



HELSINKI COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SERBIA

Penitentiary- Reformatory for Women in Požarevac

Monitoring of the prison system reform

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Penitentiary-Reformatory for
Women in Požarevac

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Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women in Požarevac

I – INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

For the past ten years, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia has been monitoring and identifying violations of human rights of marginalized groups accommodated in various institutions, where their fundamental rights have been partially or entirely limited.

After several visits to all prisons, during which the HCHRS has, based on a previously established methodology, ascertained the state of affairs, followed by a systemic monitoring of the changes in the execution of criminal sanctions, the new project aims to identify violations of rights of vulnerable groups among the prison population. Having in mind that the prison system is reforming at a slow pace and that many aspects are contingent on changes in the society and in other state sectors, the *Monitoring of the Prison System Reform in Serbia 2011* focuses on the most prominent problems which threaten fundamental human rights of persons sentenced to prison or to educational measures, belonging to one or more categories of the so called sensitive groups. For this reason, the comprehensive methodology used in previous reports has given way to observance of existing rights which the abovementioned persons cannot realize fully or to some degree, in spite the pronounced social or individual need for such rights to be engendered in the case of these particular groups.

Having defined the goal in this way, six institutions have been selected for monitoring. This includes institutions which are assigned by law for use by a specific population (such as women or minors), as well as those institutions having such a structure or capacity to provide, as much as possible, the monitoring of rights of a relevant number of offenders belonging to a particularly sensitive group (ill persons, persons with disabilities, members of a religious, ethnic or sexual minority). These are: the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women in Pozarevac, the Kruševac Juvenile Reformatory, the Valjevo Juvenile Prison, and three largest Penitentiaries-Reformatories – in Sremska Mitrovica, Niš and Požarevac (Zabela).

Over the past ten years, the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women in Pozarevac was the subject of particular interest of the HCHRS¹ given the fact that it is the only prison for women in Serbia².

In the detailed report for 2010³, the Helsinki Committee's expert team has extended much serious criticism on account of the state of human rights in this institution, that is, on account of the prison's management. During the first visit in 2011, the warden has assessed that the monitoring by the HCHRS and the presented report have led to "collective morale depletion". The director states that, during previous visits, the employees in the PR for Women "were not capable of stating all of the things that they do", leading to, in her opinion, a particularly bad impression of the HCHRS about this institute. Unfortunately, even following the latest visits, the ascertainment stands that the culture of human rights in this institute is at a relatively low level, that is, that the prison's management, but also the Administration for the Enforcement of Penal Sanctions as well as the pertinent Ministry, demonstrate insufficient understanding of the problems of human rights of the prisoners, as well as that of the employees at this institute. Nevertheless, even with the identified shortcomings, it is important to stress and commend the institution's efforts for aligning every staff activity with the Law on the Execution of Criminal Sanctions, as well as the willingness to adopt more adequate ways of treating the convicted women.

The HCHRS' task is to identify problems and to insist on the unconditional respect for human rights. The objections stated in this report and in previous ones refer to the inadequate systemic solutions and point to either the lack of respect for human rights, or the absence of understanding the concept thereof. In this sense, the report is not an attack on individuals (prison directors, managers of departments) or on the entire personnel; it is rather a form of help with the aim of better understanding of the lapse in the area of the execution of criminal sanctions demonstrated by all pertinent actors, and with the aim of a better understanding of international standards in this area.

During subsequent control visits in 2011, the HCHRS intended to ascertain and register potential positive (or negative) shifts as regards particular, especially threatened rights of female prisoners which are of great importance to them. The standards which the HCHRS went by stem from international documents which are accepted – in other words ratified and/or signed – by the Republic of Serbia⁴.

1 The HCHRS has published analyses of this Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women in 2002, 2005 and 2010, and the reports are available at www.helsinki.org.rs

2 More precisely, under criminal procedure, women can be placed in special detention facilities within other prisons in Serbia. However, this is the only institute specialized for women serving prison sentences.

3 Prisons in Serbia 2010, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, group of authors. Available at: http://www.helsinki.org.rs/projects_crdo1.html

4 Conventions on human rights (EU and the UN), Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT), Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners...

