



An EU Funded Project

Implementation of Anti-Discrimination Policies in Serbia

Palata Srbija | Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2 | office No 563

Tel: 011 31 17 124 | Fax: 011 31 14 316



Implementation of
Anti-Discrimination Policies

Communication Plan of the Office for Human and Minority Rights

Prepared by

Vladan Jovanovic, Strategic Coordination Expert, , IADP Project

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The Communication Plan of the Office of Human and Minority Rights, was created within the Project "Implementation of anti-discrimination policies in Serbia", financed by the European Union.

The Communication Plan has been created in period between February and June 2013, in a broad consultative process which involved a number of representatives of the ministries of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, representatives of the AP of Vojvodina, representatives of the independent bodies, civil society organizations, the UN and the OSCE Mission in Serbia and other organizations – without whose valuable comments and suggestions this document couldn't arise.

Support with particular importance in the preparation of this document, is provided by the director and staff of the Office for Human and Minority Rights, as well as the head and members of the Project team.

Eptisa Consultant

Vladan Jovanovic

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Republic Serbia established the Office for Human and Minority Rights (OHMR) by the *Regulation on the Office for Human and Minority Rights*¹, as a governmental service.

The purpose of establishment of the OHMR is based in the need for coordination of all ministries and bodies dealing with human rights. Despite the existence of the OHMR, the work of the Government on human rights remains allocated to various ministries and bodies.

The role and responsibilities of the OHMR within the State system of protection and promotion of human and minority rights, were defined by the above-mentioned Regulation. The OHMR provides technical assistance as well as services for the Government and relevant ministries related to:

- 1) Protection and improvement of human and minority rights;
- 2) Monitoring the compliance of national legislation with international agreements and other international instruments on human and minority rights, and initiating changes in domestic legislation with the aim of it's improvement;
- 3) General topics regarding circumstances relevant to national minorities;
- 4) Monitoring the status of national minorities living on the territory of the Republic of Serbia and the exercise of minority rights;
- 5) Establishing links of minorities with their home countries.

An important part of the scope of work of the OHMR includes the preparation and submission of reports on the implementation of international agreements on the protection of human rights ratified and signed by the Republic of Serbia. Reports are prepared for:

- 1) International treaty bodies;
- 2) Special procedures; and
- 3) The Universal Periodic Review.

The current arrangement of the protection and promotion of human and minority rights in Serbia, implies the need for:

- 1) Proposing and implementing appropriate strategies and policies in the

¹ Regulation is made under Article 31 Paragraph 1 of the Law on the Government ("Official Gazette of RS", no. No. 55/05, 71/05 - correction, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11 and 68/12 - U.S.) and Article 37 of the Law on Ministries ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 72/12). The Regulation was published in the "Official Gazette of RS", No. 75/2012 at August 2, 2012.

- field of human rights;
- 2) Coordination of activities with independent institutions and civil society organizations, and the implementation of concrete measures and activities aimed to improve the status of minority and marginalized groups; and
 - 3) Strengthening of a culture of human rights in Serbia.

Reporting on the implementation of international instruments on human rights is an obligation of the Republic of Serbia, in the framework of the United Nations (UN), as well as within the Council of Europe (CE) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The Communication Plan of the OHMR, with its focus refers to the process of reporting, which is a tool for regular monitoring of the implementation of international agreements and improvement of human rights in Serbia.

According to this normative system and the environment in which OHMR functioning, for the purpose of improving the quality of OHMR's work, in addition to other organizational, administrative and activities arising through the application of the relevant regulations – it is necessary ***to improve the mechanisms for both organization and communication in complex systems of OHMR.***

If communication is seen as ***a process of transferring information with the mutual understanding***, considering the complex OHMR's status in the system and demands that are directed toward the OHMR – it is an evident need for improving and developing systematized mechanisms and procedures for the OHMR's communication with all stakeholders with which OHMR establishes relations in order to exercise its activities.

The Communication Plan of the OHMR is a document that is, according to the sphere of influence that implies, aimed at improving communication of the OHMR with stakeholders relevant to the issues of human and minority rights in Serbia.

I. MECHANISMS FOR REPORTING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

In the context of reporting on human and minority rights in Serbia, for OHMR there are three relevant reporting mechanisms: (1) International treaty bodies, (2) Special procedures, and (3) Universal Periodic Review.

I.1. International treaty bodies

The UN system for the protection and promotion of human rights primarily is contained in:

- 1) The bodies established by the UN Charter;

- 2) The treaty bodies and the bodies established by international conventions for the protection of human rights; and
- 3) Other bodies and UN agencies.

Bodies set up by the UN Charter are: the Human Rights Council²; Commission for Human Rights³; Sub-Commission on the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights⁴; Commission on the Status of Women⁵.

The treaty bodies have been established by international conventions for the protection of human rights. There are nine treaty bodies that monitor implementation of key international agreements on human rights, which are: (1) The Human Rights Committee⁶; (2) The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁷; (3) The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination⁸; (4) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women⁹; (5) The Committee against Torture¹⁰; (6) The Committee on the Rights of the Child¹¹; (7) The Committee for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families¹²; (8) The Committee on the Rights of People with disabilities; (9) Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

Other UN bodies operating in the field of protection and promotion of human rights are: (1) General Assembly; (2) The Third Committee of the General Assembly - Committee for Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs; (3) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; (4) Economic and Social Council; (5) The International Court of Justice.

² The reform of the UN General Assembly established a new body, the Human Rights Council, by the Resolution from March 15, 2006 as its subsidiary body to replace the Commission on Human Rights. The Council has 47 members and should be the main UN forum for dialogue and cooperation in the field of human rights.

³ This Commission was established in 1946, consisting of the authorized representatives of 53 countries elected by the Economic and Social Council using the formula that provides geographical representation. It is political body acting under instructions from their governments, and often submits proposals, recommendations and reports in connection with the conclusion and implementation of international instruments in the field of human rights. The Commission provides a forum where representatives of countries, civil society organizations and human rights activists consider the situation of human rights.

⁴ The Sub-Commission for the protection and promotion of human rights is a subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Rights, which was established in 1947 under the original name of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Sub-commission changed its name (1999) to the present and currently has 26 independent experts appointed by the Commission (elected every two years for a period of four years).

⁵ Commission on the Status of Women is based on Article 68 of the UN Charter, consisting of the authorized representatives of 45 countries elected by the Economic and Social Council according to the formula that provides a geographical representation.

⁶ There are 18 members.

⁷ Founded by ECOSOC Resolution in 1985/17, 28 May in 1985 and has 18 members.

⁸ There are 18 members.

⁹ There are 23 members.

¹⁰ There are 10 members.

¹¹ There are 18 members.

¹² There are 10 members.

In addition to these bodies dealing with human rights, there are a number of other UN bodies also involved in the protection and promotion of human rights, for example: UNHCR, UNDP, HABITAT, UNESCO, ILO.

Reporting within the Council of Europe In the Council of Europe there is no unified monitoring implementation of the conventions. The manner of reporting primarily is established by rules and procedures that were adopted by the Committee of Ministers as well as treaty bodies for assessment reports of the member states.

The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg is a control mechanism to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The control mechanism for *Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* includes visits of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in detention facilities and prisons in the member states.

With regard to the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*¹³, it should be noted that reports of its application examines the Committee of Experts, which prepares a report and presents it to the Committee of Ministers, with comments given by the member states. For the implementation of the *Framework Convention for the Protection of the National Minorities*¹⁴ it is relevant Committee of Ministers, which with assistance of Advisory Committee, monitors its implementation. The Advisory Committee assesses the adequacy of the measures taken by the parties and gives opinions. On the basis of these rules and procedures, the contracting states, make up their national reports under strictly established methodological matrix, which requires a special approach to the organization of drafting state reports.

I.2. Special procedures

Within special procedures, information and answers on a questionnaire are preparing, with aim to monitor the status of a particular human rights in all UN member states. Special procedures are applied in accordance with the decisions of the relevant supervisory bodies of the UN: Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on Human Rights as well as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as a special supervisory body.

¹³ At the time of drafting the Communication Plan, already was completed the second cycle of monitoring the implementation of the Charter.

¹⁴ At the time of drafting the Communication Plan was going on the third cycle of monitoring the implementation of the Convention.

I.3. Universal Periodic Review

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique mechanism that aims to improve the human rights situation in the world. Once within every four years, every UN member state has an obligation to submit the report to the Human Rights Council, setting out the steps it is taking to improve the situation of human rights in its territory, and steps toward fulfillment of member state's obligations. The UPR is very important mainly because it is the only control mechanism of human rights, which is mandatory for all UN member states, and it is designed to ensure equal treatment of countries in the evaluation. The purpose of the UPR is that all UN member states should be subjected to some form of control. It is a unique process, structured as a dialogue between the countries, which implies equal treatment of all UN member states and allows each country to accept the recommendations and take actions to improve the situation of human rights in its territory. UPR includes: (1) a review of the human rights situation in a country; (2) implementation of the recommendations as well as promises and commitments voluntarily given by each state; (3) a report on the steps taken by the state after the previous inspection¹⁵.

II. INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS ON WHICH REPORTS ARE SUBMITTING IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS

International documents on which reports are submitting are located in the corpus of documents of the UN, Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE ODIHR).

II.1. Documents in the UN system

In the UN system reports are submitting: (1) on the application of basic international human rights treaties confirmed by the Republic of Serbia; (2) with regard to applications submitted by individuals for cases of violation basic international human rights treaties, to the treaty bodies of the UN.

