blues Music Festival was held mid-June, organized by the UK "Vuk Karadzic" and sponsored by the city municipality of Stari Grad. "Art & Blues." artist association was the executive producer of these festivals.

In 2008, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia funded a project called "Suite for Nikola Tesla," a piece written for harp, flute and acoustic guitar, performed on August 1, 2008 at the Square of Republic as an open air concert, organized by Art & Blues association and Cultural Center of Belgrade. Musicians that performed in this piece tried to draw, in their own way, through the fusion of electronic and ethnic music, the public's attention towards the scientific work of our famous scientist that has so far inspired many generations of artists.

Student union of Serbia

Student union of Serbia (SUS) is a non-profit, non-governmental and umbrella organization to 4 university and 67 faculty student unions in Serbia. Student union of Serbia was founded in 1998 in order to represent educational, cultural and socio-economic interests of students both on national and European level and before all relevant actors in Higher education. In 1999, SUS became one of 47 member unions of ESU (European Students' Union). Also, SUS is one of the founders of SEI (South-East Initiatives), which is a network of national student unions from Eastern European countries. SUS is as well, a part of the MedNet (Mediterranean Network of Student Representatives). In Serbia, SUS is a member of FeNS and Y-PEER networks. The mission of Student union of Serbia is to create European education in European Serbia, and in accordance with its mission, SUS activities focus on reform of higher education, on improvements in student welfare and on defending student rights.

In spite of difficult work conditions, our student unions have always been promoting knowledge, competences and skills as unique resources that young people have and that can be used to secure prosperity of Serbia and health of our society. Carried by ideals, SUS members visited and organized a lot of seminars, where they have broadened their horizons, became skilled spokesmen, active listeners and better representatives of the population they belong to – student population.

In the period between 2006 and 2009, Student union of Serbia had its representatives in the National council for Higher education.

Team-building, leadership, curriculum quality assurance, improvement of study programs and Higher education institutions, promotion of student, expert and scientific mobility, networking, student-focused education, social equality (especially in case of students that belong to vulnerable groups) and brain-drain prevention mechanisms are only some of the key words that describe SUS activities.

So far, SUS and its member unions have been writing magazines ("Monopolist", "Breza"...), worked on "Education for the future", "Were in the SAME LEVEL", "Guided through ECTS", "Guided through Bologna", did the "Catalyst" project, "Stopped discrimination at Serbian universities", were friends to "The First Science Festival in Novi Sad", "Surveyed the student population", were partners in TEMPUS project called "Implementation of Students Parliament in Serbia", coordinated the "Strengthening Student Participation in SEE" project, and so on...