II – STANDARDS AND RIGHTS AS REGARDS ACCOMMODATION CONDITIONS

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) sees the overcrowdedness of prisons as a serious problem in many states and considers that this cannot convincingly be explained solely by a high crime rate, but also by judicial policy. However, although objections pertaining to this segment must primarily be addressed to the state, the institution itself should have to approach more boldly and more openly towards the courts and the Ministry, and to insist, based on arguments, on the implementation of non-institutional punishments, a higher number of releases and more cases of amnesty being granted, whenever the conditions for this exist. Public advocacy for a milder penal policy would also contribute to a change of the existing practice, especially having in mind that employees at the institute hold that the behavior of the majority of prisoners is exemplary, that there are few returnees and few women likely to commit crimes which represent a great social danger.

Decreasing the number of prisoners would improve the conditions for serving a prison sentence and would bring many benefits – working on their resocialization would be more substantial and would yield better results, the organization within the institute itself would be improved and more rational, and there would be multiple benefits for the society.

Unfortunately, in spite of certain efforts taken by the institution, the accommodation conditions in the institute remain very poor. The lack of financial means is certainly a limiting factor; however, the HCHRS is concerned about the lack of sensibility for the specific needs and psychology of women, primarily in the Administration for the Enforcement of Penal Sanctions and in the pertinent Ministry, but also, to a lesser degree, at the institute itself. Women represent a relatively small group of people deprived of their liberty; therefore, there is no excuse for the state's lack of interest and capability for providing decent prison conditions for them. This especially if having in mind that the majority of women are far from home and from their families and that they belong to a low social stratum, which means that the prison surroundings are, almost exclusively, their main environment. The building of the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women is the oldest among prisons in Serbia (137 years of existence), and it has been renovated only twice thus far. The information received by the HCHRS from the prison's management that the Administration for the Enforcement of Penal Sanctions has designated around 30,000 euros for the reconstruction of the main building and that an upcoming repair of electric installations amounting to 20,000 euros is planned, is the first hint of change of attitude towards the prisoners. This, however, does not suffice, therefore the HCHRS will, in the future, insist on a comprehensive improvement of conditions at the institute, including full refurbishment of facilities, procurement of new furniture and equipment, and especially raising the general hygiene level.

III – THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STAFF AND PRISONERS

As compared to all previous visits, there has been a significant change in the dress code rules pertaining to the female prisoners. Namely, up until this year, the management has strictly prescribed the use of prison uniform (in spite of the fact that this provision has been eliminated, or rather ignored, by the majority of prisons). Finally, in early 2011, the management has allowed for the prisoners to use civilian clothes and make up, with certain necessary limitations which were imposed by the warden herself by a special act. One of the limitations which the HCHRS considers unjustified is the mandatory wearing of closed-toe shoes even during the summer months.

In addition, the demand for the prisoners to bow their head and to cross their hands on their backs whenever passed by any staff member or visitor represents an unreasonably rigid relation and rigid understanding of the execution of the criminal punishment. Such measures are degrading and counterproductive to the efforts of the trainers and other staff members which are attempting to raise the womens' self confidence and to enhance their sense of dignity. Additionally, such measures are not justified by security reasons and they do not contribute to the establishment of positive relations between the staff and the prisoners. On the other hand, it is commendable that the majority of the security staff personnel have established a relationship of trust and closeness with the prisoners, while not putting into question their professional authority and security. The HCHRS maintains that the prison's management should instigate all other employees to enhance their communication with the prisoners, with the aim of creating constructive, decent and human relations. Such an approach reduces aggression and abuse, and it increases safety through the creation of a more secure environment, thus also preventing a high level of stress among the staff.

In the past reports, the HCHRS has given a lot of attention not only to the poor and inhumane conditions in certain parts of the central facility, including solitary confinement facilities, but also to measures of restraint (fixation) and solitary confinement which are procedurally insubstantial and excessive, in the HCHRS' opinion. The problem of unnecessary and prolonged fixation⁵ has also been pointed out during 2010. In 2011, the fixation measure has been used rarely and at times of absolute necessity, which represents a positive change. In addition, at the time of the most recent visits, the section of the pavilion holding the solitary confinement was being refurbished. The management's intention is to transform the two existing solitary confinement rooms into one which would be functional and more adequate in terms of accommodation.

