

Report of the Human Rights Centre for 2024

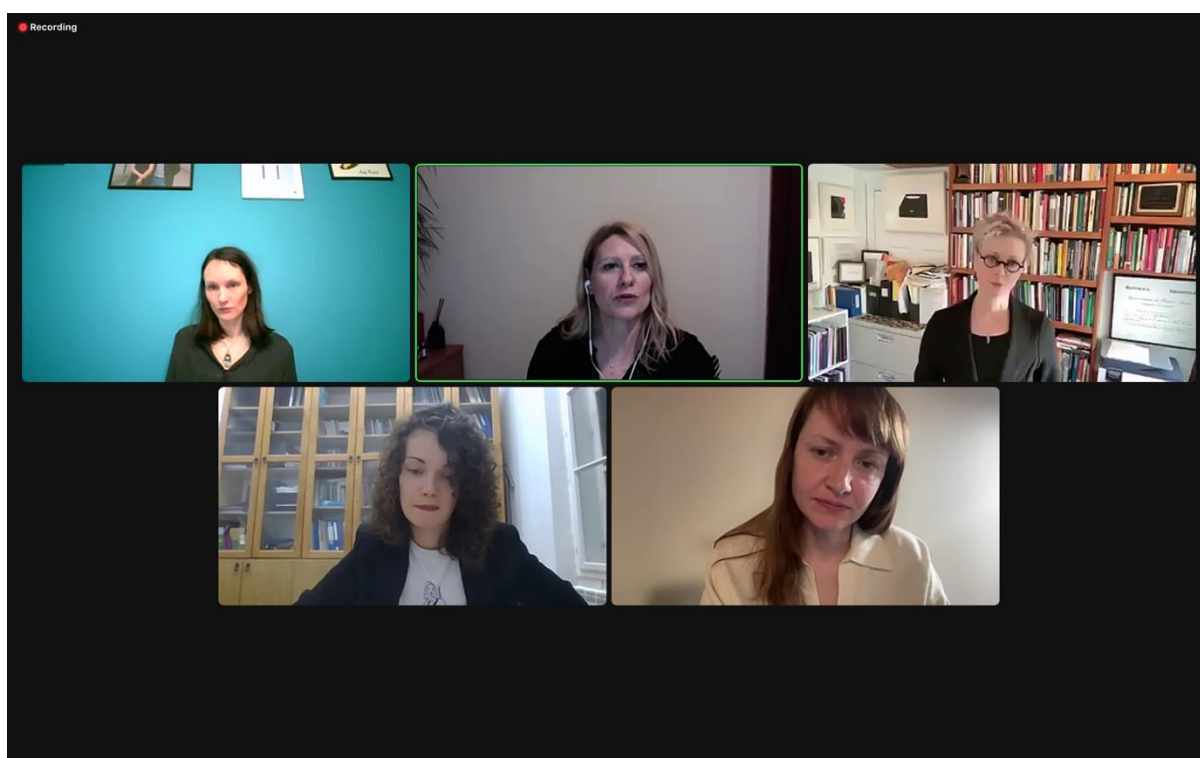
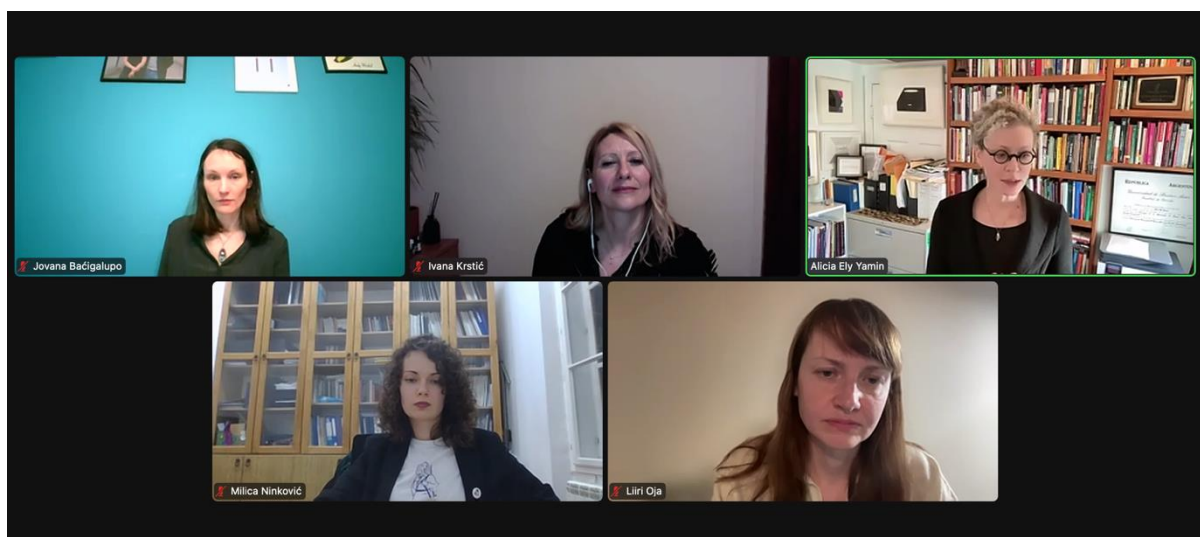
The Human Rights Centre remained active and continued successful cooperation with its partners through 2024.