Preparation of periodic reports on the implementation of key international human rights treaties by the Republic of Serbia, is related to: (1) The International Pact on Civil and Political Rights¹⁶, the Optional Protocol to the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights¹⁷ and the

¹⁵ The Republic of Serbia passed through two rounds of the UPR, at 2008 and 2013

¹⁶ Official Gazette of the SFRY – International Treaties", No. 7/1971

¹⁷ "Official Gazette of the SRY – International Treaties", No. 4/2001

Second Optional Protocol to the International Pact on Civil Rights, which aims to abolish the death penalty¹⁸; (2) The International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹⁹; (3) The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment²⁰ and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; (4) The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination²¹; (5) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women²² and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women²³; (6) The Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁴, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography to the Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁵ and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts to the Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁶; (7) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities²⁷, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities; and (8) The International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances²⁸.

Applications of individuals to treaty bodies of the UN for violating basic international human rights treaties The Republic of Serbia has accepted the jurisdiction of the Human Rights Committee, the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee on Enforced Disappearances – to consider individual complaints against the Republic of Serbia's violation of the relevant provisions of the basic treaty, where the treaty bodies established.

II.2. Documents in the Council of Europe system

In the system of the Council of Europe reports are submitting: (1) within the periodic reports on the implementation of specific documents of the Council of Europe; (2) to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.

Periodic reporting in the Council of Europe system, including reports on the implementation: the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Also, periodic reports are preparing for the European Commission against

¹⁸ "Official Gazette of the SRY – International Treaties", No. 4/2001

¹⁹ Official Gazette of the SFRY – International Treaties", No. 7/1971

²⁰ Official Gazette of the SFRY – International Treaties", No. 9/91

²¹ "Official Gazette of SFRY" - Addendum no. 6/67

²² Official Gazette of the SFRY – International Treaties", No. 11/81

²³ Official Gazette of the SRY – International Treaties", No. 13/2002

²⁴ Official Gazette of the SFRY – International Treaties", No. 15/90

²⁵ Official Gazette of the SRY – International Treaties", No. 4/2001

²⁶ Official Gazette of the SRY – International Treaties", No. 4/2001

²⁷ Official Gazette of the RS – International Treaties", No. 42/2009

²⁸ Official Gazette of the RS – International Treaties", No. 1/2011

Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)²⁹.

II.3. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

For the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, there are preparing annual reports and responses to a questionnaire regarding hate crimes.

III. REASONS FOR THE COMMUNICATION PLAN

III.1. Transparency and participation

Obligations that the Government has taken within the ratification of UN instruments on human rights and acceptance of relevant instruments of Council of Europe imply timely, relevant and meaningful reporting. External supervision of harmonization and implementation regulations of the Republic of Serbia, allows achievement of changes in terms of compliance with international standards.

High standards and good practice in the field of human rights constitutes one of the conditions for membership in the European Union (EU). This was defined in the Copenhagen criteria (1993) and it is emphasizing in the process of accession to the EU.

Promotion of human and minority rights and the reporting process – must be viewed in the context of contemporary standards and practices relating to the organization of accountably government. These standards and practices include two principles characteristic for modern parliamentary democracy: ***proper role of independent bodies*** and ***participatory democracy***.

Independent bodies that are relevant in this context are: Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia³⁰, Vojvodina Ombudsman; Commissioner for Protection of Equality³¹; and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and

²⁹ The Republic of Serbia has passed the fourth monitoring cycle.

³⁰ The Ombudsman protects and promotes the rights of citizens and controls whether the states agencies and organizations exercising public powers do their job legally and properly. The Ombudsman is independent and autonomous. The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia elects him. Ombudsman submits reports on his/her work to the National Assembly. Institution of the Ombudsman was introduced in the legal system of the Republic of Serbia in 2005 when National Assembly adopted the Law on the Ombudsman. The existence of this institution confirmed by the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006).

³¹ Commissioner for the Protection of Equality is an independent, autonomous and specialized state agency established under the Law Against Discrimination (2009). Normative framework of this institution is the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, the relevant international instruments and general and specific anti-discrimination laws of the Republic of Serbia. Tasks of this Commissioner are preventing all forms and cases of discrimination, protection of legal

Personal Data Protection³².

Participatory democracy is a form of democracy that includes broad participation of citizens in decision-making. The concept of citizen participation is not to deny the importance of institutions of representative democracy. In the concept of participatory democracy decision-making mechanisms such as the right to initiate legislation, the right to participate in advisory bodies that are preparing decisions etc. – coinciding with representative institutions such as the parliament, government, elections, etc.

The importance of transparency in respect of human and minority rights, points to the importance of involving independent bodies and civil society organizations as organizational exponents of participatory democracy, both in the reporting process, as well as the overall process of improving human and minority rights in Serbia.

Improved system for efficient reporting on the implementation of international instruments and monitoring implementation of recommendations made by international bodies within the consideration of the report – contributes to the provision and improvement of the situation in the field of human and minority rights in Serbia.

III.2. Communication in the institutional environment

As important functions of communication we would like to stress: ***informing, controlling*** and ***motivating***.

Within the scope of their activities OHMR has established relationships with various actors – public authorities, authorities of Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, local authorities, independent bodies, civil society organizations, national councils of national minorities and others.

These social actors constitute the institutional environment in which the OHMR functioning and implicitly – communicate. Also, this institutional environment that is relevant to the OHMR constitutes a complex communication context.

In this context, there is a need for continuous and effective communication and exchange of information between the OHMR and the specific actors who belong to one of these groups. Current communication of OHMR takes place in ways that are based in the regulations as well as in using of mechanisms developed on the basis of practice.

equality in all areas of social relations, supervision of the implementation of regulations prohibiting discrimination and promoting achievement and protection of equality.

³² Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection is an independent state body, independent in the exercise of its jurisdiction. This Commissioner acting in accordance to the Law on Free Access to Public Information, the Law on Protection of Personal Data and in accordance to other relevant legislation.

Directions of communication that are relevant in a complex communication environment are **vertical** and **horizontal**. Vertical communication is in two-ways: **downward communication** and **upward communication**, and horizontal communication in this context is **lateral communication**.

Downward communication starts from a certain level in communication environment or in organization, to a lower level. In connection with the operation of the OHMR, this direction of communication is evident in OHMR's relations with the upper unit – the Government. As an agency of the Government, the OHMR receives incentives for communication cycles from the Government. In this case, from the perspective of the Government, we can see downward communication. Also, the same direction of communication in the preparation of the reports on the implementation of international instruments, as well as follow-up actions according to recommendations – exists when the OHMR initiates communication with the public authorities, the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, the local authorities, independent bodies and civil society organizations. Downward communications, includes at a minimum:

- ***Setting goals;***
- ***Setting timelines;***
- ***Transfer instructions for the work;***
- ***Highlighting issues that need attention, etc.***

Upward communication is directed to a higher level within the group or the organization. This direction of communication is used to: sending feedback to organizational units or individuals at senior levels in the specific communication environment or process; informing about progress toward the goals and current problems. From the perspective of the participants in the procedures within the preparation of the reports on the implementation of international instruments, as well as follow-up actions according to recommendations – all participants in the process by which OHMR is expecting contributions, have a needs for clear guidelines and incentives, in order to:

- ***Production their inputs to reports;***
- ***Reporting on achievements;***
- ***Submission of proposals and initiatives to improve the reporting system, and improvement of human and minority rights.***

Lateral communication takes place between members of the same workgroup, members of the working groups on the same level, managers and responsible persons of the same level or horizontally between equal individuals. Lateral communication is a course that is relevant to the members of the working groups in terms of report writing and within the OHMR in the process of information exchange. Well-developed communication in lateral direction is a precondition for the use of information in order to reach a decision by the authorized person or body in a particular process or communication environment.

III.3. The internal organization and the actual functioning of OHMR

*The Rules on Internal Organization and Job Description in the OHMR*³³ regulates internal organization and activities. According to this document OHMR have established the following basic indoor units: 1) Department for the promotion and protection of human rights; 2) Department of national minorities; and 3) Department of general affairs, international cooperation and projects.

The Department for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights carries out activities related to monitoring compliance of national legislation with international treaties and other international instruments on human rights and initiate amendments of national legislation; drafting and presentation periodic reports for purposes of UN treaty bodies, on the implementation of key international agreements on Human Rights; preparing a responses on individual complaints against state which have submitted to the UN treaty bodies whose competence was adopted by the Republic of Serbia; drafting reports to UN special procedures; monitoring the implementation of regulations and recommendations, and cooperation with the bodies of the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation European Union and other international organizations and institutions to which Serbia is a member; preparing proposals of recommending measures to public authorities and other entities for the promotion and protection of human rights; monitoring measures of anti-discrimination policies; implementation strategies in the area of human rights; and performing other duties within the competence of the OHMR.

The Department for National Minorities performs tasks related to monitoring the implementation of international agreements in the field of minority rights; monitoring the compliance of national legislation with international treaties and other international instruments on minority rights and initiating changes in domestic legislation; drafting reports on the implementation of international agreements in the field of minority rights; preparation sessions of mixed intergovernmental bodies for minorities and coordination of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia in these bodies; realization of the right of national minorities to establish and maintain cross-border cooperation; organizing meetings of the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Serbia; monitoring the rights of national minorities in the field of culture, public information, education and official use of languages and scripts of national minorities in other areas of importance to national minorities; the establishment of cooperation with the authorities and civil society in improving the position of national minorities, particularly Roma; implementation and monitoring of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015;

³³ No 110-00-1/2012-01 from November 19, 2012

implementation of the Strategy on Roma and Action Plan; providing assistance to vulnerable migrant population groups; and other activities within the scope of this Department.

