



Republic of Serbia
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

PROJECT
"SERBIA FOR SERBS FROM THE REGION"
scholarships for members of the Serbian national community from
countries in the region in the academic year 2022/2023

Belgrade, July 2022

Contents

- 1. Introduction 3
- 2. Project Partners 3
- 3. Project Description 4
 - 3.1. Project Implementation Phases..... 4
 - 3.2. Scholarship Structure within the Project 4
 - 3.3. Conditions for Receiving a Scholarship 5
 - 3.4. Application Documentation 6
 - 3.5. Application Deadline 6
 - 3.6. Obligations of the Project Scholarship Holder 6
 - 3.7. Reasons for Losing the Scholarship 7
 - 3.8. General Provisions for Studying within the Project 7
- 4. Nomination and Selection of Candidates 9
- 5. Expected Effects of the Project Implementation 9

1. Introduction

With its policy of good neighborly relations and openness towards equal cooperation with all countries in the region, the Republic of Serbia is permanently interested in the free development of the Serbian national community in neighboring countries.

Pursuant to the Law on Diaspora and Serbs in the region ("Official Gazette of RS" No. 88/09), the phrase "Serbs from the region" means members of the Serbian people living in the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of Northern Macedonia, Romania, the Republic of Albania and Hungary. With its active and responsible national policy towards members of the Serbian people in the countries of the region, the Republic of Serbia preserves their identity - language, culture, religion, tradition and customs.

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, within its competencies and, pursuant to the Strategy for Preservation and Strengthening Relations between the Homeland and Diaspora, as well as of the Homeland and Serbs in the Region (Official Gazette of RS, Nos. 4/11 and 14 (11), developed the Project "Serbia for Serbs from the region" (hereinafter: the Project) which provides for the award of scholarships to young members of the Serbian national community from countries in the region.

Acquiring higher education in the Serbian language is an important precondition for preserving and strengthening the Serbian community in the region, and for its connection with the Republic of Serbia. National communities with a developed sense of identity, which exercise all guaranteed minority rights, represent a significant human resource in the countries they live in.

The Republic of Serbia recognizes members of national minorities in the Republic of Serbia and members of the Serbian national community in the region as important bearers of good interethnic relations and mutual understanding, tolerance and respect.

The Project is a way to strengthen good neighborly relations, care for members of the Serbian community and spread European values in the field of human and minority rights. To that end, the Republic of Serbia will offer 80 new scholarships through the Project in the academic year 2022/2023.

Scholarships for young members of the Serbian national community in the region will improve their level of education, which is one of the important preconditions for raising the quality of life in the countries where they live.

2. Project Partners

The implementation of the Project is managed by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia. The Ministry of Education will appoint an employee to carry out coordination activities in the implementation of the Project. The Ministry of Education will manage the implementation of the Project, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of

Health in accordance with the law, and universities of the Republic of Serbia, other institutions according to student needs and the Council for Relations with Serbs in the region.

3. Project Description

3.1. Project Implementation Phases

The project envisages scholarships for young members of the Serbian national community from countries in the region and is being implemented in two phases:

In the **first phase** of the Project, scholarship holders attend an online Serbian language course (level A1). After successfully passing the test, upon arrival in the Republic of Serbia, the scholarship holders have an intensive 720-hours course of the Serbian language (one semester). Project scholarship holders who know Serbian do not attend the course, but take a test in Serbian as a foreign language in order to qualify for enrollment. Scholars of the Project who know the Serbian language, take the entrance exam in the September enrollment period and enroll in the desired studies of the academic year 2023/2024.

The project also provides the assistance of students - hosts, who will provide support to scholarship holders from their arrival at the airport, reception upon arrival in the country, and through support to perform all administrative, organizational and other needs of scholars in the period from their arrival to the Republic of Serbia until their enrollment in studies.

In the **second phase** of the Project, it is planned that the scholarship holders attend studies according to their interests, in accordance with the offered study programs in Serbian or teaching in Serbian with the possibility of consultations in English at higher education institutions founded by the Republic of Serbia, which are a part of the University of Novi Sad, University of Kragujevac and University of Niš.

3.2. Scholarship Structure within the Project

Within the Scholarship Project, scholarships to the members of the Serbian national community from countries in the region participating in the Project **include**:

- free preparatory classes in the Serbian language (intensive Serbian language course after arriving in the Republic of Serbia);
- free education in basic academic and vocational studies, specialist vocational studies, master's academic and vocational studies, specialist academic or doctoral studies.
- scholarship in the amount of RSD 15,000.00 per month;
- free accommodation and food in student standard institutions **in align with disposable capacity**;
- voluntary health insurance in accordance with regulations and international agreements;
- free residence visa;
- free recognition of middle school diplomas;
- free recognition of higher education diplomas.

