

THEIR POSITION AND READYNESS FOR CREATIVE ETREPRENEURSHIP IN ZRENJANIN, NOVI BEČEJ AND ZEMUN











Research - Roma Women, Their Position And Readiness For The Development Of Creative Entrepreneurship In Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej And Zemun

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Summary

Roma population, especially Roma women, is one of the most vulnerable social groups in Serbia. Their social marginalization is a result of a number of factors, one of which is certainly unemployment. Evaluation of Roma creative entrepreneurship from the perspective of its possibilities for economic empowerment of Roma is largely absent. By examining good practices in empowering Roma women through creative entrepreneurship and survey of the capacity and readiness of Roma women for this type of entrepreneurship, we get an insight into the possibilities for their engagement in creative entrepreneurship. The fact that Roma men and women are not a homogeneous group is confirmed by the survey of the position and readiness of Roma women for the development of creative entrepreneurship conducted in three municipalities in Serbia: Zemun, Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin. The conclusions and recommendations made indicate that there are conditions for further work with Roma women in terms of their empowerment through creative entrepreneurship in the municipalities of Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin, through proposed different interventions and support.

Key words:

creative entrepreneurship, Roma women, economic empowerment, creative industries, civil society organizations





The Roma community, and especially Roma women, represent a national minority that is exposed to poor living conditions and high level of poverty. The causes of economic and social exclusion of this community are numerous, starting from the living conditions, education, access to labour market, health care, housing ... Almost 90% of Roma population do not have a permanent job and it is considered that one of the important issues for the Roma community is their sustainable employment (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2016).

This population shows very low employability in the labour market. First of all, we are speaking about insufficiently educated workforce, prejudice about Roma working culture among employers from the majority population, different forms of discrimination at employment, problems with obtaining documentation for employment, low level of information relating to employment opportunities and the like. In the sphere of employment, issues of employment of women deserve special attention. It is noticeable that the existing national and local strategies largely formalize the treatment of the unemployment of the Roma population and remain in the domain of planned goals, with no efficiency in realization (see more: Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov, Dimitrijević 2016). The issue of employment of Roma is mainly addressed through solutions aimed at employment of the male population, while the employment of women and their economic empowerment are not a matter of nation-

al and local public policies. This is confirmed by the fact that only 22.5% of active Roma women are engaged in occupation compared to men accounting for 77.2% (Radovanović, Knežević 2014). More than 50% of registered Roma unemployment refers to unemployed women (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2016). A strategic approach to economic empowerment of Roma women at the local level is very rare. For example, in Pirot, Niš, Lazarevac, Pančevo and Žitište, there are Local Action Plans for economic empowerment of Roma women, but measures and areas of possible employment are scarce.

Evaluation of Roma creative entrepreneurship from the perspective of its possibilities for economic empowerment is largely absent. On the one hand, the previous research of the Roma culture dealt with the deministification of their identity through language, customs and history within the traditional understanding of the Roma ethos. On the other hand, in the the discourse of public policies, what appears as the explicit goal of Roma employment policy is predominantly collection of secondary raw materials and establishing landfills for these raw materials, as shown by the results of the analysis of public policies at the level of local self-government units (Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov, Dimitrijević 2016). In the conditions of underdeveloped recycling industry, such an attitude, for example, entails certain level of ghettoization of Roma in the labour market, as these are low-paid occupations which are unattractive for other unemployed categories.

A pilot survey conducted in Pirot in 2016 (Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov, Dimitrijević) showed that there are many segments of creative entrepreneurship in which Roma cultivate diverse cultural expressions, and that creative entrepreneurship under certain conditions can be a model for their economic empowerment. This particularly applies to Roma women. Namely, creative entrepreneurship is an ideal form for improving the social position of women, taking into account the specific patterns of life of this population, such as early marriage, taking care of household chores and children, attachment to work at home, low education level, limited access to the labour market, etc. Therefore, programmes for economic empowerment of Roma women through creative entrepreneurship represent not only a formalized process of achieving results in the field of employment of Roma women, but also a model of recognition of Roma culture and strengthening of the cultural identity of Roma.. Namely, the recognition of Roma creative entrepreneurship and the diversity of cultural expressions (especially in the sphere of contemporary creativity) can reduce stereotypes about Roma and improve their social position on the long run.

Employment of Roma also entails certain risks, and they should be taken into consideration when creating the programme of economic empowerment of this target group. In addition to the way of life and gender roles in Roma families (early marriage, giving birth, motherhood ...), one should bear in mind the fact that due to low intergenerational entrepreneurship, a small number of Roma choose self-employment. According to the available data, only 1.1% of

economically active Roma are self-employed (Radovanović, Knežević 2014). For this reason, inclusion of Roma in the labour market and entrepreneurial activities should take place through civil society organizations that could act as mediators in the process of Roma inclusion, creation of entrepreneurial culture in this target group and their empowerment for entrepreneurship. An additional reason for this type of employment is that there is a visible social distance in relation to this ethnic group and its culture, and consequently on the results of its economic activity.

Creative Entrepreneurship as a model for economic empowerment of Roma

In recent decades, the importance of creativity, innovation, knowledge and culture in shaping the development process has been more and more emphasized. Hyporeculturalization and focus on endogenous development factors contribute to re-examining the role of culture as an important determinant of sustainable development. The European Union Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 speaks about several dimensions of integration of vulnerable groups: development of creative entrepreneurship through innovative measures and new business models, strengthening the role of public policies in fostering entrepreneurial and innovative potential of the creative sector, the role of cultural programmes in fostering social inclusion of vulnerable groups, creation of better conditions for the integration of vulnerable groups into the labour market and their better employment. Thus, creative entrepreneurship is becoming one of the models of economic empowerment of the Roma, but also a means of improving their social dignity and social inclusion.

The cultural expressions and creative skills of Roma have always been part of their entrepreneurial activities, especially in the field of performing arts and music. The lack of material artefacts is mainly the result of exposure to poverty and struggle for existence. Thus, in Roma, cultural expressions of oral nature (poems, stories, music tracks, poems ...) predominate, while tangible artifacts appear in the form of applied art on utility items from everyday life (women's clothing, jewelry, paintings and decorations on traveling houses. ..)..

