

# YOUTH LAW

## I. BASIC PROVISIONS

### *Scope and Purpose of the Law*

#### Article 1

This Law regulates measures and activities undertaken by the Republic of Serbia, autonomous province and local government units aimed at improving the social status and position of youth and at creating conditions for addressing young people's needs and interests in all the areas of interest for young people.

The Purpose of the Law is to create conditions for supporting young people in organisation, social activism, development and fulfilment of their potential for their own and for the benefit of the society.

### *Youth Policy and Youth Sector*

#### Article 2

Youth Policy shall mean and include all measures and activities of government bodies, institutions, associations and other actors directed at the improvement and promotion of the position and status of young people.

Youth sector shall include the areas in which youth activities are performed, specified in the general goals of the National Youth Strategy (hereinafter: the Strategy).

The Youth Policy within the youth sector shall be implemented by the relevant ministry responsible for youth affairs (hereinafter: the Ministry) through the implementation of the Strategy and other programme documents in the field of Youth Policy and coordination of activities related to their implementation, with participation of the bodies in charge of special areas in the youth sector and all the other Youth Policy actors, in accordance with this Law.

### *Meaning of Various Terms in this Law*

#### Article 3

The individual terms in this Law shall have the following meanings:

- 1) **Youth or young people** shall mean persons from 15 to and including 30 years of age;
- 2) **Youth Policy actors** shall mean: the Republic of Serbia, autonomous province, and local government unit as holders of Youth Policy, institutions, association carrying out youth activities, and other entities participating in the implementation of the Youth Policy;
- 3) **Youth activity** shall mean any youth sector activity organised by young people or Youth Policy actors, undertaken with the aim of improving the position of young people and their empowerment for active participation in the society for their own and for the benefit of the society ;
- 4) **Youth work** shall mean such youth activities organised by and for young people, based on non-formal education, carried out in young people's free time and

undertaken with the aim of improving the conditions for personal and social development of young people, in accordance with their needs and abilities, in which young people voluntarily participate;

- 5) **Non-formal education of young people** shall mean any organized activity, adjusted to young people, outside the formal educational system, based on young people's needs and interests, principles of voluntary and active participation of young people in the learning process and the promotion of democratic values, through which young people acquire competencies necessary for developing their personal potentials, active participation in the society and better employability.

Any term used in this Law is used neutrally in terms of gender.

### ***Youth Support Principle***

#### Article 4

Everybody, in particular Youth Policy actors, within the scope of their activities and purview, shall support social empowerment of young people in the manner set forth in the Law, Strategy and other Youth Policy instruments.

### ***Equality and Non-Discrimination Principle***

#### Article 5

All young people shall be equal.

Any unjustified difference made between or any unequal treatment of young people, direct or indirect, on any grounds, in particular on the grounds of race, gender, nationality, religious belief, language, social background, financial standing, affiliation with political, trade union or other organizations, mental or physical disability, health, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other actual or assumed personal trait shall be prohibited.

### ***Equal Opportunity Principle***

#### Article 6

Young people shall be entitled to equal opportunities in all spheres of life in accordance with their own choices and abilities.

### ***Principle of Raising Awareness on the Importance of Youth and their Social Role***

#### Article 7

Everybody, in particular Youth Policy actors, shall encourage and support the raising of awareness on the importance of young people and the social role of young people through Youth Policy implementation, social empowerment for the purposes of youth well being, promotion and protection of their interests and needs and creating opportunities for active participation in the society.

### ***Active Youth Participation Principle***

#### Article 8

Everybody, in particular Youth Policy actors, shall ensure a stimulating environment and offer active support in the implementation of young people's youth activities, in their taking initiative and in their purposeful involvement in decision-making processes and processes of decision implementation, which decisions contribute to personal and social development, upon young people's receiving complete information.

### ***Principle of Youth Responsibility and Solidarity***

#### Article 9

Young people should actively contribute to the building and upholding of social values and to the development of their communities, especially through various forms of volunteer activities, and express intergenerational solidarity and actively work on creating the conditions for an equal and full participation in all the aspects of social life of young people with disabilities, minority youth and all other persons and social groups that may be at risk from discrimination, i.e. discriminating behaviour.

## **II. NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY**

#### Article 10

The Strategy shall mean the document approved by the Government, at the proposal of the Ministry, which specifies in particular: active participation of young people in the social life, providing for the exercising of the right of young people to equal opportunities, youth information, encouragement and validation of tolerance, democracy and exceptional achievements of young people, fostering and development of formal and non-formal education, encouragement and incentives for employment and self-employment of young people and youth entrepreneurship, improvement of youth safety, sustainable development and healthy environment, protection and improvement of youth health and other activities and areas of importance for young people.