The Project scholarship **does not include**:

- travel expenses for arrival and departure from the Republic of Serbia;
- costs of public transport in the Republic of Serbia;
- costs for textbooks and work materials during the studies.

The scholarship in the amount of RSD 15,000.00 per month allows covering the costs of public transport, textbooks and working materials during the studies.

We recommend that scholarship holders, in accordance with their own abilities, bring with them a certain amount of money to cover costs that are not fully covered by the scholarship and to meet personal needs.

3.3. Conditions for Receiving a Scholarship

The scholarship can be awarded to a candidate who meets the following conditions:

- is a member of the Serbian national community in the countries of the region - the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of Northern Macedonia, Romania, the Republic of Albania and Hungary;
- has the citizenship of the countries in the region covered by the Project;
- is younger than:
 - 21 years for first degree studies - basic academic studies, basic vocational studies;
 - 25 years for specialist vocational studies of the first degree and for studies of the second degree - master's academic studies, master's vocational studies, specialist academic studies;
 - 35 years for third degree studies - doctoral academic studies.
- has completed adequate education:
- for enrollment in basic academic/vocational studies - has completed a four-year secondary education;
- for enrollment in master's academic studies:
 - in the amount of 60 ECTS credits - has an adequate diploma of a higher education institution obtained in basic academic studies with at least 240 ECTS credits;
 - in the amount of 120 ECTS points - has an adequate diploma of a higher education institution obtained in basic academic studies with at least 180 ECTS points;
- for enrollment in doctoral academic studies - has an adequate diploma of a higher education institution obtained in master's academic, i.e. integrated academic studies, with at least 300 ECTS credits;
- for enrollment in specialist/master vocational studies - has an adequate diploma from a higher education institution that is obtained in basic vocational studies with at least 180 ECTS credits.
- conversational level of knowledge of English or Serbian.

3.4. Application Documentation

Documentation to be submitted by the candidate when applying:

- application for the competition with information on the two study programs he/she wants to attend in accordance with his/her previous education and the conditions of enrollment in the desired study program in the Republic of Serbia;
- a CV with a motivation letter in English or Serbian;
- an original document, proof they belong to the Serbian national community;
- an original copy of the certificate of citizenship of the countries in the region covered by the Project;
- photocopy of a travel document (passport);
- evidence of education - certified photocopies of documents (middle school certificates (graduates submit certificates for the first three years and confirmation that they have enrolled in the fourth year - after the completion of the fourth year they need to submit a certificate), diploma of secondary education (graduates submit after graduation), diploma of higher education, master's degrees, transcripts of grades and diploma supplements);
- proof of knowledge of English or Serbian at the conversational level (certificate);
- an original copy of a medical certificate, not older than six months, confirming that the candidate does not suffer from any infectious disease, translated into Serbian.

3.5. Application Deadline

The deadline for sending application forms with accompanying documentation to diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of Serbia is **26th May, 2023**.

3.6. Obligations of the Project Scholarship Holder

The scholarship holder is obliged to:

- bring the original documents (middle school certificates, diplomas of higher education, master's degrees, transcripts and diploma supplements), translated into Serbian/English at arrival in the Republic of Serbia;
- pass the Serbian language exam before starting to study at the faculties of the University of the Republic of Serbia;
- Earns 48 ECTS points for enrollment in the next year of study, within the enrolled study program during the academic year;
- respect the laws of the Republic of Serbia and the regulations of the higher education institution for which he/she receives the scholarship;
- compensate for all damage caused to the premises of the student standard institution and the higher education institution;
- respects the rules of conduct prescribed by the statute of the higher education institution;
- respects the rules of conduct and house rules in the student standard institution;
- regulate their temporary residence and timely submit a request for its extension when the conditions are met, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Foreigners ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 24/2018, 31/2019);

- inform the Ministry of Education about all changes relevant to the status of the scholarship holder within the Project (graduation, withdrawal from studies, etc.) in a timely manner, and not later than within 30 days from the day of the start.

Scholarship holders in doctoral studies are required to:

- pass the exams in the study program for a specific year of study;
- bring a confirmation that the topics for scientific research works envisaged by the study program have been approved;
- bring a certificate that they have submitted a dissertation (because exams, scientific research papers and dissertations carry a certain number of ECTS).