The Department of General Affairs, International Cooperation and projects carries out human, material-financial, administrative and technical operations to ensure efficient and coordinated operation of all indoor units; participation in international cooperation in the field of human and minority rights; and other activities within the scope of this Department.

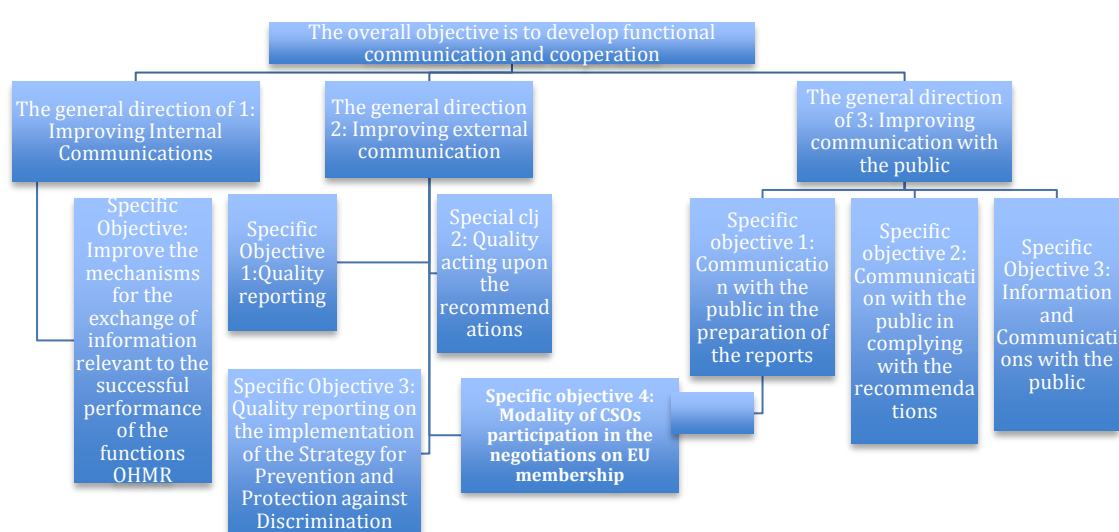
IV. THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE AND GENERAL DIRECTIONS

The results of the above analysis have impact on defining the overall objective, general directions and specific objectives and activities in this document – elements of the Communication Plan.

For the purpose of clarifying specific objectives, further in this document is given focus and summarized analysis, which relates to the circumstances relevant to the specific objectives.

The below presented graph unveil operative parts of this document, i.e. the structure of the most important parts of the Communication Plan, with summary statements, which are further elaborated in this document to the level of groups of activities as well as specific activities in the Action plan which is a part of the Communication Plan.

Graph 1: Structure of the Communication Plan



IV.1. Overall objective

The overall objective of the Communication Plan of the OHMR is developing functional communication and cooperation with all relevant stakeholders to enable appropriate reporting, monitoring of acting according to recommendations, monitoring the implementation of the Strategy of Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, as well as participation of civil society organizations and the public in activities within the operation of the OHMR.

IV.2. General directions

General directions for improving the communication of the OHMR are as follow:

General direction 1: Improvement of internal communication in the OHMR.

General direction 2: Improvement external communication with authorities and organizations.

General direction 3: Improvement communication with the public.

V. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

General direction 1: Improvement of internal communication in the OHMR

Department for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights is the internal organizational unit of the OHMR, which is responsible for reporting on the implementation of international human rights treaties, preparing responses to UN treaty bodies and other mechanisms for monitoring the status of human and minority rights, as well as for monitoring the implementation of recommendations. This department consists of two internal units: the *Segment to monitor the implementation of international and regional human rights treaties* and the *Group for anti-discrimination policy*.

Knowledge Management is the process of organizing and redistributing individual and collective knowledge in organization. Knowledge management includes the institutionalization of knowledge that exists among individuals in the organization, and knowledge of external persons involved in the organization's activities. The institutionalization of knowledge is also important because of the need for institutional memory, which allows to store and launch of the knowledge and experience of individuals when they are no longer in places where they helped the improvement of knowledge in the organization.

Institutional memory makes the organization immune to personnel changes in both lower positions and in management positions, regardless of whether it is the middle or top management.

Knowledge management in organizations, including organizations like is OHMR, is important because of purpose that the right information has to get to the right people at the right time.

Knowledge Management in the OHMR, it is important because of following reasons:

- It is intellectual capital. This type of capital, in addition to social capital and networks that are developed and used by the OHMR, is the most important type of capital that OHMR possesses;
- Without good knowledge management can not be achieved the role of the OHMR in the implementation of the Communication Plan;
- Intellectual resources in carrying out activities of the OHMR are as important as the physical and financial resources;
- Knowledge management is precondition for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the OHMR;
- OHMR has a need to develop internal databases with relevant information which an employee of the OHMR can easily searches and uses;
- OHMR needs organizational culture that supports and rewards improvement and knowledge sharing;
- OHMR needs developed mechanisms that enable employees who have acquired valuable expertise and knowledge, to share it with others.

* * *

Under the General direction 1: ***Improving internal communications in the OHMR shall have***, is defined

Specific objective

Improvement mechanisms for the exchange of information relevant to the successful performance of the OHMR, with focus on preparation of the reports as well as monitoring acting according to recommendations.

Within this specific objective will be realized following groups of activities:

- 1) To continue with the practice of regular meetings of the OHMR Collegium;**
- 2) To establish a mechanism for institutionalizing knowledge and the improvement of the institutional memory of the OHMR.**

The specific activities within these two groups of activities are given in the Action Plan, which is an integral part of this Communication Plan.

General direction 2: Improvement external communication with authorities and organizations

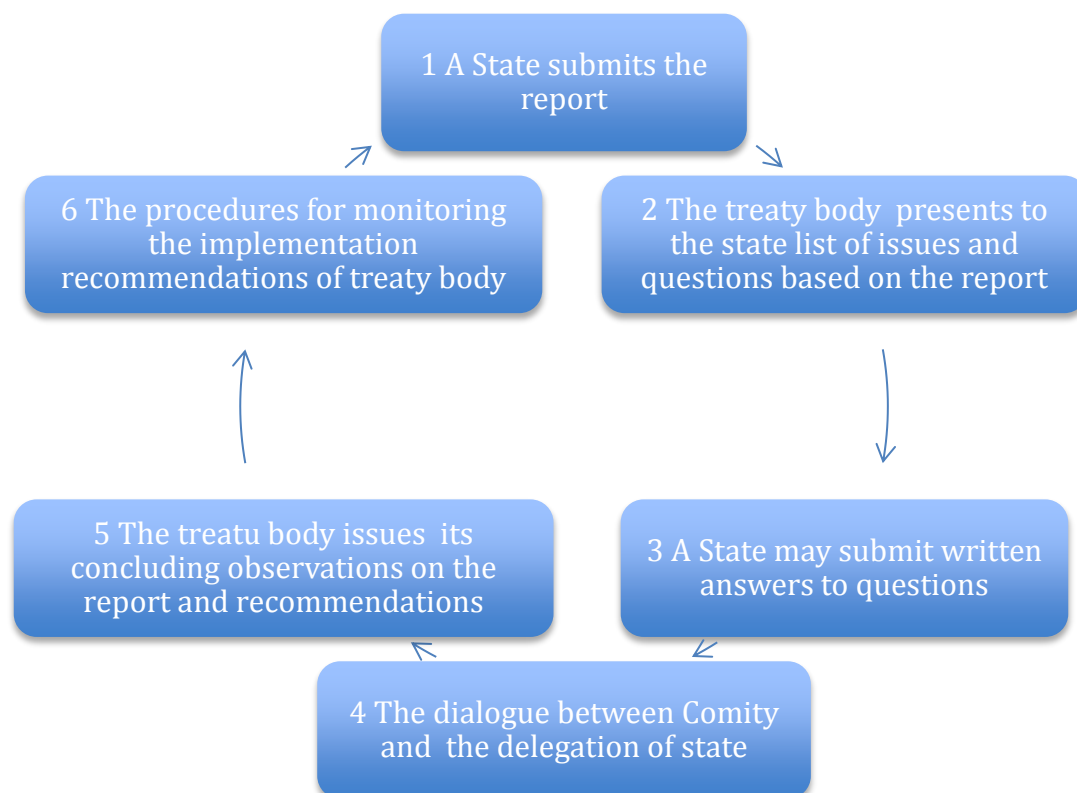
Under this general direction it is important to describe the circumstances relevant for defining specific objectives and activities that affect the realization of the overall objective of this Communication Plan.

In this sense, we present a short overview in relation to the cycle of reporting to human rights documents, the current practice of reporting, as well as key features of the current reporting system.

Cycle of reporting to human rights documents

Cycle of reporting to UN bodies in relation to international human rights treaty Although there are different procedures adopted by UN Committees, the following steps are common to all UN treaty bodies. The model that we present here in this document refers to the cycle of reporting to the UN human rights documents.