#### Article 11

The Strategy shall be adopted for a period of ten years.

Young people, the Ministry, ministries responsible for special areas in the youth sector and all the other Youth Policy actors shall participate in the development and implementation of the Strategy.

The Ministry directs and monitors the implementation of the Strategy on the local level.

Youth Policy actors act in accordance with the Strategy principles.

## ***Funds for Strategy Implementation***

### **Article 12**

The funds for Strategy implementation shall be provided in the budget of the Republic of Serbia, as well as the budget of the autonomous province and local government unit, and from other sources, in accordance with the Law.

In accordance with the Strategy, the autonomous province, and the local government unit shall develop action plans for Strategy implementation in its territory, and provide in their budgets the funds for the implementation of such plans.

## **III. ASSOCIATIONS IMPLEMENTING YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

### ***Associations of Young People and for Young People***

#### **Article 13**

For the purposes of carrying out youth activities, improving conditions for personal and social development of young people according to their needs and abilities and for the purpose of including young people in the social life of a community and their informing, associations of young people and associations for young people may be established, in accordance with the Law governing the establishment and legal status of associations.

Associations stated in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be recorded in the registry of associations kept by the responsible body, in accordance with the law.

Association of young people shall mean any association, recorded in the registry and operating in accordance with the Law governing the establishment and legal status of associations, whose membership has no less than two-thirds of young people and whose goals or area of activity are aimed at young people pursuant to this Law.

Association for young people shall mean any other association recorded in the registry and operating in accordance with the Law governing the establishment and legal status of associations, and whose aims or area of activity are focused, among other things, on young people, in accordance with this Law,.

Young people may also establish informal associations whose aims or area of activity are focused on young people, in accordance with this Law, and which operate in accordance with the Law governing the establishment and legal status of associations.

### ***Federations of Associations of Young People and for Young People***

#### **Article 14**

All registered associations of young people and associations for young people may, for the purposes of pursuing common goals and interests, form federations, whose goals and area of activity are aimed at young people (hereinafter: Federations).

The respective provisions of the Law governing the establishment and legal status of associations shall apply to the establishment, recording in the registry, and operation of federations.

The status of an Umbrella Federation (hereinafter: Umbrella Federation) shall have every federation consisting of at least 60 registered associations set forth in Article 13 hereof and federations set forth in paragraph 1 of this Article, having their head office on the territory of at least two thirds of counties in the Republic of Serbia and which have carried out youth activities in several local government units for at least two years, and which have at least 2,000 individual members, registered once, of whom at least two thirds are young people.

Based on the records it keeps, in accordance with this Law, the Ministry shall issue to such federation a certificate of compliance with the conditions stated in paragraph 3 of this Article.

The Umbrella Federation represents and acts in the interests of its members, proposes candidates for the Youth Council, and participates in the process of development and implementation of the Strategy and other documents related to youth policy.

### ***Maintaining Records***

#### **Article 15**

The Ministry shall maintain joint records of associations and federations referred to in Articles 13 and 14 of this Law based on the data obtained from the body responsible for their registry and based on the data submitted by associations in order to enable an organised and systematic monitoring of the status of the Youth Sector Area and to monitor the implementation of Youth Policy and the financing of programmes and projects of public interest in the area of Youth Sector in accordance herewith.

The records mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article shall contain the following data:

- Name of association, head office and address;
- Date of foundation of association;
- Area of activity;
- Purposes for which the association is founded
- Personal name and unique master citizen number, i.e. passport number and the country issuing the passport, of the association's representative;
- Membership in associations;
- Total number of members of the association;
- Number of members aged 15 to 30.

The contents and manner of maintaining such joint records referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be specified by the Minister responsible for youth affairs (hereinafter: Minister).

## **IV. YOUTH COUNCIL, OFFICE AND AGENCY**

### ***Youth Council***

#### **Article 16**

At the proposal of the Ministry and in accordance with the regulations governing the work of the Government, the Government shall form a Youth Council

as an advisory body initiating and harmonising activities related to the development and implementation of Youth Policy and proposing measures for its improvement.

The Youth Council shall consist of representatives of the government body dealing with areas of interest for young people within their portfolios, provincial government body responsible for youth affairs, federations and associations from Articles 13 and 14 hereof, youth offices, joint representative of national councils of minorities, and renowned experts.