3.7. Reasons for Losing the Scholarship

A scholarship holder shall lose a scholarship if:

- he/she does not pass the Serbian language exam with the least passing grade;
- he/she does not earn 48 ECTS points required for enrollment in the next year of study in the status of a student financed from the budget within the Project during the academic year within the enrolled study program, in accordance with the general act of the higher education institution;
- he/she seriously violates the student's obligations, provided by the general act of the higher education institution, in accordance with the law;
- he/she has been sentenced to a minimum imprisonment of 6 months' probation, or a more severe sentence;
- he/she behaves inappropriately, i.e. grossly violates the rules of study, prescribed by the statute of the higher education institution and the institution of student standard;
- gives up the scholarship on his/her own initiative.

A doctoral scholarship holders shall lose their scholarship if:

- he/she does not earn 48 ECTS credits for enrollment in the next year of study;
- he/she does not pass the remaining exams in the next academic year;
- he/she does not bring confirmation that they have been approved topics for scientific research papers provided for in the study program;
- he/she does not bring a certificate that they have submitted a dissertation;
- he/she does not defend the doctoral dissertation within the legal deadline.

3.8. General Provisions for Studying within the Project

Within the framework of the Scholarship Project, only one study program can be attended.

During the academic year, the student is obliged to earn 48 ECTS points required for enrollment in the next year of study in the status of a student financed from the budget within the Project, in accordance with the general act of the higher education institution which determines the conditions for enrollment in the following year.

After the end of the last year of the study program, the scholarship holder who has earned at minimum of 48 ECTS points in each academic year during the study period, reserves the right to a scholarship for another academic year.

Students who have lost their scholarship can only regain the status of a scholarship holder in the following academic year, under the condition they earn 48 ECTS points.

The scholarship holder is obliged to attend the enrolled study program, and transfer to another study program within the Project is not possible.

A scholarship holder who is unable to earn a sufficient number of ECTS credits for enrollment in the next year of study in the status of a student financed from the budget due to a serious illness during the entire academic year, has the right to enroll in the same year for the second time and retain the right to the scholarship. The scholarship holder is obliged to submit the complete medical documentation (with the confirmation of the doctor's council of the institution where the scholarship holder was treated, that it is a serious illness) to the Ministry of Education, by the end of the current academic year.

The scholarship holder is obliged to pass the remaining exams during the repeated academic year, i.e. to earn a sufficient number of ECTS points for enrollment in the next year of study. Otherwise, the scholarship holder shall lose the right to the scholarship.

The scholarship holder is obliged to inform the competent authorities about the rights and obligations related to the regulation of temporary residence in the Republic of Serbia.

The scholarship holder is obliged to pass the remaining exams during the repeated academic year, i.e. to earn a sufficient number of ECTS points for enrollment in the next year of study. Otherwise, the scholarship holder loses the right to the scholarship.

The scholarship holder is obliged to inform the competent authorities about the rights and obligations related to the regulation of temporary residence in the Republic of Serbia.

Higher education institutions included in the Project are obliged to submit reports on the progress of scholarship holders twice a year (within 15 days from the end of the winter semester, i.e. summer semester) at the request of the Ministry of Education.

Higher education institutions included in the Project are obliged to inform the Ministry of Education about all changes of importance for the status of scholarship holders within the Project in a timely manner, no later than within 30 days from the day they occur (graduation, leaving studies, etc.)

4. Nomination and Selection of Candidates

Candidates interested in receiving the scholarship shall apply through the diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of Serbia in the countries of their residence, in coordination with the legitimate representatives of Serbs in the countries of the region.

The Embassies of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of Northern Macedonia, Romania, the Republic of Albania and Hungary submit the list of proposed candidates to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All registered candidates must meet the conditions for receiving a scholarship.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs submits to the Ministry of Education and the Council for Relations with Serbs in the Region an integrated list of proposed candidates, as well as applications with complete documentation of all registered candidates.

The Minister in charge of education will appoint by a decision a special inter-ministerial commission, which will review the documentation received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the selection of proposed candidates. The commission will be composed of representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Agency for Qualifications - ENIC/NARIC Center. This decision will determine the tasks of the commission for the selection of candidates and the awarding of scholarships.

The decision on the selection of the final list of proposed candidates, made by the Minister responsible for education, is forwarded by the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to inform the embassies, i.e. all candidates who have applied.

5. Expected Effects of the Project Implementation

A successful implementation of the Project will enable the achievement of short-term and long-term positive effects, both for members of the Serbian national community from countries in the region and for the Republic of Serbia:

- Academically educated representatives of Serbian national communities will significantly contribute to achieving and improving participation in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the countries they live in;
- improving relations with the representatives of the majority population in their country through constant dialogue on an equal basis;
- promotion of the higher education system of the Republic of Serbia;
- promotion of cultural, scientific, economic, tourist and other capacities of the Republic of Serbia;
- improving friendly and good neighborly relations between the Republic of Serbia and the countries in the region.