However, at the end of the 1980s, with the improvement of the economic position of Roma, new cultural expressions emerged in the field of contemporary art and creative industries. The emergence of a new generation of Roma intellectuals, the recognition of Roma national minority status and major donor programmes have enabled working on the professionalization of Romani culture and creative industries. There is a wave of founding theater companies with Roma actors and dramatists and popularisation of their work, such as the Moscow Roma Theater *Romen*, the German theater company *Pralipe*, the Slovakian theater troop Romatan ... An important step in affirming Roma contemporary cultural expression is the setting of the Lost Paradise

pavilion at 52nd Biennial of Art in Venice (2007), in which the works of Roma conceptual artists were presented.

The most important and most developed aspect of Roma creative entrepreneurship is surely music. The field of cultural tourism shows that its linking with other sectors can enable market sustainability for creative entrepreneurship of Roma. Roma musical orchestras are part of the tourist offer of many cities, they are considered to be the dimension of bohemian life and an important element of the attractiveness of the city's spirit (eg Hungarian restaurants with Roma music)..

An interesting example of creative entrepreneurship is the opening of authentic Roma restaurants. Romani Platni in Budapest is a restaurant organized as a social business aimed at reducing stereotypes and misunderstandings about Roma through gastronomy. The restaurant is designed on the principles of creative tourism, where Roma gastronomic practice becomes a means of cultural understanding and part of an innovative tourist offer. Traditional gastronomic specialties are prepared by members of the Roma community, and in the pleasant atmosphere of Roma families, apart from enjoying specialties, social interaction takes place through the story, customs, music and culture. On the menu of this restaurant there are traditional Roma dishes that have been part of the food culture of Roma for more than 100 years. The restaurant also represents a way for members of the Roma community to gain new knowledge, social contacts and skills, but also to present their culture and customs to members of the majority community.

Transformative tourist events, the component of which is the creative entrepreneurship of Roma, can shape the change in values and the view of the Roma community. "Roma Bridges" is a project that deals with integrating Roma into the labour market in Slovenia through creative entrepreneurship and creating added value for these products through transformative tourist events. In the framework of the project, trainings were conducted for the production of tourist souvenirs based on elements of the cultural heritage of Roma, as well as workshops on traditional medicine of Roma and plant mixtures, which Roma women can prepare and place on the tourist market, and transformative cultural and tourist events (camps, creative workshops and cultural events) in which Roma and non-Roma population and tourists participated. The project enabled creating a sustainable model of creative entrepreneurship of Roma through inclusion in chains of tourism industry, but also creating added value for Roma creative products and services, thus contributing to their better placement in the majority population and tourists through interactive events and learning about Roma culture and customs.

Bodvalenke Fresco Village is another project in the field of creative entrepreneurship, aimed at the creative transformation and re-positioning of a Roma settlement into a tourist destination. In 2011, Roma activists engaged Hungarian and European artists to portray murals in Bodvalenke village in the east of Hungary. About 85% of the population of Roma origin live in this village. Artistic interventions served as a framework for further transformation of settlements

and the development of creative entrepreneurship (tourism, art crafts, restaurants, gastronomy and other service activities), but also as a model which, through the painted details from the Roma culture, beliefs, legends and events from the history of Roma can influence on increasing pride, affiliation to the community and satisfaction of the local population.

Budapest Beyond Company, which deals with the organization of socio-cultural hiking tours in Roma settlements and tourist visits to Roma families in the territory of Budapest with the aim of better acquainting with this ethnic group, its values and the way of life. The tours include visiting Roma families, refreshments, interacting with family members and getting to know their cultural life.

Modern cultural expressions such as street performances, circus animations and designs can also be an effective means of integrating Roma and their sustainable economic empowerment. "Circus as a way of life" is a project supported by the Creative Europe programme aimed at professionalising and improving the skills of 80 circus artists from marginalized groups (especially Roma), as well as their economic empowerment and integration through circus performances, artistic animations and street theater.

Roma design is a somewhat newer form of interpolation of Roma cultural heritage into creative entrepreneurship. Romani design is a unique fashion house founded by Erika Varga, a Roma designer, in 2009. It employs Roma and other population, and it is specific in the design and production of fashion pieces inspired by Roma traditional elements, colours and motives. Fashion design here serves as a means of economic empowerment of Roma, but also for

Dragan Ristic and Kal band are a modern Roma music brand that created a specific cultural expression of Rock'n'Roma based on traditional Romani music with *rock'n'roll* elements They founded their band in 1996, which today has five members. They gained popularity with performances at many world festivals such as Sziget, European Biennale of Young Artists in Athens, EXIT, and others. Through music, which combines elements of traditional heritage, popular music and association with music of other cultures (Ljubinković 2011), KAL also realizes its activist mission – fighting against stereotypes, anti-racism and the establishment of intercultural dialogue. In addition to music performances, KAL also organizes a Roma music school where mostly foreigners spend two weeks in the pleasant environment of the Roma family, learning about Roma music and studying the cultural, ethnological and social aspects of Romani musical culture. Gypsy Roma Urban Balkan Beats (GRUBB) is a group of young Roma who perform traditional Romani music and dance crossed with hip-hop and rap. In collaboration with international artists, they expand their model of work through



recognition of Roma culture and strengthening of cultural identity of Roma. Erika, together with her sister and mother, began to deal with fashion, by combining contemporary fashion details and traditional motifs of Roma on clothing. In her fashion house, there are also workshops for people with special needs and Roma women in order for them to acquire new skills in making fashion details, porcelain jewelry, painting of textiles, etc. all with the goal of creating new employment opportunities and showing their creative abilities. Her products are sold on-line and in galeries throughout Europe.

educational workshops, and perform dance and vocal performances on tours across America, Canada, etc.

The selected examples suggest that the empowerment of Roma is possible through creative entrepreneurship, but it is necessary to examine the needs and resources in specific communities, and on the basis of this, carefully create support programmes in this area.