Prof. Dr. Ivana Krstić Appointed as a Member of the Working Group on Homelessness of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue

In January 2024, Prof. Dr Ivana Krstić was appointed as a member of the Working Group on Homelessness established by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. The Working Group held several meetings aimed at drawing attention to the issue of homelessness and the need to organize public dialogues on specific related topics. Prof. Krstić participated in the public dialogue "Homelessness - Resolving Issues of Personal Documents on the Path to Social Exclusion", which took place on 20 February at the City Administration of the City of Belgrade. She also represented the expert team that provided support to the Ministry in drafting the Human Rights Strategy and the Action Plan for 2024–2025, as well as the Strategy for the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for the period 2022–2030.

Online Panel Discussion on "Obstetric Violence"

The Human Rights Centre, in cooperation with the Institute of Mental Health, organized an online panel discussion on the topic of Obstetric Violence on 20 February 2024. The discussion was moderated by Jovana Baćigalupo, and the speakers included Alicia Ely Yamin from Harvard University, Camilla Pickles from Durham University, Liiri Oja from the Office of the Estonian Chancellor of Justice, Milica Ninković from the Faculty of Philosophy, and Prof. Dr. Ivana Krstić, Director of the Human Rights Centre. The panellists examined the issue of obstetric violence from a range of professional perspectives. After their presentations, participants engaged in a discussion and Q&A session that focused on identifying concrete measures to enhance the protection of women during pregnancy and childbirth. The event was closed with recommendations aimed at reinforcing health policy frameworks, enhancing professional education for healthcare workers, and increasing awareness of obstetric violence.



LAWGEM Summer School

From Monday, 1 July, to Friday, 5 July 2024, the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law, together with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, organized the second international summer school Law and Gender (LAWGEM Summer School). The school was held in a hybrid format, both in person at the faculty premises and online via the Webex platform, which enabled many interested students from Serbia, the region, and around the world to attend the lectures. The structure of the programme consisted of four compulsory courses, each comprising two lectures: Feminist Political and Legal Theories, Human Rights from a Gender Perspective, Feminist Judgments, and International and European Law and Gender Equality. In

addition to the compulsory courses, participants were offered a selection of seven elective courses from which they could choose those that best matched their interests: Public Policy and Gender Equality, Gender Perspective in Labor Law, Gender-Competent Criminal Law, Gender Issues in Comparative Legal History, Gender Equitable Taxation, Gender-Competent Criminology, and Gender Economics. The summer school highlighted the strong interest of students in gender equality, which was evident in the lively discussions that followed each lecture. Both after the opening session and at the closing ceremony, participants had the opportunity to continue discussion during lunch, creating an informal setting for networking and for continuing meaningful conversations on key issues in the field of gender equality.



Master Class – Non-verbal communication skills for lawyers and mediators

On September 28, 2024, the Human Rights Centre organized a master class on “Non-Verbal Communication Skills for Lawyers and Mediators”. The seminar was held by Mark Segal, an attorney and international legal consultant with more than thirty years of experience in implementing judicial and legislative reforms in over fifty countries. He is known for his work in strengthening the professional capacities of legal practitioners and for his specialized training on non-verbal communication designed for judges, prosecutors, attorneys, and mediators.