Graph 2: The cycle of reporting to UN bodies



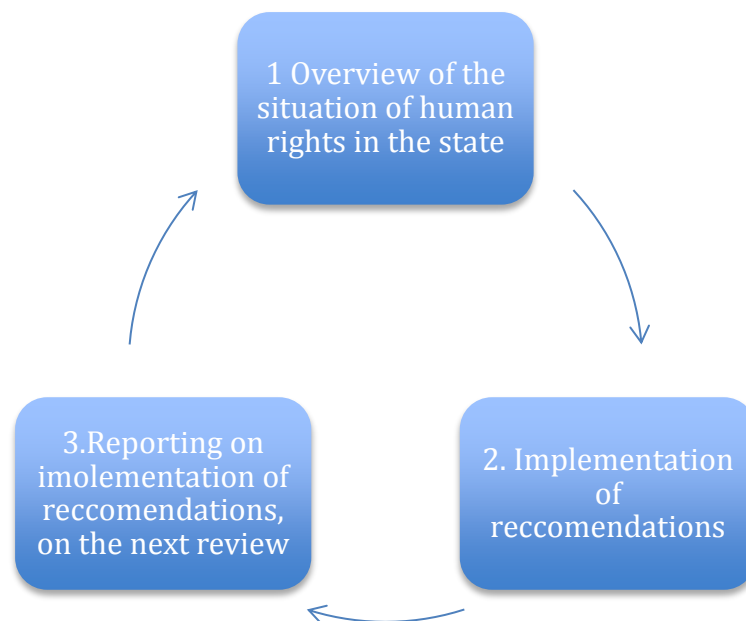
- 1) ***A Contracting State submits its report*** The report to the Secretary General should be submitted at one of the six official languages of the United Nations. Then the report is processed by the Secretariat and the got translated into the working language of the Committee. When processing is completed, the Committee shall schedule a review of the report on one of its regular meetings.
- 2) ***List of issues and questions*** The Committee drafts a list of issues and questions that are submitted to the Contracting State before the meeting at which the Committee formally considers the report. At this stage it is existing possibility for inputs that could be submitted from the UN system, and from other stakeholders.
- 3) ***A written response to questions*** Contracting State may submit its answers to the list of issues and questions in written form. Written responses are supplements of the report and they are very important when dealing with a large range between the date of the original report and the date when the Committee took report into the consideration. In addition to the report of the state party, the treaty body receives information from other sources about the situation in the state in the field of human rights.
- 4) ***Formal review of the report: a constructive dialogue between the treaty body and state*** All treaty bodies have developed a practice of inviting states parties to send delegations to attend meetings of the Committee which considers the report to respond on questions and provide additional information. At this stage there is a possibility for gathering additional inputs from the UN system, and other relevant stakeholders.
- 5) ***Concluding observations and recommendations*** Review of the report ends with the adoption of "concluding observations" that a committee called the "final comments". Concluding observations or comments are intended to provide practical advices to the state and to encourage further steps in the implementation of the rights contained in the contract. The treaty bodies are trying to give more concrete and practical recommendations. State is required to publish concluding observations with aim to inform the public about how to make progress in the implementation of human rights.
- 6) ***The procedures for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the treaty bodies – Application of concluding observations and the next periodic report submission*** Adoption of the concluding observations by the Committee imply the end of formal consideration of the report. Following the submission of the initial report of the state is required to submit periodic reports to the treaty bodies at regular intervals. The element of each periodic report will be reporting to the Committee about the steps the government has taken to implement the recommendations of the treaty body connected with the previous report. On this way the reporting cycle is getting back to the starting point.

As the addition to the information provided by the state party, the treaty bodies may, at different stages, obtain information on the situation in the state in the field of human rights from other sources, including UN agencies, other international organizations, civil society organizations (both international and national), academic institutions and the media.

This cycle is repeated periodically – every two years for the ICERD; every four years to the ICCPR, CEDAW and CAT; every five years for the CESC, CRC and CMW.

Reporting cycle of the Universal Periodic Review The Universal Periodic Review is a new and unique mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council, in order to improve the human rights situation in each of the 193 UN member states. According to this mechanism, the human rights situation of all UN member states is reviewed every four and a half years. The human rights situation is under the review in the 42 member states each year, during the three sessions of the Working Group, each of which is focused on the 14 member states. These three sessions are usually held in January / February; May / June and October / November. The result of each review is contained in the **final report** that outlines recommendations to the government should implement until the next review.

Graph 3: Reporting cycle of the Universal Periodic Review



Universal Periodic Review Cycle consists of three main phases:

- 1) **Review of the human rights situation** in the state to which the review was directed is first crucial phase of the cycle. Examination is carried out at a session of the Working Group.
- 2) **Implementation of the recommendations** The state to which it is directed inspection, implement recommendations made between two

reviews in the period of 4.5 years and act according to commitments voluntarily undertaken.

- 3) **Reporting at the next review** On the working group session at the next review, the state reports on the implementation of the recommendations, as well as the handling of voluntarily undertaken commitments. The state reports on human rights in the period between the previous and current review.

The current practice of reporting

Relevant stakeholders In the reporting process and the implementation of the recommendations of international treaty bodies, we can identify the following actors:

- 1) Mechanisms for reporting (international bodies, special rapporteurs; Universal Periodic Review³⁴);
- 2) Diplomatic missions of the Republic of Serbia (e.g. diplomatic missions of the Republic of Serbia to the UN in Geneva);
- 3) Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- 4) OHMR;
- 5) State organs / agencies as well as other organizations involved in the writing of the report (ministries and other relevant state institutions, e.g. Commissioner for Refugees and the Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia; organs in the AP of Vojvodina; local self-government units; independent bodies for the protection of human rights, civil society organizations);
- 6) The Gender Equality Directorate;
- 7) The Government of the Republic of Serbia;
- 8) Parliamentary Committee on Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality.

In this review we present the most important stakeholders and remarks about them, especially in terms of their role in the reporting process. The review focused on all of these actors, with the exception mechanisms for reporting (No 1. in this list), which have already been discussed in this paper.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs is part of the communication process. Ministry of Foreign Affairs has its representatives in the working groups for the preparation of reports, giving an opinion to the reports, forwards reports after approval by the Government to the appropriate embassy or consulate of the Republic of Serbia with the aim to submission report to the relevant international mechanism for reporting. This ministry forwards to the OHMR requirements and recommendations made by the relevant international bodies and sent through the diplomatic missions of Serbia.

OHMR coordinates the process of preparing reports, communicating with

³⁴ Performing in the UN Human Rights Council.

ministries and other stakeholders, collects information and evidence for the report, which consolidates and forwards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in order to deliver to the appropriate international body.

State organs / agencies and organizations involved in the writing of the report are: relevant ministries and other state institutions, including the Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia; organs of AP Vojvodina; local self-governments; independent bodies for human rights; and civil society organizations. These stakeholders provide information and submit sections of the report to the OHMR.

Gender Equality Directorate operates within the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Affairs, and it is responsible for the development and promotion of gender equality. As most important work of the Gender Equality Directorate, here should be distinguished: (a) an analysis of the situation and the measures related to the promotion of gender equality; (b) development and implementation of the National Strategy for the Advancement Status of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality; (c) development of draft laws and other regulations in this area; (d) cooperation with other state bodies, bodies of AP Vojvodina and local municipalities in this area; (e) international cooperation; (f) implementation of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Parliamentary Committee on Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality is a permanent working body of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. In the jurisdiction of this committee is to consider laws and other documents submitted to the National Assembly, review of policies pursued by the Government, monitoring the implementation of laws and other general acts of the Government and other public authorities and bodies, consideration of other issues within the competence of the National Assembly – all in the field of human and minority rights and gender equality. Within its scope, the Committee also monitors the work of the Government and other bodies, whose work is overseen by the National Assembly, in accordance with the Constitution and the laws. The Committee is informed with preparation of reports and with recommendations of international bodies and special rapporteurs, as well as with the reporting steps and recommendations within the Universal Periodic Review.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopts reports directed to the appropriate reporting mechanism.

Independent bodies in Serbia, relevant in this regard, as it has already been mentioned in this document are: Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia; Vojvodina Ombudsman; Commissioner for Protection of Equality; and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data. Participation of independent bodies in the promotion of human and minority rights in Serbia is reflected in the performance of their duties in accordance with relevant laws and regulations. Independent bodies affecting human and minority rights, among other things, gives their recommendations (e.g., in the opinions and recommendation of the complaints procedures of the

Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, recommend measures to the public authorities in the annual reports, etc.). The participation of independent bodies in the reporting process, considering the need to preserve their independence, is focused on providing the necessary information on topics that are relevant for the development of the report.

Civil society organizations can appoint a representative to the working groups for the preparation of the report. An important factor that affects the role of these organizations in the drafting of state reports is the possibility for civil society organizations to prepare alternative reports ("shadow reports") on the application of the same international documents. This circumstance may affect civil society organizations in terms of their decision to participate in the development of state reports. They have legitimate and respectable motive to protect its independence. Nevertheless, the role of civil society organizations in drafting state reports can be, and it is in generally, designed for providing the OHMR with information they have, which are essential for national reporting. Civil society organizations dealing with human rights, have a very important insights and information they obtain as part of their researches and in other ways within the performance their activities.

Local self-governments units (SLGU) are important group of actors in the protection and promotion of human and minority rights. Citizens are living in the local community and they are focused primarily on the resources that are in local community, including those that are relevant for human and minority rights. OHMR, for reporting purposes, has the legal possibility of direct communication with the LSGUs. However, in terms of suitability and operability, it can be said that in communication with LSGUs can be appropriate to use existing networks of communication that is developed between LSGUs. In this regard, an important actor is the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM), which have good communication with LSGUs. The SCTM developed communication networks (e.g., networks of commissioners and network of heads of municipal administration), and the mechanisms of direct contacts with the mayors. In addition SCTM has the capacity to organize meetings with the committees as permanent working bodies of SCTM³⁵, on different topics. All of these resources can be with relevance for the promotion the cooperation with local government units in the reporting process, as well as in monitoring the activities according to the recommendations. So, the SCTM can be focal organization for communication with the local self-government units.