Purpose, objective and methodology of research

The research "Roma women, their position and readiness for the development of creative entrepreneurship in Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej and Zemun" is being implemented for the needs of the project "Working Horizons for Young Roma Women with an Emphasis on Returnees" aimed at assessing the creative potentials of the selected districts to create conditions for (self-) employment and explore the possibilities for activating and encouraging the employment of young Roma women and young returnees based on their needs and wishes. The project is being implemented in Zemun, Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin.

The subject of this report is the analysis of the situation and readiness of Roma women in Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej and Zemun for the development and improvement of creative skills, and then the very creative entrepreneurship in the communities in which they live. The aim of the research is to assess their capacities and needs to deal with jobs in the sphere of creative industries as a basic interest and continuity. The project task defines that the subject of this research is young Roma women aged 18-35 from the territory of the municipality of Zemun (the suburban settlement Kamendin), Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin who know some of the creative skills, that are inclined to engage in creative activi-

In the first step, in cooperation with the Roma Women's Center Bibija and the Association of Roma Novi Bečej, preliminary mapping of Roma women that meets the above two criteria has been carried out. The established data-

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ties.¹ We defined creative skills in this research as the skills that respondents possess and can use in their work to create creative goods and services, such as handicrafts, textile painting, knitting, crocheting, jewelry making, decoration, sewing, etc. skills such as processing and preparing photographs, web design, graphic design, creative services, gastronomy, designing creative workshops, etc. As a methodological framework for mapping creative skills, Unesco's classifications of creative industries used so far in the mapping of local creative activities (Mikić 2015) were adapted to the specificities of the Roma community (see more: Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov and Dimitrijević 2016). In this research, the term creative entrepreneurship refers to creative activities in the formal and informal economy, as well as voluntary and unpaid forms, in which products, services and contents are created, whose economic value is creative work based on elements of art and culture.

Creative activity is a form of activity that aims to express the creativity of individuals and groups and which has cultural contents. Creative industries are industries that provide conditions for performing creative activities. Creative activities can be performed in the form of a hobby or as a basic occupation.

base contained 60 entries for each of the local self-government units in which the survey was conducted and a total of 180 Roma women were mapped. A random sample for the survey was made up of 40 female respondents who were available at the interviewing period (10th August - 5th September 2017) and willing to answer questions from the survey. The survey consisted of 19 mostly closed questions through which we wanted to get to know about creative skills, family tradition and way of acquiring them, working status, preferences and work motives of Roma women, barriers to starting work and affinities towards certain creative and service jobs, as well as areas of creative entrepreneurship in which female respondents would like to improve their knowledge.

In addition to quantitative work, 3 focus groups were also held. In the focus groups, respondents were selected according to the following criteria:

- number of years of involvement in creative activities
- returnee / not a returnee
- type of creative skill
- actively involved in creative work / hobby, occasionally
- inherited skills from someone in the family / acquired knowledge, creative skills alone

The possibility for Roma civil society organizations (hereinafter referred to as CSOs) to propose up to 3 participants in the focus group, of their own choosing, and being guided by the aforementioned criteria, has been left open. The total number of participants in all focus groups was 34 (Zrenjanin 10 persons, Novi Bečej 12 persons and Zemun 12 persons). Focus groups were attended also by representatives of Roma CSOs that were partners in the project - Association of Roma Novi Bečej and Roma Women's Center Bibija from Belgrade. The focus groups were held on 18th and 20th September 2017. The discussion with the participants of the focus groups covered 4 topics - the interests and preferences of Roma women in the field of creative entrepreneurship, the current situation regarding access to the labour market and employment of Roma women, access to information on employment opportunities at the local level and assessment of working opportunities in the field of creative entrepreneurship and service activities.

The second part of the research covered, in the period from 10th to 18th September 2017, a survey of the capacities of existing civil society organizations operating in the Central Banat District and Zemun to map interested organizations that conduct activities to encourage the employment of young Roma women and returnees, and examine their capacities for further development of programmes in this area, with a special focus on creative and service activities. The Questionnaire for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) was developed by the team of the Jelena Šantić Foundation (FJS) for the research project "Working Horizons for Young Roma Women with an Emphasis on Returnees". A total of 20 representatives of CSOs filled out a questionnaire from Belgrade, Nova Crnja, Sombor, Kruševac, Niš, Novi Bečej, Surdulica, Užice, Zaječar and Zemun. The structure of the guestionnaire itself was divided into four parts, within which the CSO capacities were assessed for further inclusion in the programme of creative entrepreneurship of Roma women and returnees:

The assessment of the capacities of the civil society organization was carried out according to the following criteria: 1) Number of employees, 2) Number of volunteers 3) Annual budget 4) Experience in the field of social inclusion and work with vulnerable groups, with emphasis on work with Roma women and returnees 5) Experience in the field of creative industries 6) Experience in developing partnerships with different entities in the local community (public sector, private sector, other organizations, public cultural institutions ...).

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Analysis of the capacity of young Roma women for creative entrepreneurship in Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej and Zemun

Analysis of the capacity of young Roma women to develop creative entrepreneurship is based on the results of a survey that included a total of 120 female respondents, with an average age of about 26 years. Out of the total number of respondents, 35% are returnees from readmission, in most cases from Germany and Austria. This category of respondents mostly dominates in the suburban settlement Kamendin in the municipality of Zemun, where returnees from the readmission accounted for about 90% of the respondents.

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents at the level of the whole sample show that these are persons who have completed elementary and secondary school (66.7%), live in multi-member households with average size of 5 members, have no tradition of dealing with creative entrepreneurship in the family, can work on a computer and in most cases they have been engaged in creative activity for an average of 3 years.