The seminar covered key topics related to the role and importance of non-verbal communication in the legal profession. Participants were introduced to the basic principles of non-verbal communication, followed by a discussion on why these skills are particularly important for lawyers and mediators and how they influence professional practice. Participants then

worked on understanding and applying various forms of non-verbal signs, as well as on techniques for accurately interpreting non-verbal communication when communicating with clients and colleagues, as well as in front of the court. The final part of the program focused on specific aspects and factors of non-verbal communication that can significantly enhance the effectiveness of negotiations, mediations, and courtroom proceedings. At the end of the seminar, all participants received certificates of completion.



The First Annual Asylum Roundtable in Serbia

The First Annual Asylum Roundtable in Serbia was held on October 2 and 3, 2024, in Vrdnik, organized by the Judicial Academy and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Serbia. This two-day event brought together representatives of key institutions involved in the asylum system to exchange experiences, discuss practical challenges, and strengthen institutional cooperation. Speakers included the Director of the Judicial Academy, representatives of UNHCR, the President of the Administrative Court, representatives of the Asylum Office and the Asylum Commission, as well as representatives of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, civil society organizations, and legal representatives of asylum seekers.

On behalf of the Human Rights Centre, Junior Teaching Assistant Ana Memeti addressed the participants and presented the wide range of activities that the Centre implemented in the field of asylum and migration. These activities include preparing the Bulletin on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the Court of Justice of the European Union, implementing the legal clinic, conducting a specialized course, and providing support to various research initiatives. She particularly emphasized the importance of the Centre's ongoing cooperation with the Administrative Court and UNHCR, highlighting that this collaboration plays a crucial role in improving the quality of judicial practice in the field of asylum.



Conference Private sector engagement - from refugees' perspective

The conference Private sector engagement - from refugees' perspective was held on October 8 at the Sava Centre, organized by UNHCR and IKEA Serbia. The event was part of the #ForRefugees initiative, aimed at presenting the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as how the private sector can contribute to their employment, economic inclusion, and overall quality of life. The conference brought together representatives of institutions, international organizations, and the business community to

identify good practices and encourage further cooperation in supporting refugees. The Human Rights Centre was represented at the conference by Teaching Assistant Marija Vlajković and Junior Teaching Assistant Ana Memeti.



Launch of the New Master's Program at the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law Law and Gender

On Wednesday, October 23, 2024, the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law formally launched a new master's program, Law and Gender, which is delivered in English. The program was opened by Prof. Dr. Ivana Krstić, the director of the master's program and director of the Human Rights Centre, who warmly welcomed the first generation of students and emphasized the importance of developing a gender-sensitive approach to legal education. Prof. Dr. Dragica Vujadinović, the main coordinator of the LAWGEM project, also addressed the first generation of students, emphasizing that the Law and Gender program emerged as a result of the successful implementation of the international Erasmus+ cooperation partnership in higher education.

Following the introductory remarks, Professor Krstić, together with the program secretary, Junior Teaching Assistant Ana Memeti, presented the structure of the program and highlighted its interdisciplinary teaching approach, which encourages discussion and critical thinking. The event was attended by professors involved in the program, who introduced the wide range of mandatory and elective courses within the master's studies. Students also had the chance to introduce themselves, discuss what motivated them to enrol in this program, and raise any questions. After an engaging and pleasant discussion, Prof. Dr. Bojana Čučković delivered the first lecture within the compulsory course International and European Law and Gender Equality.

The Law and Gender master's program was additionally supported by the private sector, which has provided three scholarships. Professor Ivana Krstić extended sincere gratitude to Attorney Ljubica Tomić, Attorney Nikola Babić, and Professor Dragica Vujadinović for providing these scholarships and for recognizing both the quality of the program and the importance of enabling more students to pursue studies in this field.





Roundtable on “A Sustainable Framework for Collecting Data on National Minorities”

On 21 November 2024, at the conference hall of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law, a roundtable on “A Sustainable Framework for Collecting Data on National Minorities” was held. The event, organized by the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade, the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, and the Human Rights Centre, aimed to foster cooperation and dialogue among key stakeholders to advance minority rights through data-driven policies. The roundtable aimed to foster cooperation and dialogue among key stakeholders to improve the protection and promotion of minority rights through data-driven policies, in line with EU standards and the recommendations of the Council of Europe, particularly the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.