Working groups are forming for the purpose of every single report. WGs have representatives of the ministries and other relevant state institutions, representatives of the Gender Equality Directorate, those from AP of Vojvodina, civil society organizations and other bodies. WGs are formed after the letter that OHMR sent to ministries and other organizations and inviting

³⁵ Currently there are ten SCTM Committees: Committee for European Integration and International Cooperation; Committee for local economic development; Committee for Planning and Housing; Committee for Social Affairs; Committee for Environmental Protection; Committee for Energy Efficiency; Committee for Communal Services; Committee for balanced regional development; Committee for system of local self-governance; and the Finance Committee.

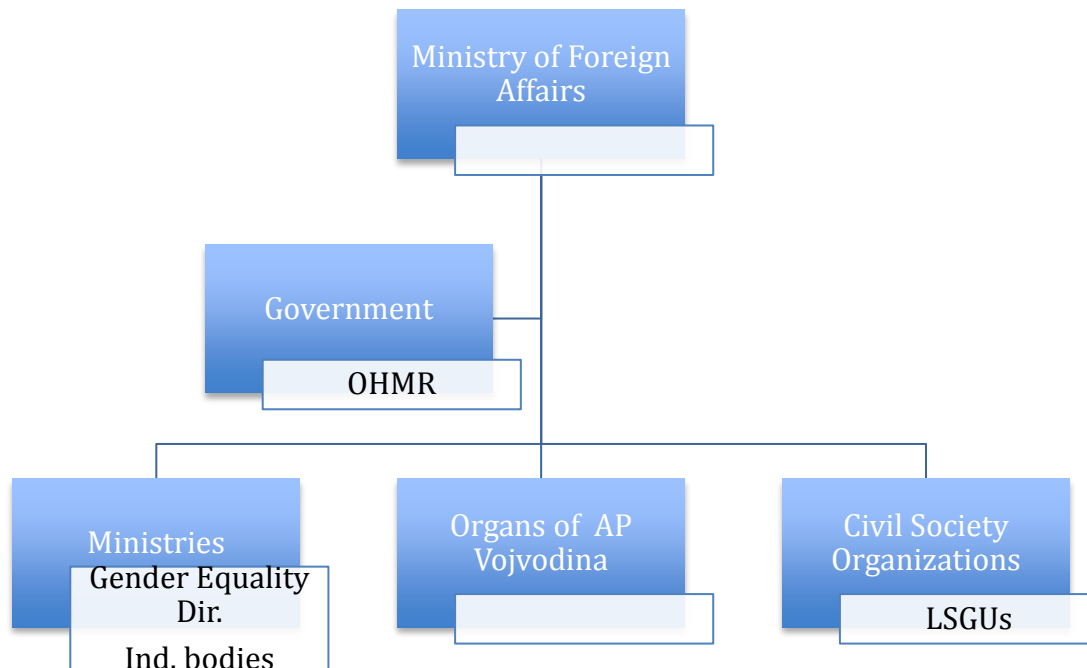
them to appoint representatives in the WG. Members of the WGs submit inputs for report to the OHMR. WGs are operating in meetings, in which the distribution of tasks performs to state organs and other organizations whose representatives are members of the WG.

Focal Points are persons that are central in each ministry and other organization, in terms of organization and communication as well as responsibility for making the appropriate parts of the report. These people are responsible for the collection and processing of information within the ministry or organization. The OHMR has no influence on the choice of the persons that represents the ministry or other organization in WG for the development of a specific report. Currently, there are no specific criteria for the selection of focal points.

The data that are using for the preparation of reports are obtained from the Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia (SORS) and the ministries, as well as from Gender Equality Directorate, AP of Vojvodina, local self-governments, independent agencies, civil society organizations and other sources. SORS participates in the writing of the report by having a representative in the WG and through delivering the data in the process of drafting the report, according to request of OHMR. SORS has statistics that is comply with the standards of *Eurostat*, and statistic in accordance with Serbia's obligations toward the UN. SORS is delivering data to OHMR in *Excel form* according the appropriate variables. In the process of writing reports, it remains as an open question formatting the data into appropriate tables, graphs, etc.

Relations of relevant actors The OHMR communicates with all stakeholders, either directly or indirectly. The direct method of communication is prevalent with most of the existing participants in the reporting process (ministries, organs of AP Vojvodina, independent bodies, civil society organizations). With the Gender Equality Directorate prevalent type of communication is indirect communication, through the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy. With local self-governments units the direct mode of communication is possible, but it is difficult mainly due to their large number.

Graph 4: Communication Network



In the *Graph 4* is presented the communication network in the reporting process. It shows the using a **chain networks** as a form of communication network. This communication network at its core is a formal, implying encouraging accuracy in transmitting information.

In the reporting system OHMR is the central point. It is the institutional center of the communication, data collection and processing inputs for the reports. In addition, the OHMR is the central point in this process and in terms of providing technical support to stakeholders.

Monitoring the activities according to the recommendations

Monitoring the activities according to the recommendations of international bodies, adopted during consideration of the report – is a question that is not regulated by the current system in Serbia. Also, there is currently **not a binding document, nor the authorized body and procedures for monitoring activities according to the recommendations**. As an exception there is a legal obligation on the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. For the implementation of the Committee's recommendations Gender Equality Directorate is responsible in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Law on Ministries establishes this obligation³⁶. It is important to point out the dichotomy that exists in the jurisdiction in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women – the OHMR is responsible for

³⁶ Law on Ministries ("Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia", No. 72/12), Article 17 Paragraph 3

preparing a report on the implementation of the Convention, and the Gender Equality Directorate is responsible for implementing the recommendations. Acting within its authority, the Gender Equality Directorate informed the relevant ministries with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and with the Committee's recommendations. Inter-sectorial WG for this convention is formed, which consists of professionals proposed by the ministries. Gender Equality Directorate has organized training for members of the WG. Gender Equality Directorate also informed members of WG about the Convention as well as with Committee's recommendations, and with the important issues on the development of the report. According to current practice, the WG preparing the material for the report and submit it to the OHMR for further action in accordance with OHMR's responsibilities and jurisdiction.

Adequate follow-up is crucial in terms of rounding the reporting system. In other words, without an adequate monitoring system toward the activities that are undertaken according the recommendations, there can be no communication circuit, both in the reporting process in which OHMR has the key role, and more broadly – in the system of implementation of policies relating to human and minority rights.

In the framework of the Universal Periodic Review Serbia were instructed to form an appropriate body to deal with the following recommendations of this mechanism for monitoring the status of human and minority rights as well as recommendations of treaty bodies.

Key features of the current reporting system

Reporting system set on way we described in this document, is partly functional. It enables the development of relevant reports that are eligible and meet the expectations of reporting mechanisms. Good sides of the current reporting system are contained primarily in the existence of infrastructure for reporting in the Republic of Serbia. In other words, the existence of a WGs for the preparation of the reports; recognition of Gender Equality Directorate as an entity specifically responsible for gender equality; the existence of the OHMR; normative foundation of OHMR and it's functionality in relation to the reporting role; the fact that a great majority of the social actors involved in this process recognizes the crucial role of the OHMR and it's willingness to cooperate with OHMR – it all makes a good infrastructure for reporting.

However, the reporting system has gaps that as most relevant are seen following:

- 1) *Inadequate flow of information;***
- 2) *Inconsistent structure of input for the reports, which are obtained from the relevant ministries and other stakeholders in the reporting process;***

- 3) ***Lack of criteria for determining the representatives of the ministries and other organizations as members of the working group for the preparation of reports;***
- 4) ***Inadequate or incomplete statistical and other data;***
- 5) ***Lack of statistical data disaggregated on all grounds of discrimination;***
- 6) ***Lack of strategic approach in relation to the process of reporting.***

Also, the system is primarily focused on reporting, and it is missing:

- 1) ***The mechanisms and procedures for monitoring the activities according to recommendations of international treaty bodies, except in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;***
- 2) ***The mechanisms for acting on the recommendations of the independent bodies in the Republic of Serbia (Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia, Vojvodina Ombudsman; Commissioner for Protection of Equality; and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data). The existence of these mechanisms would led to more timely response to the competent authorities in the decision or amend the regulations and practices in the field of human and minority rights, and the prevent situations in which the recommendations from the international treaty bodies are relating on the same issues.***

OHMR, as one of the key stakeholders in the preparation of the reports on the implementation of international instruments, as well as in follow-up actions regarding to the recommendations – have the institutional interest to improve the mechanisms and procedures as well as standards of communication in this complex communication environment.

* * *

Under the General direction 2: ***Improvement external communication with authorities and organizations***, are defined

Specific objectives

as following

Specific objective 1: Creation the institutional environment and the communication mechanisms that enable high-quality reporting, on the manner that enable government organs and other stakeholders could adequately be involved and participate in the preparation of the reports on the implementation of international documents.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To ensure adequate inputs for the reports.** It is necessary to provide instruments to the partners that will enable them to adequately

participate in the process of developing reports, as well as enable them to deliver quality and timely inputs and data relevant for reporting;

- 2) **To enable civil society organizations to participate in the preparation of reports;**
- 3) **To establish mechanisms to improve communication and cooperation during the preparation of reports.** It is necessary to establish mechanisms that would enable all involved actors to make proposals relevant regarding to point out the issues in the process of reports development, and proposals on ways how to overcome them;
- 4) **To provide a mechanism for understanding and implementing the recommendations of the independent bodies in the Republic of Serbia** (Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia; Commissioner for Protection of Equality; and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data) and the Vojvodina Ombudsman, in the period between the two reporting cycles;
- 5) **To provide the mechanism for integration of gender aspects in the development of the reports.** It is necessary to establish a direct communication line with the Gender Equality Directorate and use the resources has this Directorate, both human resources and knowledge network developed by the Directorate – with the aim of integrating gender aspect into the development of the reports.
- 6) **To provide an adequate participation of representatives of local self-governments units in the writing of reports,** in cooperation with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM). To ensure necessary information from local self-government units, in relation with preparation of reports. In other hand OHMR will provide local self-government units with information that are relevant to them in the protection and promotion of human and minority rights, via the same communication channels, (e.g. information on seminars, round tables, calls for project funding, etc. – what is relevant for promotion of human and minority rights);
- 7) **To improve the collection and processing of information relevant to the preparation of reports** in collaboration with the Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia.