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Table 1

Characteristics of respondents at the level of the whole sample

Total number of respondents		120
Years of age		25,8
Returnee from readmission	yes	35,0%
	no	65,0%
Do you have tradition of entrepreneurship	yes	6,7%
in the family?	no	93,3%
	2007	1,7%
	2009	0,8%
	2010	1,7%
	2011	0,8%
How long have you been engaged in	2012	7,5%
creative activities?	2013	2,5%
	2014	18,3%
	2015	16,7%
	2016	49,2%
	2017	0,8%
	uncompleted school, 1-3 grades of elementary school	19,2%
	primary school	39,2%
Educational structure	secondary education	27,5%
	college	5,0%
	faculty, higher education	7,5%
	no answer	1,7%
	2	1,7%
	3	10,0%
	4	29,29
The size of the household	5	26,7%
in which you live	6	10,09
	7	15,0%
	8	0,8%
	no answer	6,7%
	Foreign languages	35,8%
	Computer literate	69,2%
	Driving licence	10,0%
	Technical knowledge	4,29
Additional skills	Craft	4,29
	Business economy	1,79
	Art and design, musical skills	4,29
	Traditional skills	4,29
		4,27

Between municipalities there are differences regarding the educational structure of respondents with respect to the average values for the whole sample. Roma women from the suburban municipality of Kamendin belong to lower educational profiles (55% of respondents did not finish school, or have 1-3 grades of primary school), compared to Zrenjanin and Novi Becej,

where the share of respondents with these educational characteristics is negligible (less than 2.5%). There is a similar situation regarding the additional skills of respondents coming from this municipality, where about 80% do not have any additional skills, which indicates their unfavorable work profile compared to the other two municipalities.

Table 2		Zre	njanin	Novi	Bečej	Zei	mun
Level of educa-		Ν	%	Ν	%	Ν	%
tion of Roma women	uncompleted school, 1-3 grades of elementary school	0	0,0	1	2,5	22	55,0
	primary school	6	15.0	28	70,0	13	32,5
	secondary education	17	42,5	11	27,5	5	12,5
	college	6	15,0	0	0,0	0	0.0
	faculty, higher education	9	22,5	0	0,0	0	0,0
	no answer	2	5,0	0	0,0	0	0,0

The structure of creative skills of Roma women is mostly dominated by the skills that they can independently acquire and perform. There is a low share of traditional creative skills, which can be associated with a small percentage of the intergenerational transfer of these skills within the family. Only 14.2% of respondents have a tradition of dealing with some form of creative entrepreneurship in the family, more precisely - one generation (83% of respondents) to two generations (16.7% of respondents). Intergenerational transfer of creative skills is present in the field of domestic work - knitting, crocheting, as well as sewing and modeling. The respondents in Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin learned sewing mostly from the female line, with their

A large percentage of respondents who think that they possess the skills of making jewelry deal with it on a voluntary basis for other members of the Roma community, or children. Therefore, it is a latent creative skill, but not one that has reached a certain professional level and which can serve the purpose of economic empowerment of Roma women. Returnees from readmission, in comparison to other Roma women, differ in terms of creative skills. Mainly, under the term "creative skills" they recognise multifunctional skills that serve as support for creative activities, but which to a small extent belong to the category of skills that can create creative products and services. Also, among the respondents of this category, there is a great



mother, grandmother or aunt who worked in the Kluz - Tisa clothing production in Novi Bečej or some other social enterprise

diversity of skills that they recognize in themselves, compared to other respondents who are mainly focused and committed to perfecting one creative skill. The causes of these differences can be found in greater exposure to the poverty of returnees and other respondents from

Kamendin Municipality and their struggle for existence. Namely, this form of life implies the acquisition of those skills that can allow them to make a living, compared to respondents in other units of local self-government, who are at a higher level of socio-economic integration.



Table 3 Structure of creative skills and knowledge of Roma women

Type of skill	Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
decoration, creative services	47,5%	52,5%	0,0%	33,3%
jewelry making	22,5%	25,0%	50,0%	32,5%
sewing	10,0%	10,0%	20,0%	15,0%
knitting	0,0%	2,5%	25,0%	9,2%
nail art, makeup	10%	0,0%	0,0%	2,5%
flower decoration	2,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,8%
hairdressing skills	7,5%	5,0%	0,0%	2,8%
textile painting	0,0%	7,5%	0,0%	2,5%
crocheting	7,5%	2,0%	5,0%	5,2%

Table 4 Family tradition in the field of creative entrepreneurship

	Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
There is a family tradition	15,0%	5,0%	22,5%	14,2%
There is no family tradition	85,0%	95,0%	77,5%	85,8%
N=128				

Previously implemented programs in the field of employment of the Roma population were directed to conducting training for several occupations - hairdresser, manicure, pedicure, makeup artist, chef, operator of building machines and baker. According to CSO statements, they were mostly implemented in cooperation with the National University "Božidar Adžija" and Academia Educativa, lasting from 3 to 4 months, after which the participants were provided with equipment in order to continue to pursue selected occupations on their own. Although complete data on monitoring and the degree of effectiveness of economic empowerment of Roma in this way are not available,



from the interviews with respondents who were beneficiaries of these programs, it becomes clear that the market for such jobs is mainly within the Roma community, while only a small number of participants reach professional level and adequate reputation to provide services to members of the majority community. There are also some forms of discrimination in smaller communities (eg Novi Bečej), where in such forms of economic empowerment of Roma women there is no interest of employers from the majority community to receive them for internship and later to employ them. Due to the small number of registered Roma entrepreneurs in Zrenjanin (3 entrepreneurs) and Novi Bečej (2 entrepreneurs), opportunities for employment of Roma women after training are still at a very low level. Some previous studies have shown that Roma entrepreneurship is mostly developed as a family one (see: Žarković et al. 2016) or within the framework of the Roma community (Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov, Dimitrijević 2016), therefore, encouraging and supporting the development of Roma entrepreneurship can have a multiplier effect on further employment of young Roma.

In the research, a high percentage of creative skills related to the contemporary decoration and beautification of the body is noticeable, which is closely related to the mentioned programmes of economic empowerment of Roma women. According to the testimonies of the respondents, they deided to chose these professions because there were no other possibilities in the offer. However, from the discussions with focus group in Zrenjanin and Novi Bečej, we found out that their interest in acquiring new creative skills is guite large and of wide range (especially in the domain of decor and design), but that they never had the opportunity to acquire such knowledge. Therefore, it can be concluded that access to new, innovative and modern knowledge is crucial for improving the work profile of young Roma women and their employment. In addition, respondents also pointed out that they would be able to use their knowledge in the field of marketing and photo processing, working in design and prepress programmes, as well as painting textiles and other materials. They think that in this way they could reduce the costs of purchasing materials from the existing supplier and offer better, more diversified and more authentic services.