Conference Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – 10 years of implementation

On Monday, 25 November 2024, the Human Rights Centre hosted a conference at the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law to mark ten years of implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. At the formal opening, speakers included the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Prof. Dr. Bojan Milisavljević; the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, Ms. Brankica Janković; and the Director of the Human Rights Centre and the book's editor, Prof. Dr. Ivana Krstić. They emphasized the impact of the Istanbul Convention on human rights protection and national legislation, as well as the importance of raising awareness of the challenges that persist in practice.

The conference consisted of two panels presenting papers published in the collection of papers on the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - Ten Years of Implementation. This volume was produced as part of research conducted under the strategic project of the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law named "Challenges in Creating, Interpreting, and Applying the Law." The papers examined the Istanbul Convention and its contribution across a range of thematic areas.

In the first panel, Professor Dragica Vujadinović discussed the roots of gender-based violence from an intersectional feminist perspective, while Professor Bojana Čučković addressed the impact of the Istanbul Convention on the standards of the European Court of Human Rights, with particular reference to the positive obligations to protect victims as an element of fundamental human rights. In the second part of the first panel, doctoral candidate Ana Zdravković analysed the role of the Istanbul Convention in interpreting Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, while Teaching Assistant Marija Vlajković examined the process that led to the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention in the European Union.

The second panel began with a presentation by Professor Svetislav Kostić, who highlighted the economic importance of preventing and combating violence against women. Junior Teaching Assistant Mina Kuzminac then discussed the impact of domestic violence on women in the world of work, followed by Assistant Professor Ivana Marković, who addressed the relevance of the Istanbul Convention for the implementation of the criminal offense of stalking in Serbian law. Professor Ivana Krstić presented on international standards and comparative practices regarding SOS hotline services for women experiencing violence, while Junior Teaching Assistant Ana Memeti analysed the Convention's influence on the protection of children.

The conference attracted considerable interest among members of the academic and professional community, including professors, teaching staff, researchers, representatives of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, and the Centre for Judicial Research (CEPRIS). The conference was also attended by representatives of civil society organizations such as the Autonomous Women's Centre and FemPlatz, which provide support to survivors of gender-based and domestic violence in practice. Students from all levels of study at the Faculty of Law were also present.





Premiere of the Documentary Film A Trace in Time - Dr. Damjan Tatić

The premiere of the documentary film A Trace in Time - Dr. Damjan Tatić was held on 10 December 2024. After the documentary film was shown, the speakers at the event included Marica Mirić, President of the Community of Associations of Persons with Disabilities of Croatia (SOIH) and member of the EDF Board, Tanja Srećković, Senior Advisor in the Sector for Multilateral Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tatjana Prijić, Acting Assistant to the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality in the Sector for the Promotion of Equality, Cooperation and Projects, Borka Rajišić, Senior Advisor at the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications, and Prof. Dr. Jovica Trkulja from the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law.

The Director of the Human Rights Centre, Prof. Dr. Ivana Krstić, took part in the documentary, where she spoke about the longstanding cooperation between the Faculty of Law and Dr. Damjan Tatić and the significance of his involvement in the Legal Clinic on Anti-Discrimination. The event was attended by Junior Teaching Assistant Ana Memeti, together with students who had participated in the legal clinic.



Bulletin on the Case Law of the European Court of Human Rights and the Court of Justice of the European Union

Since 2023, the Human Rights Centre of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law has been continuously preparing bulletins on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in the field of asylum, to strengthen the capacities of the judiciary and enhance the consistent application of European standards in international protection proceedings.

Throughout 2024, the Centre issued two bulletins covering relevant case law for the periods from January 1 to June 30 and July 1 to December 31. Each bulletin provides a systematized overview of ECtHR and CJEU decisions important for administrative and judicial proceedings in the field of asylum.

The purpose of these bulletins is to support more efficient decision-making by competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia, as well as to facilitate monitoring developments in international standards on asylum and international protection. The bulletins are prepared together in cooperation with the UNHCR Office in Serbia and the Administrative Court.

All bulletins are available on the website of the Institute for Legal and Social Sciences of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law. Access links: <https://ius.bg.ac.rs/publikacije/билтен-праксе-европског-суда-за-људск-3/> and <https://ius.bg.ac.rs/publikacije/билтен-праксе-европског-суда-за-људск-4/>.