⁵ In this institute, this measure has been used primarily as a punitive measure – not for medical purposes; see previous reports.

However, the HCHRS stresses that the implementation of such measures should be extraordinary, of short duration and strictly controlled. In a situation where nearly the entire prison population is well disciplined, the impossibility of controlling and appeasing upset or acutely aggressive women is primarily a fault on behalf of the staff. To support this claim, we are stating the opinion of a member of the security service: “If there weren’t several women, mostly drug addicts, who are prone to causing incidents, we would be like a kindergarten”.

As compared to the previous visit, the practice of prisoners doing their laundry manually has been partly modified. Namely, the previous report stressed that forcing the prisoners to wash their laundry by hand was unacceptable. According to recent findings, the laundromats are now being used on a regular basis and this obligation no longer exists.

IV – HYGIENE

Apart from the fact that certain toilets and bathroom facilities are still in miserable condition and do not provide the minimum of conditions for maintaining personal and sanitary hygiene, there is also a problem of supplying the prisoners with necessary sanitary items. Such items are inadequate and insufficient. The official explanation states that, due to the lack of financial means, frugality is necessary in the procurement of such items. The prisoners from Pavilion I are still complaining that it does not provide sufficient hot water for showing, especially during the summer period, which particularly affects women who are occupationally engaged.

The hygiene issue in the women’s prison is far more specific as compared to penitentiary institutions for men. The needs of women must, therefore, be addressed appropriately, and officials cannot make excuses based on insufficient funding, because, in the case of women, hygiene is much more directly related to their health. The failure to provide basic sanitary items may, in itself, represent humiliating treatment.

V – KITCHEN AND FOOD FOR PRISONERS

Alimentation remains a problematic topic for both the prisoners⁶ and the prison’s management. Namely, the food quality at the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women is extremely low. In this institution, the food is supplied daily from the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Men in Zabela, which is a unique case. During the past visit, we have noticed a mini bakery which was received by the institute as a donation. The prisoners were making good quality bread and croissants, which was an important addition to their alimentation. During the last visit, the bakery was out of order (for several weeks) because the flour was not provided by the management.

6 Nearly all prisoners interviewed on this topic by the HCHRS had complained about the monotonous, low quality food without fruit, dairy and sweets.

At the institute, they are persistently refusing to discuss the need and possibility of the institute establishing its own kitchen, whereas the HCHRS has not been given an acceptable explanation for such a stance. The construction of a kitchen is not part of the prison management's plan, in spite of the fact that this kitchen would also entail occupational engagement for a number of prisoners, while it could serve as a form of professional training for others; whereas it would be a source of additional income for the institution. The possibility of providing food of better quality and more adequately prepared, as well as the possibility of training for various types of work it would provide (baking, confectionery, catering, business...) was acceptable to absolutely every woman the HCHRS has talked to. Thus, the response by the institute that they "do not want another objection by the HCHRS that there are types of misogynous behavior at the prison" is nothing but an attempted justification of their own lack of initiative while allegedly referring to gender equality. The HCHRS sees in this but a violation of this right, in a classical case of avoiding responsibility which is attributive to all those who, in essence, do not understand the concept of human rights including women's rights.

VI – HEALTH SERVICES

The organization of the health service in prisons is quite poor because the medical staff is considered a part of the prison's administration, whose work is under the competence of the prison management, that is, the Ministry of Justice, and not the Ministry of Health. The existing solution is unsustainable and very problematic as regards the interests of the prisoners.

Unfortunately, in spite of persistently pointing out the unsatisfactory level of health care in all prison reports, it is the HCHRS' impression that the Ministry, and even the prisons' managements have not dealt with this problem with adequate attention. Primarily, this illustrates that the officials are not sufficiently aware that inadequate health care most easily leads to situations which can be characterized as "inhumane or humiliating behavior". Even more disturbing is the fact that there isn't an awareness of the extremely important role the health service in each particular institution has in fighting against abuse. On the contrary, health services in all prisons behave as they are part of the penal system, disregarding their basic function. Such an unacceptable and very concerning approach is, certainly, the result of a poor systemic solution as part of the Ministry of Justice, but it is also the result of Serbia's seriously flawed health system. The HCHRS holds that the competence over health services in prisons must urgently be transferred to the Ministry of Health.