A very small number of respondents are actively engaged in creative activities (only 6.7%), while as many as 92.5% have declared that they practice creative activities as a hobby. The reason for this is the typical constraints that appear in the process of economic empowerment of Romani women aged 18-35:

Early marriage and family care for many respondents is a major barrier to doing any work and continuous work engagement. Child care is considered a priority, and it is possible to engage in other tasks only after the household chores have been completed. Respondents estimate that about 60-70% of available time goes to their household chores. This type of life mainly emphasizes the work at home as the only form of economic activity. Therefore, in this group, the respondents are engaged in the creative activities in the form of a hobby, sporadically in relation to the available time and as a supplement to the household budget. Some of these activities are performed exclusively within the Roma community, on a voluntary basis (eg, sewing, etc.) and/or as assistance to other members of the community.

There are a large number of social assistance beneficiaries (especially in the territory of the suburban municipalities of Kamendin and Novi Becej), and there are legal restrictions regarding the realisation of other revenues.. The Roma population from the territory of the suburban municipality Kamendin perceives the realization of income from working engagement as high risk, and there is a concern that due to any economic activity they may lose the right to

social assistance, which they consider as providing them with an existential minimum. Some respondents also have a viewpoint that they would not like to change their current position. They point out that having financial reliance on a male family member and social assistance, corresponds to the status of a housewife.

Work engagement in other jobs that provide household income. Almost 23% of Roma women are engaged in seasonal agricultural work, trade, hygiene services or helping their husbands in the collection of secondary raw materials. As these jobs represent the main source of income for their households, respondents have

Table 5 Creative activi-		Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
ties earnings as the main source	Yes	2.5%	2.5%	0.0%	1.7%
of household	No	92.5%	97.5%	100.0%	96.7%
income	No answer	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%

Regarding the working culture of the respondents, most of them do not have permanent employment (75%). The share of unemployed Roma women is the highest in Kamendin and Novi

Table 6 Roma women's			ijanin		Bečej	201	nun		tal
working status		Ν	%	Ν	%	Ν	%	N	%
	Formally employed	28	70.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	28	23.3
	Illegally employed	0	0.0	1	2.5	1	2.5	2	1.7
	Unemployed	12	30.0		97.5		97.5	90	75.0

little freedom in choosing a profession to deal with independently, including creative activities dedicated to hobbies.

Most Roma women perform creative activities individually, and the observed sample of Roma women is characterized by a high share of entrepreneurial ventures in its infancy (90.8%). In a small number of cases, income from creative activities is the main source of income for the household (1.7% of respondents), mostly with respondents who have single mothers status. These findings point to the low level of utilization of creative skills for involving Roma women in entrepreneurship and improving their social position.

Bečej settlements (97.5%), while in Zrenjanin the share of unemployed Roma women is the lowest with 30%.



Unemployed Roma women in 35% of the cases are registered at the National Employment Service, through which they mostly seek employment (60%). The share of the registered unemployed women is the highest in Zemun (76.9% of respondents), where there are also the highest number of social welfare recipients, but also the smallest number of those who seek employment through this service (30% of the respondents). Such findings lead to the conclusion that they register at the National Employment Service in order to obtain the formal status of an unemployed person, since this is one of the conditions for receiving social welfare, but without the intention to actively seek employment.

Apart from the National Employment Service, most unemployed Roma women also look for jobs on their own (23.3%) using the job advertisements. The largest number of Roma women who do not seek employment is in Kamendin, which encompasses about 25% of the respondents. They mainly address to the Center for Social Work or Roma organizations to get all the information about their rights and assist them in the realization. They have a personal feeling that official services don't apply the same criteria when deciding about their rights, don't understand their problems, and besides they are exposed to unpleasant situations when they ask for help. The indifference of the official institutions for Roma economic empowerment issues and employment is also a general impression of the respondents from the other two municipalities. Therefore, the respondents have a personal feeling that they are left alone, and they independently find jobs and forms of work engagement.

Table 7:		Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
Are you looking	No, I am not	8.3	0.0	25.6	12.2
for a job?	Yes, through Employment Service	58.3	89.7	30.8	60.0
(multiple	Yes, through a Youth association/society	16.7	2.6	7.7	6.7
answer)	Yes, through the ads	8.3	7.7	43.6	23.3
	Yes, I visit the employers	8.3	0.0	0.0	1.1

Regarding the capacities for an independent pursuit of some occupation, more than 83% of Roma women are interested in improving their economic status through work engagement. Focus groups' discussions have indicated that regardless of the degree of Roma women integration and education, all the respondents show a high level of awareness that employment improves their economic status, quality of life and social status. For this reason, they often

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emphasize that they would like their children to be economically independent, as this will enable them a better and more qualitative life.

Table 8:		Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
Do you want	Yes, independently	52.0	37.5	7.5	32.5
to start your	Yes, together with other women	15.0	60.0	77.5	50.8
own busi-	No	27.5	2.5	15.0	15.0
ness?	No answer	5.0	0.0	0.0	1.7

Regarding the ideal employment, the first choice of the respondents is primarily to work for the salary provided by the employer, which indicates low entrepreneurial capital. Mainly, Roman women who have positive entrepreneurial models in the family - successful Roma entrepreneurs in their immediate surroundings have positively evaluated independent entrepreneurship and they represent those respondents who see themselves as someone creating entrepreneurial ventures independently. Compared with other research studies (Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov, Dimitrijevic 2016), once again it has been confirmed that strong inter-generational entrepreneurial capital positively influences the Roma entrepreneurial inclination, the recognition of good economic opportunities and a more positive perception of the independent entrepreneurship as a form of employment.