Representatives of young people shall make up no less than one third of the Youth Council membership, coming from associations and federations from Articles 13 and 14 hereof.

### ***Provincial Youth Councils and Local Government Youth Councils***

#### Article 17

For the purposes of harmonizing activities relating to the implementation of Youth Policy, in the territory of the autonomous province and local government unit, the competent body of the autonomous province and the competent body of a local government unit may establish a provincial, city and municipal youth council.

### ***Youth Office***

#### Article 18

For the purposes of providing conditions for active involvement of young people in the life and activities of the social community, empowerment of young people, providing support to the organization of various social activities of young people, learning and creative expression of young people's needs, a local government unit may, within the scope of its authority, needs and capacity, establish a Youth Office.

The Youth Office shall be funded from the budget of the local government unit, and other sources in accordance with the Law.

The activities referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be implemented on the basis of local youth action plans.

### ***Youth Agency***

#### Article 19

An agency may be established for the purposes of implementing youth programmes, in accordance with the European Union youth programmes, and other programmes relating to young people, in accordance with a separate Law.

## **V. FINANCING OF PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS OF PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE YOUTH SECTOR**

### Article 20

The funds for funding programmes and projects of public interest in the youth sector shall be earmarked in the budget of the Republic of Serbia, and such funds shall be used for:

1) providing conditions for the development and improvement of youth activities through encouraging young people to actively participate in social processes;

2) encouraging associations of young people, associations for young people, and federations to participate in the implementation of youth activities and objectives from the Strategy;

3) informing young people on issues of importance for the youth and issuing publications of importance for young people;

4) stimulating career guidance and counselling for young people, and organizing trainings, seminars and events of importance for the employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship of young people;

5) fostering non-formal youth education within the youth sector and development of quality of non-formal youth education;

6) social empowerment of young people, especially through encouraging volunteerism and youth work and capacity building of youth associations;

7) encouraging young people to spend active and quality free time and foster healthy and safe lifestyles, as well as addressing the needs of young people in the field of culture;

8) encouraging youth activities within the youth sector at the local level through the support of implementation of local plans of action for young people, as well as programmes and projects of local youth offices;

9) conducting research on the position and needs of young people in the Republic of Serbia;

10) implementation and promotion of international cooperation within the youth sector;

11) support of young talents through rewards, scholarships, and skills improvement of school and university students.

For the purposes of financing the support to young talents through rewards, scholarships and additional training of pupils and college students, the funds shall be provided in the budget of the Republic of Serbia within the budget fund established by the Government for such purposes (hereinafter: Fund for Young Talents), in accordance with the Law regulating the budgetary system.

### ***Funding and Co-Funding of Programmes and Projects of Public Interest in the Youth Sector***

### Article 21

The funding and co-funding of programmes and projects of public interest in the area of youth sector referred to in Article 20, paragraph 1, sub-paragraphs 1-10, of this Law shall be addressed through funding or co-funding of programmes and projects implemented by programme and project holders, as follows:

1) associations of young people, associations for young people, federations;

2) local governments;

3) institutions, science and research institutes, and other legal entities having their head office in the Republic of Serbia.

The general interest in the youth sector area referred to in Article 18, subparagraph 11 of this Law shall be addressed through funding of school and university students in accordance with the requirements of this Law and the act establishing the budget fund referred to in Article 18, paragraph 2 of this Law.

The holder of the programme and project of public interest in the youth sector area, funded or co-funded in accordance with the provisions hereof, may not at the same time apply for funds from the Republic, Provincial and local budgets for funding of the same activities.

### ***Conditions for Programme and Project Funding, Co-Funding and Implementation***

#### Article 22

The holders of programmes and projects referred to in Article 21, subparagraphs 1) and 3) of this Law must be registered in the territory of the Republic of Serbia in accordance with the Law.

The holders of programmes and projects referred to in Article 21, subparagraph 2) must have established youth offices.

Beneficiaries of the Fund for Young Talents must be Republic of Serbia nationals or have a refugee status, and have permanent residence, or temporary residence if refugees, in the Republic of Serbia and meet other requirements stipulated in the act establishing the above budget fund.

The funding or co-funding of programmes and projects referred to in Article 21 of this Law shall be carried out on the basis of a public call for proposals, in accordance with the funds envisaged in the Republic of Serbia budget for funding the public interest within youth sector.

For the expert evaluation of the submitted programmes and projects proposed to be financed, as stated in Article 20, paragraph 1, subparagraphs 1-10 hereof, the Minister shall issue a decision forming a special task force – a commission, in accordance with the regulations governing the state administration.