Specific objective 2: Establishment of mechanisms for functional management process on acting according to recommendations of international bodies, by improving communication, which provides that public authorities and other actors reacting adequately according to recommendations made by international bodies in the consideration of the reports.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To develop mechanisms and procedures for monitoring activities according to recommendations of international treaty bodies.** Mechanisms and procedures should provide insight into the behavior and performance of all actors involved in the implementation of specific

recommendations, with the aim of reporting to the appropriate international mechanism.

Specific objective 3: To create the institutional environment and the communication mechanisms that enable high-quality reporting on the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection from discrimination, on the manner enable public authorities and other stakeholders to be adequately involved in the preparation of the reports on the implementation of this Strategy.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To establish cooperation with all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection from discrimination, within the process of gathering and collecting of reports on the monitoring of the implementation of this Strategy,** with the aim of harmonizing these reports by OHMR.
- 2) **To establish cooperation with all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection from discrimination, within the framework of gathering inputs for the internal evaluation on the application of this Strategy,** with the aim of monitoring and evaluating of the implementation Strategy on an annual basis, periodically (in two years) and finally on the end of the strategic period.

Specific objective 4: To establish an appropriate modality for the participation of civil society organizations in the process of negotiations on the membership of the Republic of Serbia in the European Union.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To develop a special collaboration with the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society as well as with civil society organizations dealing with human and minority rights,** with the aim of finding an appropriate modalities for the participation of civil society organizations in negotiations on the membership of the Republic of Serbia in European Union, within the chapters that are in line with responsibilities of the OHMR.

The specific activities within these groups of activities in four above written specific objectives are given in the Action Plan, which is an integral part of this Communication Plan.

General direction 3: Improvement communication with the public

Under the General direction: *Improvement communication with the public*, are defined

Specific objectives

as following

Specific objective 1: To improve the practice of communicating with the public in the preparation of reports on the application of international human rights treaties.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To improve the practice of publishing the draft reports on the implementation of specific international treaties on human rights.** The public should be able to be informed about the products in the process of preparing the reports, with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of human and minority rights, and in order to respect the principles of transparency and participatory democracy.

Specific objective 2: To improve the practice of communicating with the public in the process of implementing the recommendations of international bodies.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To improve the practice of publishing the concluding observations of international treaty bodies.** Serbia is obliged to publish the concluding observations, in order to inform the public of achieving progress in the implementation of human rights.
- 2) **To establish the practice of consultation with civil society organizations dealing with human and minority rights.**

Specific objective 3: To improve the practice of information and communication with the public, in terms of situation in the field of human and minority rights in Serbia, as well as regarding the specific cases of human rights violations.

Within this specific objective following group of activities will be realized:

- 1) **To establish the practice of publishing information on the situation in the field of human and minority rights in Serbia.**

The specific activities within these groups of activities in three above written specific objectives are given in the Action Plan, which is an integral part of this Communication Plan.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Formalization and implementation of the Communication Plan

This Communication Plan aims to operationalize and improve communication of the OHMR with all relevant stakeholders to which it relates.

All stakeholders to which the Communication Plan relates should be parts of the communication cycles, and should accept the Communication Plan as its operational document.

In preparing of this document there are used consultations with a number of representatives of stakeholders to which it refers, but not with each actor within the specific group (ministries, civil society organizations, independent bodies, local self-government units, etc.).

A Communication Plan has the attributes of the *Protocol on Cooperation*, which can be accessed by any authority or organization to which it relates. By posting communications plan on the website of the OHMR, after giving opportunity to all stakeholders to comment and make suggestions on the draft document – Communication Plan becomes operational tool for treatment on a voluntary basis by organizations that are going to recognize their interests of participation in communication with the OHMR in order to improve human and minority rights in Serbia.

In addition, with respect to certain activities that are defined in this document, it is needed a formal decisions by relevant authorities. After making these decisions, the state organs to which they refer will be obliged to act upon them.

The OHMR will designate a person (employee) responsible for the implementation of the Communication Plan, i.e. implementation of all planned activities are a prerequisite for achieving the defined objectives.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Communication Plan does not include setting up special bodies, but use resources already developed for reporting and monitoring the treatment of recommendations.

Accordingly, the person from the OHMR, in charge of the implementation of a Communication Plan, within the monitoring of the realization activities and objectives that are defined, will be included:

- 1) representatives of the WGs for the preparation of reports,
- 2) representatives of the *body for monitoring the activities relating to recommendations* of international bodies, when this body for monitoring is formed;

All by organizing the periodic meetings to monitor the implementation of the Communication Plan.

Depending on the needs as well as circumstances that will arise in the period of implementation of Communication Plan, the mechanisms responsible for monitoring will evaluate the implementation and initiate modifications to this document or the redefinition of specific activities, objectives and general directions.

As part of the Communication Plan there is developed an Action Plan for its implementation, which is an integral part of this document.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN CONSULTATIONS

No.	Name and surname	Organization	Contact
1	Suzana Paunović	Director of OHMR	suzana.paunovic@ljudskaprava.gov.rs
2	Gordana Mohovović	OHMR	gordana.mohorovic@ljudskaprava.gov.rs
3	Snežana Trkulja	OHMR	snezana.trkulja@ljudskaprava.gov.rs
4	Miloš Marojević	OHMR	milos.marojevic@ljudska.prava.gov.rs
5	Gianfranco Deramo	The Project	gderamo@eptisa.com
6	Mirjana Dokmanović	The Project	mdokmanovic@eptisa.com
7	Gordana Stamenić	Ministry of Justice and Public Administration	gordana.stamenic@mpravde.gov.rs
8	Mirjana Radić	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	mirjana.radic@mfa.rs
9	Mitar Đurašković	Ministry of Internal Affairs	ozs@mup.gov.rs
10	Jasmina Ivanović	Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy	jasmina.ivanovic@minrzs.gov.rs
11	Jasna Vujačić	Gender Equality Directorate	rodna.ravnopravnost@minrzs.gov.rs
12	Vesna Acković	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	vesna.ackovic@mpn.gov.rs
13	Zoran Jančić	Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia	stat@stat.gov.rs
14	Vesna Zajc	Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia	stat@stat.gov.rs
15	Milica Basta	Ministry of Youth and Sport	milica.basta@mos.gov.rs
16	Jana Vlajković	Ministry of Youth and Sport	jana.vlajkovic@mos.gov.rs
17	Nevena Petrušić	Commissioner for Protection of Equality	nevena.petrusic@gmail.com
18	Kosana Beker	Assistant of Commissioner for Protection of Equality	kosana.beker@ravnopravnost.gov.rs
19	Aleksandar Resanović	Deputy Commissioner for Information of	aleksandar.resanovic@poverenik.rs

		Public Importance and Personal Data Protection	
20	Ružica Banda	OSCE Mission in Serbia	ruzica.banda@osce.org
21	Jelena Jokanović	OSCE Mission in Serbia	jelena.jokanovic@osce.org
22	Marija Raus	UN Mission in Serbia	marija.raus@undp.org
23	Nataša Savić	Office for European integrations	nsavic@seio.gov.rs
24	Ivana Ćirković	Director of the Office for Cooperation with civil society	ivana.cirkovic@gov.rs
25	Bobana Macanović	Autonomous Women Center	bobana@azc.org.rs
26	Nevena Nikolić	Belgrade Centre for Human Rights	bgcentar@bgcentar.org.rs
27	Marijus Rošu	Secretariat for Education, Administration and National Communities – Vojvodina	marius.rosu@vojvodina.gov.rs
28	Anita Beretić	Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality – Vojvodina	anita.beretic@vojvodina.gov.rs

THE ACTION PLAN

For the implementation of the Communication Plan of the Office of Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia

Overall objective			
<p>The overall objective of the Communication Plan of the OHMR is developing functional communication and cooperation with all relevant stakeholders to enable appropriate reporting, monitoring of acting according to recommendations, monitoring the implementation of the Strategy of Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, as well as participation of civil society organizations and the public in activities within the operation of the OHMR</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General direction 1:</u> Improvement of internal communication in the OHMR</p>			
Specific objectives	Groups of activities	Specific activities	Timeframe and person in charge
<p><u>Specific objective:</u></p> <p>Improvement mechanisms for the exchange of information relevant to the successful performance of the OHMR, with focus on preparation of the reports as well as monitoring acting according to recommendations.</p>	<p><u>Group of activities 1:</u></p> <p>Continue the practice of regular meetings of the OHMR Collegium</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> To establish the practice of briefings at the Collegium, which will focus on specific topics relevant to current issues in terms of the functioning of the OHMR, as well as topics that are relevant for the long-term process involving OHMR. Each meeting should be planned in advance with the agenda; predetermined time frame for the duration of the meeting; persons responsible as carriers of specific activities, submitted brief reports on meetings; orientation of the review of individual topics, rather than on problems.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> To establish the practice of making short notes from the meeting, which shall include at least the following elements: time and place of the meeting; participants; topics that were discussed; brief overview of the most important parts of the hearings, agreements and decisions on further actions, the names of persons responsible for their implementation.</p>	