Regarding the intention to start their own business, most respondents are concerned if they are capable of achieving success independently. Fear of failure is more present in the respondents with a lower education and more unfavorable work profile (Zemun), who survived some kind of discrimination at work. In relation to younger and more educated respondents, this fear is smaller (Zrenjanin), and they feel more free to try an entrepreneurial venture, and some of them have a vision what kind of job they can do in the future and what business goals they would like to achieve. The focus group participants in Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin point out

that they are supported by the community and family to persevere in their business ideas, and in cases where conditions allowed, the family invested in their additional education. They personally feel proud when the community positively values what they do. The positive social affirmation they receive from the community is significant for them and one of the main motivational factors is that they advance further. The respondents who are actively engaged in a creative activity estimate that their social affirmation, that is a recommendation for a welldone job, besides personal satisfaction brings them an economic satifaction as well, such as new clients. The markets where they work are mainly within the surrounding municipalities, up to 40 km



from the place of their residence, and clients are primarily from the Roma community. However, the respondents have the ambition and would like with the additional improvement to offer their services to members of the majority communities, because they believe that it is the only way they can create the conditions for sustainable creative entrepreneurship. Creative services and products are provided either by the orders or they are self-designed by the respondents . When service is ordered, clients find the photo of the service they want on the Internet (decoration, painting, pattern, etc.) and then products are made according to the client's idea,. In the case of sewing and creating clothes, the respondents mostly work in line with tailor

patterns and cuts from fashion magazines. The greatest freedom and creativity are shown when designing textile bags, making embroidery

designs on clothes, and using fashion details beads, zircons, and other various accessories like lace.

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Desirable areas for starting an independent entrepreneurial venture

c .		Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
S	Crafts, jewelry production, crocheting, knitting, sewing	25.8	45.0	52.9	41.9
al	Decoration, interior decorations, textile painting	16.1	50.0	2.9	24.8
	Services – hairdresser, cleaning	19.4	0.0	41.2	19.0
	Trade	12.9	0.0	8.8	6.7
	Food and pickled winter food production	3.2	0.0	5.9	2.9
	Beekeeping	2.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
	Opening kindergartens	2.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
	No answer	12.9	2.5	8.8	7.6

The respondents who would like to engage independently in creative entrepreneurship, find motivation in the prospects they see for advancement in this area (47.5%), as well as obtaining the independence and increased income (27% of the respondents). Only 16% of the respondents cite the economic necessity as a motive for starting creative entrepreneurship, as well as a lack of other business opportunities for the employment, and they believe the hobby they are engaged in, can turn into business.

In the focus groups organized in Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin, the respondents have explained that they are engaged in creative activities, because they love and enjoy them. Love for decorations and ornaments is highly expressed in the selection of the areas in which they would start independent entrepreneurial ventures.

There are mostly activities that combine colors, shapes and details and create different types of decorations. Precisely because these jobs are not imposed on them and are chosen in line with their own affinities, the participants of the focus groups showed a high degree of the commitment and ambition for further advancement, but also the desire to improve in these areas. Generally, the development of their creative skills is currently determined by the available material equipment. However, they would like to possess skills that will enable them to create original and more authentic creative products, as well as more expensive and better-quality raw materials with which they could work. They are also aware that they are lacking certain knowledge in this field and its overcoming would help them to improve the quality of the provided services and products. The respondents of a higher

work profile (Zrenjanin and Novi Bečej), besides practical skills, are also interested in acquiring of the so-called "soft" skills like project writing, marketing and sales skills. On the other hand, the respondents from Zemun are mainly inter-

Table 10:		Zrenjanin	Novi Bečej	Zemun	Total
In which areas should your knowledge and	Making handicrafts, textile painting, knitting, crocheting, jewelry production, decorations	37.5%	80.0%	45.0%	54.2%
skills be up- graded? (multi-	Project writing	35.0%	40.0%	0.0%	25.0%
ple answer)	Running the Association activities	7.5%	2.5%	2.5%	4.2%
	FB, social networks, promotions	2.5%	2.5%	12.5%	5.8%
	Services - hairdressing, cosmetics, cleaning, food production	17.5%	2.5%	52.5%	24.2%
	Marketing and sales	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%
	Photo processing, web design	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
	Computer training	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.8%
	None	5.0%	0.0%	5.0%	3.3%
	N=120				

Most ideas are found on the Internet and through YouTube tutorials, which shows that besides creative skills, the respondents from Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin also have functional skills - research and analysis skills, in other words they use different sources of information to master certain techniques and types of operations. Some skills were acquired by necessity, because they couldn't afford to pay for that service, so they mastered it on their own. Some respondents also possess problem-solving skills, meaning that while designing a creative product based on a particular pattern/model, their attempts, errors and tailor pattern analysis help them come up with certain solutions.

Interpersonal skills such as team work and helping others can be enhanced, as well as certain communication skills, such as the effective ideas exchange and cooperation in achieving a common goal in the field of creative entrepreneurship. The results of our research show that there is a low level of social capital within Roma women's population, whereas about 80% of the respondents have never been members



ested in the occupations and jobs that enable fast and easy employment - such as service activities (hairdressing, cleaning, cosmetic activities, etc.), which dominate in the group of these respondents with about 52.5%.

of an organization or association. The survey results show that the respondents would be ready to join the associations in order to do some work, although the discussions conducted within the focus groups clarified that the interest in associations exists only for the purpose of improving skills, project realization and similar activities, and that there is a certain reserve for joining associations for economic reasons and on a lasting business basis. It is noticeable that these findings are similar to the previous research. A survey of the creative entrepreneurs in Pirot showed that even 87% of them would not engage in any kind of associations (Mikić, Radonjić-Živkov, Dimitrijević 2016), whereas for example, the research on the economic position of Roma women in Pirot (SeCons, 2012) showed that in addition to a high unemployment, the respondents did not want to start their work either by themselves (92%), or in cooperation with other women (64%). Therefore, Roma women from Novi Bečej and Zrenjanin can be considered more open, more entrepreneurial and

bolder to enter into new business challenges, which can partly be explained by the accumulated experience gained through customer contacts and social interactions.

Regarding the perception of the obstacles for starting an independent business, in 69% of the cases, the main obstacle for Roma women is the lack of a starting capital and household obligations (27.5%). This coincides with the previous research on the Roma population (Đorđević 2013; SeCons 2012), which mostly show that Roma are not only uninterested, but mostly do not have an economic basis for entrepreneurial ventures. In addition to these obstacles, significant obstacles are also situations in which many customers do not have money to pay for the services, bargain about the price for the service provided, have debts that can not be charged, etc. Sometimes there is a misunderstanding between the clients requests and Roma women who provide the service, especially when putting interior decorations for celebrations.