VII – ACCESS TO THE DOCTOR

When discussing the rights of female prisoners, in addition to alimentation, healthcare continues to represent one of the most contentious points. During discussions with HCHRS representatives, the women have, practically without exception, complained about the quality of health services. During previous visits, they have mostly complained about the work of a particular doctor who has, in the meantime, changed her work post and no longer works at this Penitentiary-Reformatory. The new doctor, although very young, has fit very quickly into the unsatisfactory collective and the established practice. Thus, it is not surprising that the majority of objections stated by the prisoners continue to refer to the work of the health service, doctors as well as nurses with decade-long experience in the institute. The medical staff's claim that "female prisoners have better access to health services than citizens, that they don't wait in line and have provided medication" is problematic on many accounts and clearly demonstrates the state of affairs in both the health and the penal system. Even though, essentially, these are changes which require the transformation of the entire society, it is important for the Penitentiary-Reformatory management to take into account the prisoners' complaints. When claims and statements coming from various categories of female prisoners overlap significantly, the least that can be done is to seriously question the functioning of the health service.

For example, a high number of prisoners have complained about having difficulty receiving ordinary analgetics for pain relief in cases of headaches, migraines, stomach pains etc. The prison doctors and other medical staff find this complaint unfounded. The HCHRS' request to gain insight into medical records of certain prisoners has been refused, whereas the doctor justified this with medical ethics. This is the first time that the HCHRS has not been able to gain insight into the institute's complete medical documentation. Given that the HCHRS' expert team includes a licensed specialized doctor with longstanding experience, such an excuse is inadequate and irrational.

However, having reviewed the registry of medically examined prisoners for 2011, it has been established that, over the past six months, an extremely small number of prisoners with a headache had been given treatment. The prison's doctor refers to her professional competence and has stressed that, in such cases, the patient's blood pressure is always taken and her medical chart is reviewed, on the basis of which it is concluded that there isn't a need for analgetics. Not contesting the knowledge and professional attitude of the young doctor, the HCHRS still finds the given explanation inadequate. The use of cheap and widely available analgetics is justified in many cases, especially when women in prison conditions are concerned. Treating high blood pressure is a health problem differing completely from a headache which can be the result of poor or insufficient sleep, exposure to the sun, the cold, stress etc. In addition, various gynecological problems which can be completely benign and acute, often cause pain which is eliminated by a small dose

of analgetics. Such a restrictive approach to medication can neither be justified by financial limitations. Therefore, the HCHRS stresses that each prisoner must be given adequate health treatment in each situation, not only in cases of serious diagnosed conditions.

VIII – PREVENTION OF VARIOUS FORMS OF VIOLENCE

As regards security, the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women is one of the best institutions in Serbia. As testified by the prisoners, the security service represents a buffer zone between them and the management, although the lack of confidence in the Treatment Service is puzzling and concerning. In addition to the good organization of the Security Service, it probably holds true that women represent a more disciplined part of the prison population. This thesis is supported by the fact that incidents, such as attempted escapes, smuggling of drugs or cell phones into the institute is nearly an unknown event. As stated by the prisoners, the work of the Security Service has improved significantly over the past year.

In addition, in 2011, there has been a significant decrease of self-inflicted injuries, which can, to some extent, also be explained based on other positive changes in the management's conduct, ie. a more flexible stance towards the prisoners' outfits and make-up wearing. This has, clearly, had a very positive psychological effect on their self-perception. It should not be forgotten that this Penitentiary-Reformatory was well known for its great amount of *prison disciplinary offenses* committed by the inmates, primarily regarding self-inflicted injuries. In 2009, 11 women have purposely injured themselves in an organized manner, which was, clearly, an outcry for help and a demonstration of their helplessness as regards the institute's management.

The number of disciplinary actions against prisoners has dropped significantly since 2011 as compared to previous years. The reasons for this change are numerous: primarily, over the past year, the new Acting Chief of the Security Service has moderated the rigid attitude towards the prisoners – which has not gone unnoticed.