		<p>Specific activity 3: Meeting notes immediately after the meeting – should be distributed by e-mail to all participants in the meeting. Extracts from the notes, if they are relevant to other employees of the OHMR, or other persons who are not employed in the OHMR – should be distributed by e-mail to these people.</p>	
	<p>Group of activities 2: Establish a mechanism for institutionalizing knowledge and the improvement of the institutional memory of the OHMR</p>	<p>Specific activity 1: To set up the folder for storage and exchange of information on activities relevant to work of the OHMR, on the server of OHMR, with the appropriate number of subfolders. This folder and subfolders should be available to all persons employed in the OHMR.</p> <p>Specific activity 2: To motivate employees to use the folder for storage and exchange of information. Motivational cycle can begin by giving examples of the use of folders, by sector managers and smaller organizational units of the OHMR. Also, in order to examine the practice of using this folder, it is possible, specify it as part of the communication route in the OHMR – rather than e-mail communication among the employees of the OHMR, in particular with aim to the preparation and distribution of written materials for meetings, exchange of information on current projects and other activities within the OHMR and in other occasions.</p>	

General direction 2: Improvement external communication with authorities and organizations			
Specific objectives	Groups of activities	Specific activities	Timeframe and person in charge
<u>Specific objective 1:</u> Creation the institutional environment and the communication mechanisms that enable high-quality reporting, on the manner that enable government organs and other stakeholders could adequately be involved and participate in the preparation of the reports on the implementation of international documents	<u>Group of activities 1:</u> To ensure adequate inputs for the reports. It is necessary to provide instruments to the partners that will enable them to adequately participate in the process of developing reports, as well as enable them to deliver quality and timely inputs and data relevant for reporting	<u>Specific activity 1:</u> Initiate the establishment of rules and criteria for the appointment of the working group members (<i>Focal Points</i>) for the preparation of reports, with the aim of providing quality professionals whose skills and employment within the ministries, organs of the AP of Vojvodina, and other organizations, are correlated with the area of human rights. Also there should be an initiative by OHMR for the establishment practice of continuity in the work of these professionals as members of working groups, with the aim of establishing the conditions for the institutionalization of knowledge and practice in the preparation of the reports. These should be done through direct communication with relevant ministries and other organizations – in a meeting or meetings, with the intention to agree to these rules and criteria for the appointment of members of working groups, as well as criteria for revocation of the members of working groups. Any agreement on these issues should be formalized in an appropriate way – through the signing of protocols and agreements on these issues. <u>Specific activity 2:</u> To design a one-day training for the members of the working groups for the preparation of the reports (<i>Focal Points</i>), as well as persons who are central in terms of organization and communication in each ministry and other organizations responsible for the development parts of a any specific report. <u>Specific activity 3:</u> To ensure the implementation of training for all members of the working groups, as well as the availability of this training to all new members of the working groups, in cases of personnel changes of these people in the ministries and other organizations. <u>Specific activity 4:</u> To appoint the person in the OHMR, which will be trained and capable of providing training for members of the working groups.	

		<p><u>Specific activity of 5:</u> To review the need for comprehensive Guide for preparation of the reports, which will cover at least the following issues: reporting obligations of the Republic of Serbia in the UN system and the Council of Europe; international reporting mechanisms; documents on which the reports should be submitted; participants in reporting in the Republic of Serbia; reporting procedures; participants' role in the reporting process; extracts from the other existing guidelines for reporting; required formats in use for reporting and others. It is necessary to evaluate the current Guide, produced in the framework of IPA 2007 and modify existing Guide or develop a new one.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 6:</u> To ensure the accessibility of the Guide for the preparation of reports, to all members of the working groups – by the posting on the website of the OHMR.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 7:</u> No later than at the first meeting of each working group for the preparation of the report, provide guidance for the development of that specific report, i.e. improve the existing standard practice of translation guidelines and their submission to the members of the WG.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 8:</u> On the website of the OHMR, to post guidance for every specific report, no later than the first working group meeting.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 9:</u> Make available the guidelines for making concrete reports, to civil society organizations – by publishing them in same time when is published the invitation to civil society organizations to participate in the preparation of the report.</p>	
	<p><u>Group of activities 2:</u> To enable civil society organizations to participate in the preparation of reports</p>	<p><u>Specific activity:</u> At least 30 days prior to the scheduled start of operation the WG for the development of a specific report, it is needed to publish call for civil society organizations to participate in drafting the report and appoint their representative. This public call should be posted on the website of the OHMR. In addition OHMR should encourage its distribution or information about it, through the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society. Deadline for appointment representatives of civil society organizations, should not be less than 15 days after call is published.</p>	

	<p><u>Group of activities 3:</u> To establish mechanisms to improve communication and cooperation during the preparation of reports. It is necessary to establish mechanisms that would enable all involved actors to make proposals relevant regarding to point out the issues in the process of reports development, and proposals on ways how to overcome them i</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Improve the quality of the existing practice of periodic meetings of the working groups during the drafting of the reports and use those meetings for a debate on the current issues in the process and ways to overcome them <u>Specific activity 2:</u> On the website of the OHMR should set up a banner with “box” (folder) for pointing out the problems and proposals for their overcoming. <u>Specific activity 3:</u> Create the form for those who are interested in, to indicate the problems and suggestions to overcome them. Format should follow the logic and the structure of specific reports, i.e. to be general and applicable to all reports, both those for the UN system, as well as those for the Council of Europe system. <u>Specific activity 4:</u> Inform all partners on the existence of banner with “box” and on its purpose, and invite them to use it. <u>Specific activity 5:</u> Establish a practice of giving feedback to participants in the process of drafting reports, particularly to those organizations (civil society organizations, independent bodies, local self-government units) that participate in the process by providing an overview of the situation, analysis and data on issues that are covered by particular report. Giving feedback is good communicational practice that reflects respect for partners in the process, and gratifies their contributions. It is a factor of strengthening and building partnerships for the future cooperation.</p>	
	<p><u>Group of activities 4:</u> To provide a mechanism for understanding and implementing recommendations of the independent bodies in the Republic of Serbia (Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia; Commissioner for Protection of Equality; and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data) and the Vojvodina Ombudsman, in the period between the two reporting cycles</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Establish the practice of periodic meetings with representatives of the independent bodies, e.g. regarding the drafting of annual reports by independent bodies. <u>Specific activity 2:</u> Establish the practice of <i>ad hoc</i> meetings with representatives of the independent bodies, at the initiative of particular independent body or at the initiative of OHMR.</p>	

	<p><u>Group of activities 5:</u> To provide the mechanism for integration of gender aspects in the development of the reports. It is necessary to establish a direct communication line with the Gender Equality Directorate and use resources of this Directorate, both human resources and knowledge network developed by the Directorate – with the aim of integrating gender aspect into the development of the reports.</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Hold an initial meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy as well as with Gender Equality Directorate, on which should achieve concrete agreements on direct communication and cooperation between the OHMR and Directorate. Other topic on the meeting could be role of the Directorate as a key factor in ensuring gender mainstreaming in the reporting on the implementation international human rights treaties, activities according the concluding observations and recommendations of international treaty bodies.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> Establish the practice of periodic meetings with the Gender Equality Directorate with the aim of monitoring the functioning of agreed ways of cooperation and resolving any problem that arise in the course of cooperation</p>	
	<p><u>Group of activities 6:</u> To provide an adequate participation of representatives of local self-governments units in the writing of reports, in cooperation with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM). To ensure necessary information from local self-government units, in relation with preparation of the reports. In other hand OHMR will provide local self-government units with information that are relevant to them in the protection and promotion of human and minority rights, via the same communication channels, (e.g. information on seminars, round tables, calls for project funding, etc. – what is relevant for promotion of human and minority rights)</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Hold an initial meeting with representatives of the SCTM, on which should be to achieved concrete agreements on cooperation and the role of the SCTM as a key factor for ensuring the participation of local self-government units in the preparation of reports, as well as agreements on the use of appropriate SCTM's resources, communication networks, etc. Agreements raised from this meeting should be to formalized and articulated within a particular document (agreement). That document should establish a framework of cooperation in which would define the specific roles and responsibilities of the SCTM, OHMR and local self-government units.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> Establish the practice of periodic meetings with the SCTM, with the aim of monitoring the functioning of agreed ways of cooperation and resolving any problem that arise in the course of cooperation.</p>	