Table 11:

The main obstacles for starting an independent creative business, multiple answers

Zrenjanin Novi Bečej Zemun Ν % Ν Ν % Not enough money 34 85.0 36 90.0 13 32.5 69.2 to start a business Family and household 7 17.5 12 30.0 14 35.0 27.5 obligations 5 12.5 9 0.0 Big taxes 22.5 0 11.7 0 0.0 Fear of failure 2 5.0 14 35.0 13.3 Insufficient 2.5 knowledge on laws 1 0 0.0 0 0.0 0.8 and regulations Nothing 3 7.5 2 5.0 2 5.0 5.8

AVERAGE PROFILE OF A CREATIVE ENTREPRENEUR FROM **NOVI BEČEJ**

AVERAGE PROFILE OF A CREATIVE ENTREPRENEUR FROM ZEMUN

AVERAGE PROFILE OF A CREATIVE ENTREPRENEUR FROM ZRENJANIN Age 25.5

She isn't a readmission returnee

- There is no tradition of creative entrepreneurship in the family
- Creative entrepreneurship area decoration, creative services
- Engaged in creative activities for 3 years, on average
- Lives in a five-member household
 Would be engaged in creative
- entrepreneurship driven by promotion opportunities
- Education elementary school

► Uses a computer and knows a foreign language

Age 25.6

- A readmission returnee
- There is no tradition of creative entrepreneurship in the family
- Creative entrepreneurship area cleaning, repairing jewelry
- Engaged in creative activities for 1 year, on average
- Lives in a five-member household
- ► Would be engaged in creative entrepreneurship due to an economic necessity

Education - uncompleted school, 1-3 grades of elementary school

Does not have additional knowledge and skills

Age 25.6

She isn't a readmission returnee

- There is no tradition of creative entrepreneurship in the family
- Creative entrepreneurship area decoration, sewing
- Engaged in creative activities for 3 years, on average
- Lives in a four-member household
- ► Would be engaged in creative entrepreneurship driven by promotion opportunities
- Education high school
- Uses a computer, has a driving licence, knows foreign language

Analysis of civil society organizations capacities in the field of Roma women economic empowerment through a creative entrepreneurship

Positive regulations of the Republic of Serbia enable non-profit organizations (citizen associations, foundations and endowments) to perform economic activities and to generate revenues for those activities that are in line with their goals. A civil society organization that generates income up to 400.000,00 RSD in the calendar year is not obliged to pay profit taxes, which opens up great opportunities for work engagement and employment within the framework of creative entrepreneurship.

Jelena Šantić Foundation carried out a survey of civil society organizations capacities from September 18 to October 5, 2017, in order to examine possibilities for potential work engagement and employment of young Roma women in creative entrepreneurship. In this period, Jelena Šantić Foundation examined the online questionnaire of civil society organizations that work

The questionnaire was filled in by 20 civil society organizations from 11 cities (Novi Bečej, Zemun, Belgrade, Sombor, Uzice, Zajecar, Dimitrovgrad, Surdulica, Nis, Nova Crnja, Kikinda and Kruševac). Out of the 15 completed questionnaires, 6 organizations are registered



and operate within the income-generating activities in two regions: the Central Banat District and Zemun. The research was focused on measuring the organizations capacities, their previous experience in work engagement and employment of the vulnerable groups, the interest in employment of young Roma women in creative industries in the future but also with the aim of mapping specific skills, knowledge and support necessary for the organizations to result in work engagement and employment of young Roma women in the field of creative entrepreneurship.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS CAPACITY

in the territory of Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej and Zemun, while 9 organizations work within the mentioned communities. Most organizations, 60% of them have existed for more than 10 years (the oldest organization was registered in 1991), while 40% of the organizations have been established and started working in the last 10 years (only one organization was established in 2016). The financial capacities of the surveyed organizations show a generally stable financial capacity of organizations, over 60% of the surveyed organizations have an annual budget of over 30,000 euros. The aforementioned capacities of the organizations represent a solid starting point for future work in the field of income-generating activities in the creative entrepreneurship.

TARGET GROUPS

All the mapped organizations have experience in working with sensitive groups, almost 90% of the surveyed organizations directly involve their users in their activities. The majority of the surveyed civil society organizations work with women, 86.7%, followed by young people 80%, elderly and persons with disabilities 46%, migrants and refugees 40% and 33.3% with returnees from readmission. Over half of the surveyed organizations have worked with Roma women returnees so far , mainly on support activities in obtaining documents, education and free legal assistance. Two organizations implemented the programs for economic empowerment of Roma women returnees, but through education and workshops realization.

EXPERIENCE IN REALIZATION OF INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYMENT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

46.6% of organizations have experience in the realization of income-generating, economic activities in a way to provide work engagement and employment of their users. The organizations have realized a wide range of activities, from textile recycling, children's toys assembling, work engagement and education in recycling and furniture reparation, agricultural activities up to public works, and education and training, after which the users got a job. It is especially interesting that the organizations with experience in employment and work engagement of their users and beneficiaries managed to temporarily engage and hire at least 63 users. Over 93% of the organizations conduct their income-generating activities within the legal form of the citizens' association and over 2/3 of the surveyed organizations plan to continue in the future to deal with the economic empowerment of their users.

EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Every third surveyed organization has responded that it has experience in the area of creative entrepreneurship, which has been mainly focused on the workshops for making children's toys, furniture reparation and recycling, as well as making unique wooden items, clothes and textiles recycling, and making ornaments and jewelry . It is very impressive that over 80% of the organizations are interested in this type of activities in the future.

NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR THE INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES DEVELOPMENT

In addition to financial support in the form of the equipment for the activities realization, all the surveyed organizations have stated that they need additional support and education in the following areas: creative entrepreneurship development (9 responses), users' creative skills development (9 responses), business plan development (6 responses) and assistance in the placement of their products.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community organizations have a very good cooperation with local governments and institutions in the realization of their activities, over 67% of the organizations have established cooperation with municipalities and the National Employment Service. A similar situation is related to cooperation with the business sector, where over 75% of the organizations have a cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises and companies in the communities in which they work. It is especially important to point out that all the surveyed organizations have achieved the cooperation with other community actors that are necessary for the realization of their economic activities: media, cultural centers, schools and other actors at the local level.







Conclusions

Analysis of the capacity of young Roma women for creative entrepreneurship in Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej and Zemun

The results of the research have showed that there is a significant difference in the capacities and readiness of Roma women for creative entrepreneurship in Zrenjanin, Novi Bečej and Zemun, which requires different models for their economic empowerment. When creating a program, it is important to keep in mind the findings of this research, the working patterns and socio-demographic characteristics of Roma women in the analyzed local self-government units in order to increase their relevance. Since the survey showed that only a small proportion of the respondents (only 16%) stated that the economic necessity was a motive for engaging in creative entrepreneurship, but primarily they see business opportunities in this area, it can be estimated that creating a model for Roma women's economic empowerment through the creative entrepreneurship could result in a significant success. Nevertheless, the Roma women's economic empowerment programs should not be understood as a formalized process of achieving only results in the field of their

employment, and consequently of the social inclusion, but also as a process of affirmation of Roma culture and their cultural identity strenthening. Therefore, the combination of economic and cultural components is of great importance. Namely, the affirmation of Roma creative entrepreneurship and the diversity of cultural expressions (especially in the sphere of contemporary creativity) can reduce stereotypes about Roma and improve their social position in a long-term perspective.



KAMENDIN, ZEMUN: The assessment is that the respondents from the territory of the suburban municipality Kamendin possess latent creative skills, which are not sufficiently developed to be able to work with them on concrete programs of the economic empowerment in the field of creative industries. This group of the respondents have multifunctional skills that serve as a support for creative activities, but to a small extent belong to the category of skills that can make creative products and services. Bearing this in mind, as well as the estimated level of work interest of the respondents, it is estimated that the economic empowerment programs through creative entrepreneurship are not for the time being an effective solution for their employment. The general conclusion is that Roma women in this group are dedicated to their families and household responsibilities, and are very little motivated for work engagement that does not involve housework. According to the statements

of these respondents, they see themselves as an individual with work responsibilities in 5 or more years when they bring up their children.

ZRENJANIN: The respondents from the territory of Zrenjanin are at the beginning of their careers. They are Roma women who still do not have a full access to the market and clients, and some of them continue to study and improve. These respondents appreciate the support to access the market and the empowerment to join creative entrepreneurship. Roma women from Novi Bečej showed interest in acquiring and improving creative skills, but in addition, they would like to regularly meet and exchange experiences in this area, visit cultural and other events where they can connect and see the latest achievements in this field. It is also characteristic that they are mainly interested in different forms of decorations, and are fulfilled with such creative skills, indicating that the risk of failure and the degree of abandonment of the economic empowerment program would be low. Namely, it is about choosing an interest in personal affinities, where the feeling and the boundary between hobbies and jobs are lost.

NOVI BEČEJ: The respondents from Novi Bečej are at a higher level of professionalization of the creative services and products, and have entered certain markets. However, they do not have access to clients in the majority community, although they would like to improve and expand their market. Therefore, it is important for them to provide additional raw materials and equipment, as well as training programs that would increase the competitiveness of their products and services.

Analysis of the civil society organizations capacities in the field of economic empowerment of Roma women through creative entrepreneurship

The results of the research have shown significant multi-angle potential of the civil society organizations as a resource for employment of Roma women returnees in creative entrepreneurship. First of all, civil society organizations are a good legal framework that allows for a work engagement of a substantial number of individuals, and the positive regulations also provide them with a relatively open space for starting employment of the beneficiaries because they are not in the tax system up to 400,000 RSD annual income made from economic activities². At the same time, they ensure that the equipment and resources that are necessary for the beginning of employment of Roma women will not be easily alienated because

they have a prominent social mission that gives them an additional comparative advantage over self-employment.

The organizations' experience in economic activities, as well as the existing capacities (human and financial), represent a good starting point for the employment of returnees. Over 60% of the surveyed organizations have an annual budget of over € 30,000, which supports their experience as well as management potentials. A particularly encouraging fact is that almost all the surveyed organizations have experience in dealing with vulnerable groups, and over 80% of them work on women empowerment, and over 33% of the organizations have activities focused on Roma women returnees. One third of the surveyed organizations have results in creative entrepreneurship activities, and over 80% of them will start or continue to deal with these activities in the future. The organizations offer a wide range of activities that can be models of the returnees recruiting, from textile recycling, through the jewelry and other products production to furniture recycling and reparations. In general, all the organizations have a good position in the local community and the established cooperation with local governments but also with other actors (the National Employment Service, business sector, cultural centers, schools, media, etc.) that can contribute to success in the field of creative entrepreneurship. In addition to the positive potentials of the civil society organizations, besides financial support and equipment provision, it is necessary to invest in raising their capacities. The research indicates the necessary support in the preparation of business plans, the launching and sustainability of creative enterprises, as well as the work sensitization of dealing with Roma women returnees. However, it should be kept in

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mind that besides the work on the employment of Roma women returnees, the work should also be directed to creating the conditions for the sustainability of the initiated organizations economic activities, primarily through education, assistance in placing products on the market, marketing promotion, and through other forms of support. It is especially important that some of these organizations have a readiness to act in the communities where they are not registered, that is, their activities are increased in the communities where there are no civil society actors who can be the drivers of the creative entrepreneurship development.

² More information on the functioning of civil society organizations can be found in the Law on Associations of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 51/2009 and 99/2011), Law on Foundations and Endowments of the RS ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 88/2010 and 99/2011) and the Law on Corporate Income Tax of RS ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 25/01, 80/02 - other law, 80/02, 43/03, 84/04, 18/10, 101/11, 119/12, 47/13, 108/13, 68/14 – other Law, 142/14, 91/15 - authentic interpretation, 112/15)



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