As part of the Admissions Service, which employs a graduate psychologist, there are a vast number of specialized psychological tests (measuring IQ, risk assessment etc.). However, the quality of such tests is questionable based on one of the cases noted at the institute. During 2011, a woman convicted for a serious crime was admitted to the institute to serve her sentence. During admission at the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women, this woman has attempted suicide twice, whereas the tests carried out had shown no serious risks in her case. Immediately upon admission, the woman committed suicide. Although the stated example does not prove the incapacity of the Admissions Service or that of the psychologist performing the tests, there is an impression (especially based on discussions with graduated psychologists) that this part of the service is in urgent need of additional education.

IX – SOCIAL AND FAMILY TIES

Adequate psychological help is needed because many women have alternating, ‘turbulent’ emotions, ranging from negation to feeling guilt, to regret and to a feeling of relief. Many of them also have poor relations with their respective families, which calls for continuous work with them, but also with their families or other close persons. This is a very important segment for a prisoner and her future life, and yet it is a weak spot in all prisons as well as in all other institutions with institutional accommodation. Contacts with their respective families and the outside environment call for engagement and a professional, synchronized approach by various different institutions.

X – EQUAL ACCESS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

A vast amount of the psychologists’ engagement takes place based on support and empowerment of women following their release from longer sentences. Activities and trainings for the improvement of social skills and assertiveness (self-confidence), are being taught, as are skills for protecting themselves from sexual, physical and psychological abuse, for the improvement of family relations; they can also receive legal aid, some forms of education and an anti-stress program (tension reduction through physical exercise). These one-hour activities take place once a week for a period of eight weeks. However, it remains unclear as to how much women serving their sentences actually participate in choosing activities which to take part in. In addition, the weekly activities can hardly maintain the continuity and motivation for participation, which is noted by the staff themselves. Group drop-out reaches up to 50% percent.

Resocialization is crucial for the successful return of convicted citizens into normal life. As regards resocialization (which is an outdated and inadequate term, which is, however, still being used in Serbia’s prisons), it is a positive influence of the prison’s Educational Service on the prisoners, in the context of work engagement of the prisoner, their professional improvement, education and schooling. In addition, the dimension of leisure activities of the prisoners is very important, as are the preparation for release from prison and post-penal protection.

Unfortunately, this aspect of work with the prisoners in Serbia’s prisons is quite neglected. In many prisons, one trainer works with between 20 and 50 prisoners (male or female). The state, evidently, does not see the importance of this type of work with the prisoners, whereas the explanation, as usual, boils down to the problem of the lack of financial resources.

Regarding the Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women, the structure of crimes has changed significantly, as did the structure of the prisoners themselves. It is extremely important for the women in prison to be offered adequate work and professional engagement. The

prison's management is not doing enough in this regard. The vast part of the women's engagement comes down to manual and maintenance work, and, most of the time, this refers to working on a farm (this is a seasonal engagement which represents a difficult and physically demanding job with low reimbursement) and working in a workshop at the institute. The workshop represents an inadequate space for women to work in, especially under winter conditions.

At the time of the HCHRS' last visit (in July), more than 160 women was occupationally engaged (which is commendable), although these are still seasonal or temporary jobs.

A number of employees claim that it is impossible to interest many women at the institute in any type of work or professional improvement. Even though it holds true that many women are apathetic and depressed, having talked to the prisoners, the HCHRS was under the impression that the scarce offer of jobs and activities by the Penitentiary-Reformatory significantly affects such a state of affairs.

As compared to the previous visit, no changes were observed as regards treatment in the narrow sense. This time, particular attention was paid to the work of psychologists. In the opinion of the HCHRS, the tests which were conducted during admission for personality testing, testing of general abilities and emotional state testing, as well as a questionnaire for the assessment of risk which encompasses various aspects of life, are not being used enough and in an adequate way in terms of treatment planning. In the case that some psychological problems are observed during the admission of a new prisoner, we were told that a psychologist can initiate another meeting with her. If no problems have been observed, women can visit a psychologist during their stay at the institution only based on a referral from an educator. The HCHRS holds that this procedure does not allow for psychologists to adequately monitor the women's adjustment process to prison conditions, nor does it allow for good insight into the women's mental state. Thus, an adequate response is lacking, so it is not surprising that the prisoners feel greater closeness to certain members of the Security Service which they interact with on a daily basis. Nevertheless, this should not be a replacement for a continuous professional support by psychologists and educators.

