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2nd Divac Ideas Forum (DIF) Report

The 2nd Divac Ideas Forum (DIF), the second in a series of one-day events dedicated to the presentation and exchange of ideas on how to improve the quality of life for the young people in Serbia and to determine a clear path forward via a Platform of Action over the course of a three year period, was held on May 18, 2012, at Dom Omladine in Belgrade.

The second DIF was organized as part of the Shared Values of Serbia's Youth: Campaign and Call to Action project. The initial funding for this long-term initiative was received from USAID through the Institute for Sustainable Communities. Additional in-kind funding was received from a cluster of private companies providing PR and advertising support to promote the national level “Stvarno Vazno/Really Important” campaign.

During the first phase of the “Shared Values” project, the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation (HOD) brought together a coalition of civil society activists and young people for the first Divac Ideas Forum (DIF). The working groups formed at the first DIF worked over the past six months to define a Platform of Action to address and bring attention to youth-related issues and problems through a series of projects. At the 1st DIF, six thematic working groups were established in the following sectors: security; education and employment; health; culture and leisure; environmental protection; and activism, volunteerism, awareness raising and mobility. Participants from each working group, comprised of 30-60 young people, have been working on developing projects and activities within each area in an effort to improve the quality of life for young people.

The primary purpose of the second DIF was to present the results of the six working groups, comprised of more than 250 youth people, who developed a draft Platform of Action. During the event, six working groups presented their projects in order for audience members, including peer youth organizations, representatives of bilateral and corporate donors, and ministry officials, to ask questions about the goals and objectives of the proposed projects. The event also served to incubate and foster partnerships and networks of financial and in-kind support from the government, bilateral and corporate representatives for each of the six areas that constitute the Platform of Action in order to commence with their implementation.



Presentation of the Platform of Action

The Working Groups created the following six projects:

- 1. Security:** Presented by Zoran Zlatkovic - Organization of Creative Gathering (OKO), Belgrade
Brief project summary: The main objective of the project is to empower young people to take an active role in creating a culture of tolerance through a youth-led educational anti-violence campaign aimed at reducing peer-violence, bullying, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination among young people.
Project locations: Kikinda, Belgrade, Sjenica, Loznica, Zaječar
- 2. Health:** Presented by Jelena Milutinović – JAZAS, Belgrade
Brief project summary: Establishment of a Youth Information Center to inform and educate young people on a broad range of health issues, such as sexual and reproductive health, physical health, healthy eating habits and primary prevention of substance abuse.
Project locations: Beograd, Novi Sad and Nis
- 3. Education and Employment:** Presented by Biljana Ružičić - Umbrella Organization of Serbian Youth (KOMS), Belgrade
Brief project summary: Support for young people to start-up entrepreneurial businesses and to promote the importance of entrepreneurship among peers.
Project locations: Ten secondary schools throughout Serbia will be selected through a competitive process.



4. Environmental Protection: Presented by Vladimir Novaković - Young Researchers of Serbia, Belgrade
Brief project summary: Mobilizing and engaging young people to participate in environmental protection issues and activities in an effort to improve their communities.
Project locations: Three protected environmental areas in Serbia will be identified at the beginning of the project.

5. Activism, Volunteerism, Awareness Raising and Mobility: Presented by Valentina Antić - Center for Vocational Education, Krusevac
Brief project summary: Establishment of Volunteer Centers at the local level across the country to connect young people with civil and public sector volunteering opportunities.
Project locations: Kruševac, Leskovac, Niš, Zaječar, Beograd, Novi Sad and Požega

6. Culture and Leisure: Presented by Đorđe Miličić - Scout Association of Serbia, Belgrade
Brief project summary: Promoting the benefits of “active lifestyles” to young people, including visits to cultural institutions, cultural clubs, young people's street actions, etc. Several different types of activities and programs will be created to engage young people, such as Club of Active Live and Culture, My Free Time program and Youth Festivals.
Project locations: Seven cities in Serbia will be selected through a competitive process.





Fundraising for the Platform of Action

These projects represent the basis for further developing the Platform of Action going forward. The Divac Foundation will support these projects and other potential ideas and initiatives that emerge throughout the drafting process through a Matching Grants Fund. In order to establish this Fund, Divac Foundation has already started to seek support from bilateral and corporate donors. All funds collected will be matched with in-kind and cash contributions raised by the above listed youth organizations.

Divac Ideas Forums will continue to be held quarterly in order to measure the progress against the Platform of Action. Future DIFs will also serve to celebrate the achievements and innovations developed by young people during the process. Additionally, the work of youth organizations implementing the Platform of Action in their communities will be profiled at future events and peer feedback will be provided in order to transfer best practices and lessons learned to other youth organizations across the country.

Participants at the 2nd Divac Ideas Forum

- 50 leaders and activists from youth organizations and civil society groups
- 6 government institutions, including: Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Ecology
- 10 representatives from foreign embassies, including U.S., Denmark, Germany, Canada, Japan and Azerbaijan
- 20 representatives from international organizations, including GIZ, UNICEF, Care International, and Balkan Trust for Democracy
- 10 private companies
- 15 media representatives

Media References

Clipping: http://www.stvarnovazno.org/upload/document/press_kliping_dif2.pdf

Twitter - 138 tweets from Divac Ideas Forum (#stvarnovazno).

Official blogger of the event was Nikola Jovanović: <http://peckopivo.com/>

Live stream: <http://www.live-e.tv/> (235 people followed the forum live.)