At the proposal of the commission mentioned in paragraph 5 of this Article, the Minister establishes which programmes and projects of public interest in the youth sector area will be funded or co-funded or co-funded from the budget of the Republic of Serbia.

At the official website, the Ministry shall publish the list of all the participants in the procedure, approved programmes and projects, including the amounts of approved funds, as well as the list of approved scholarships and rewards as stated in Article 21, paragraph 2 hereof. .

#### Article 23

The Ministry shall enter with the holder of the programme or project awarded the funds into an agreement on the implementation of the programme or project of interest for young people within the youth sector, as stated in Article 20 hereof.

If the programme or project holder does not respond to the invitation to conclude the agreement within 15 days of receipt of the invitation, he shall be deemed to have abandoned the programme or project proposal.

The holder of the approved programme or project shall submit a report on programme or project progress and funds expenditure upon the request of the Ministry, but not less than twice per year.

The Minister may discontinue further funding of a programme or project for the approved programme and project holder failing to submit such report within the specified period of time.

In the event that the funds are used for purposes other than those for which they have been awarded, the holder of an approved programme or project shall reimburse the entire awarded amount to the entity providing such funds.

The holder of an approved programme or project shall retain the records or documents relating to the implementation of such programme or project in accordance with the Law.

#### Article 24

The Minister shall specify the manner for the approval of programmes and awarding funds, appearance and contents of the application form and documentation to be submitted with the project or programme proposal, contents and appearance of programme or project progress reports, manner and monitoring of implementation of approved programmes or projects.

### ***Addressing the Needs and Interests of Young People in the Youth Sector in the Autonomous Province***

#### Article 25

The financing of the needs and interests of young people in the autonomous province shall be in line with the interests and needs of the autonomous province and its economic power and shall be used for:

- 1) providing conditions for the participation of young people in the development and implementation of the provincial youth action plan;
- 2) encouraging young people to actively participate in social processes through promotion and support of youth activities in the territory of the autonomous province;
- 3) encouraging associations of young people, associations for young people, and federations to participate in the implementation of the Youth Policy, including capacity building of youth associations in the territory of the autonomous province;
- 4) organisation of trainings, seminars, conferences and events in the area of Youth Policy of special interest for the autonomous province.

The funds for addressing the needs and interests of young people referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be provided in the autonomous province budget.

The competent body of the autonomous province shall specify the requirements and manner for awarding funds from the autonomous province budget, and/or approval of projects addressing the needs and interests of young people in the territory of the autonomous province, and the manner of publication of information on the programmes and projects proposed for funding, approved programmes and projects and implementation of approved programmes and projects.

***Addressing the Needs and Interests of Young People in the Area of Youth Sector in Local Government Units***

Article 26

The financing of needs and interests of young people in local government units shall be in line with the interests and needs of the local government unit and its economic power, and shall be used for:

1) encouraging young people to actively participate in social processes through promotion and support of youth activities, youth work and non-formal education in the territory of the local government unit;

2) encouraging associations of young people, associations for young people, and federations to participate in the implementation of the Youth Policy, including capacity building of youth associations in the territory of the local government unit;

3) establishment and operation of the Youth Office, youth clubs, youth centres and the like;

4) activities of institutions through which the public interest in the field of Youth Sector is addressed, and which have been founded by the local government;

5) creating conditions for young people's participation in the preparation and implementation of local plans of action for young people;

6) creating conditions for young people to spend active and quality free time, engaging in sports, nurturing healthy and safe lifestyles, implementation of volunteering activities, organisation of trainings, seminars, conferences and events of importance for the employment and skills improvement of young people, as well as for addressing the needs of young people in the field of culture,

7) supporting activities and projects fostering sustainable development and environmental protection.

The funds for addressing the needs and interests of young people referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be provided in the budget of the local government unit.

The competent body of a local government unit shall specify the requirements and manner for awarding funds from the budget of the local government unit, and/or approval of projects addressing the needs and interests of young people in the territory of the local government unit, and the manner of publication of information on the programmes and projects proposed for funding, approved programmes and projects and implementation of approved programmes and projects.

**VI. IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING**

Article 27

The implementation of this Law shall be monitored by the Ministry.

## **VII. FINAL AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

### Article 28

The regulations related to the implementation of this Law, referred to in Article 15, paragraph 3, and Article 24 hereof, shall be adopted within six months of the date this Law comes into effect.

### Article 29

This Law shall come into effect on the eighth day of publication date in the „Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia“, and its application shall commence upon the expiry of a period of six months of the effective date.