	<p><u>Group of activities 7:</u> To improve the collection and processing of information relevant to the preparation of the report in collaboration with the Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Initiate a meeting or use any other appropriate way to define mutual expectations in terms of clarification needs of OHMR from the Statistical Office, regarding to specific information (compared to concretized target group – e.g. children at a certain age, youth in certain age, etc.).</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> Initiate the collection and recording data disaggregated on all grounds of discrimination.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 3:</u> Initiate the process of developing indicators on human rights, in cooperation with the Statistical Office, as well as all other stakeholders, primarily with the relevant ministries, organs from Vojvodina and civil society organizations.</p>	
<p><u>Specific objective 2:</u> Establishment of mechanisms for functional management process on acting according to the recommendations of international bodies, by improving communication, which provides that public authorities and other actors reacting adequately according to recommendations made by international bodies in the consideration of the reports</p>	<p><u>Group of activities:</u> To develop mechanisms and procedures for monitoring activities according to recommendations of international treaty bodies. Mechanisms and procedures should provide insight into the behavior and performance of all actors involved in the implementation of specific recommendations, with the aim of reporting to the appropriate international mechanism</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Initiate the process for formation of a body for monitoring activities on recommendations. This initiative can be launched toward the Government of the Republic of Serbia, or at the level of ministers, the representatives of the AP of Vojvodina and others.</p> <p>Accordingly, the body could be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governmental – established by the decision of the Government; or • Inter-sectorial – as a product of the agreement of ministers, representatives of the AP of Vojvodina and others. <p>Also, initiate the Government's decision (if the Government form the body for monitoring activities according the recommendations) on mandatory periodic meetings of this body, at least once a year – with the aim of reviewing the process and the achievements of the treatment of recommendations. In the case of forming the inter-sectorial body for the same purpose, by agreement between ministries, OHMR should suggest the same standard (on the minimum number of meetings), which should be formalized in the appropriate agreement of ministers, representatives of the AP of Vojvodina and others.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> Initiate a decision of Government on the obligation of the ministries to follow-up treatment recommendations by international bodies. This activity is complementary to the previous (Initiative for the establishment of an Governmental body for monitoring). The decision on the obligation of</p>	

		<p>ministries to monitor the treatment of recommendations may be part of the same Governmental act on forming the Governmental body for monitoring – if the Government opts for this approach. Also, if the monitoring body is formed by the agreement as an inter-sectorial body (an alternative proposal in specific activity 1), then would be necessary, as a separate document, the Government's decision on the obligation of ministries to follow-up activities according the recommendations.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 3:</u> Establish in the OHMR monitoring mechanism for activities according the recommendations. The OHMR should be, also in the process of monitoring the recommendations, the key actor - as well as it is in the reporting process. This mechanism can be set up by appointment the concrete employee in the OHMR, who will be in charge for cooperation with the monitoring body described both in activity 1 and activity 2)³⁷.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 4:</u> Develop the software for monitoring activities according the recommendations – which should be available to all relevant stakeholders in the monitoring process and should enable them to record the activities and results regarding to recommendations. This application should be set up on the website of the OHMR. This would allow continuous monitoring and mutual information to all stakeholders on the actions taken and the results achieved during undertaking the activities driven by recommendations. An additional benefit of this approach is its capacity for institutionalization of good practices and knowledge management. As a model and an example of best practice, OHMR should examine the possibility of use the software that was developed by the Gender Equality Directorate.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 5:</u> Develop a system of questionnaires, structured to suit the need of obtaining specific information regarding activities according the recommendations. Questionnaires should be targeted and made up ad hoc, and would be distributed to all stakeholders, at a time when it is necessary. System of questionnaires can be seen as a supplement to software (see activity 4), but it also may be a transitional instrument, to be used before developing and putting into operation above-mentioned software.</p>	
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³⁷ OHMR's Sector for National Minorities actually preparing national reports on the implementation of the two conventions of the Council of Europe.

		Specific activity 6: Establish a practice of analysis recommendations. The OHMR should be the bearer of these activities. For these activities OHMR could use its own human resources or external experts, depending on the circumstances and needs. Analysis of recommendations could have influence on decisions concerning the planning of activities regarding recommendations and OHMR's suggestions of appropriate ministries.	
Specific objective 3³⁸: To create the institutional environment and communication mechanisms that enable high-quality reporting on the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection from discrimination, on the manner enable public authorities and other stakeholders to be adequately involved in the preparation of reports on the implementation of this Strategy	Group of activities 1: To establish cooperation with all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection from discrimination, within the process of gathering and collecting of reports on the monitoring of implementation of this Strategy, with the aim of harmonizing these reports by OHMR	Specific activity 1: To have a meetings with representatives of all relevant state organs, as well as representatives of the Gender Equality Directorate and achieve concrete agreements on the roles and responsibilities of the contact persons in the preparation of reports on the implementation of the Strategy of Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, as well as on the roles of the OHMR in integrating these reports, and on further dynamics of cooperation in relation to reporting on the implementation of this Strategy. Specific activity 2: To have a meeting with representatives of civil society organizations, the Republic Ombudsman and the Ombudsman of Vojvodina and reach specific agreements on their roles and responsibilities in the preparation of reports on the implementation of this Strategy, on the role of the OHMR as well as the further dynamics of cooperation in relation to the reporting on implementation the Strategy Specific activity 3: To have a meeting with civil society organizations engaged in the promotion, enhancement and protection of human rights, particularly those dealing with the prevention of discrimination of vulnerable groups and reach specific agreements on their roles and responsibilities in the preparation of reports on the implementation of the Strategy, on the role of the OHMR as well as the further dynamics of cooperation in relation to reporting on the implementation of the Strategy	

³⁸ To realize this specific objective of great importance is the content of the Action Plan for the implementation Strategy of Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, with specific activities, stakeholders and deadlines for their implementation, as well as indicators.

	<p><u>Group of activities 2:</u> To establish cooperation with all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Strategy of prevention and protection from discrimination, within the framework of gathering input for the internal evaluation of the application of this Strategy, with the aim of monitoring and evaluating of the implementation Strategy on an annual basis, periodically (in two years) and finally on the end of the strategic period</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> The OHMR will establish the practice of periodic meetings with contact persons from relevant state authorities, the Gender Equality Directorate, Commissioner for Protection of Equality, Republic Ombudsman, Ombudsman of Vojvodina and civil society organizations engaged in the promotion and protection of human rights, particularly those dealing with the prevention of discrimination of vulnerable groups - all with the aim of (a) defining the method of organizing the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Strategy, (b) the operation of the agreed ways of cooperation in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Strategy (c) resolving potential problem during the cooperation they arise.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> The OHMR will appoint persons from its employees, who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Strategy, annually, periodically (in two years) and finally at the end of the strategic period.</p>	
<p><u>Specific objective 4:</u> To establish an appropriate modality for participation of civil society organizations in the process of negotiations on the membership of the Republic of Serbia in the European Union</p>	<p><u>Group of activities 1:</u> To develop a special collaboration with the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society as well as with civil society organizations dealing with human and minority rights, with the aim of finding an appropriate modalities for the participation of civil society organizations in negotiations on the membership of the Republic of Serbia in European Union, within the chapters that are in line with responsibilities of the OHMR</p>	<p><u>Specific activity 1:</u> Arrange talks with representatives of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society on the need to establish appropriate modalities for the participation of civil society organizations in negotiations on Serbia's membership in the European Union and to prepare a joint meeting with representatives of civil society organizations.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 2:</u> To have a meeting with representatives of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society and with representatives of civil society organizations dealing with human and minority rights, with a focus on the drafting of appropriate modalities of their participation in the negotiations for Serbia's membership in the European Union.</p> <p><u>Specific activity 3:</u> Advocate for the implementation of appropriate modalities for the participation of civil society organizations in the negotiations for Serbia's membership in EU, to the representative of appropriate negotiating group / negotiating groups.</p>	

General direction 3: Improvement communication with the public			
Specific objectives	Groups of activities	Specific activities	Timeframe and person in charge
<u>Specific objective 1:</u> To improve the practice of communicating with the public in the preparation of reports on the application of international human rights treaties	<u>Group of activities:</u> To improve the practice of publishing the draft reports on the implementation of specific international treaties on human rights. The public should be able to be informed about the products in the process of preparing the reports, with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of human and minority rights, and in order to respect the principles of transparency and participatory democracy	<u>Specific activity 1:</u> Continue with the practice of publishing on the website of the OHMR, all ratified international human rights treaties, including the optional protocols. <u>Specific activity 2:</u> Each draft report have to be published on the website of the OHMR. <u>Specific activity 3:</u> Invite all interested parties to submit comments and suggestions the draft reports and set a deadline for comments and suggestions. <u>Specific activity 4:</u> Prepare a form for comments and suggestions on the draft reports and publish it on the website of the OHMR.	
<u>Specific objective 2:</u> To improve the practice of communicating with the public in the process of implementing the recommendations of international bodies.	<u>Group of activities 1:</u> To improve the practice of publishing the concluding observations of international treaty bodies. Serbia is obliged to publish the concluding observations, in order to inform the public of achieving progress in the implementation of human rights.	<u>Specific activity 1:</u> Continue with the practice of publishing on the website of the OHMR, the concluding observations of international bodies. <u>Specific activity 2:</u> Inform the public about the progress in the acting according the concluding observations, as well as on activities and results of activities according to the recommendations of international bodies, by publishing relevant reports and information on the website of the OHMR.	

	<p><u>Group of activities 2:</u> To establish the practice of consultation with civil society organizations dealing with human and minority rights</p>	<p><u>Specific activity:</u> Establish a practice of regular meetings (at least once a year) with representatives of civil society organizations dealing with human and minority rights, with the objective of sharing information, gaining better insight into the activities and achievements of OHMR and civil society organizations, with aim to get a clearer insight into the capabilities and resources with civil society organizations, which can be put into use when creating reports, monitoring and acting according to recommendations.</p>	
<p><u>Specific objective 3:</u> To improve the practice of information and communication with the public, in terms of situation in the field of human and minority rights in Serbia, as well as regarding the specific cases of human rights violations</p>	<p><u>Group of activities 1:</u> To establish the practice of publishing information on the situation in the field of human and minority rights in Serbia</p>	<p><u>Specific Activity:</u> Publish on the website of the OHMR, summary reports on human and minority rights in Serbia, as a compilation of summaries of reports by independent bodies and civil society organizations, or make the links on the website of the OHMR that leads to the portals of independent bodies and civil society organizations, where are these reports, reviews and information.</p>	