Apathy, sadness and a small capacity for active engagement are the characteristics of persons who live in isolation, outside their natural environment. Relying only on their motivation to participate and work makes chances for success very slim. The program for occupational training called *The Second Chance*, which includes skills of cooking, flower growing, working on a computer, a hairdresser's and a beautician's courses, certainly provides a bigger choice and possibilities for motivation. However, the beautician's course is under question because of hepatitis B which has been detected at the institution. As this is an important segment for self-confidence raising and for preparing to return to the outside environment, it is necessary to provide a quality level of these courses and to continue working on raising the motivation level of women for participating.

XI – PRISONERS WHO ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR EXTENDED IMPRISONMENT

Women who are victims of domestic violence are of particular interest to the HCHRS. As a rule, these women commit serious criminal offenses of murdering their partners and are sentenced to long imprisonments, which is a testimony of the utter incommensurateness of judicial practice in Serbia. Such judicial practice deviates significantly from the court practice in European countries. Sentencing women who are victims of long-lasting torture (sometimes lasting several decades) to a long imprisonment is inappropriate, to put things mildly.

As a reminder, only during the first six months in 2011 29 women have been killed in Serbia, whereas 32 women were murdered during 2010⁷. These crimes against women have been committed by their partners⁸. This data demonstrates that domestic violence is on the rise, which is clearly a consequence of tragic social events in Serbia. The stated data also demonstrates that state institutions have failed at the process of protecting a vast number of women. However, these same state bodies, which were incapable of or uninterested in helping the victims of domestic violence, are very efficient when it comes to sentencing women for murdering their husbands. These proceedings are carried out very quickly and efficiently, which is not the case with other criminal proceedings in the country. At the same time, in contrast to often stunningly low sentences for other serious criminal offences, verdicts of up to ten year imprisonment for women who are victims of violence are a regular occurrence in court practice.

Additionally, the HCHRS finds inappropriate that persons with short term fatal prognoses, persons suffering from serious illnesses which cannot be adequately treated in prison conditions, persons with severe disabilities and elderly persons are serving long prison sentences. Extended imprisonment of such persons presents a big problem both for the prisoner and for the prison itself. In such cases, which are also present at the Women's Penitentiary in Pozarevac, it is up to the prison doctor to present a report to the competent authorities with the aim of finding alternative solutions. On the other hand, the initiative of the institute to furnish one ground-level area for persons with disabilities is commendable.

7 Data according to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, as part of the project 'Combating *Sexual and Gender-based Violence*'.

8 A third of the women in Serbia are being simultaneously exposed to a combination of different forms of violence, whereas this is, in most cases, a combination of psychological and physical violence. Also, 38 percent of women view the family as a place of suffering and uncertainty. According to the same survey, the degree of psychological violence in 2010 was the highest among young women aged 18 to 24 (42,3%), as was the case with physical violence (20,9%). During the past year, the most severe forms of violence were committed exclusively by men, as high as 96 percent, out of which 80,8 percent were husbands and partners; whereas the violence took place in the presence of children in 40 percent of the cases. Over the first three months in 2011, 11 women were killed, out of which 6 women were victims of domestic homicide in March 2011 only. Domestic violence has risen 6,5 times since 2005.

Due to inadequate prevention and treatment of victims of domestic violence, as well as persons with serious illnesses and/or elderly persons, the HCHRS has initiated a campaign for the amnesty of a certain number of women in Serbia, that is, for their release via the institute of conditional release (parole) as soon as possible. The first such case of conditional release was recorded this year. A female prisoner was released from prison as the result of an initiative of a group of prominent (female) citizens⁹, which have signed their support to her application for parole.

Until the end of 2011, the HCHRS continues its initiative and plans to lobby for at least five women sentenced to prison for murdering their partners or other similar criminal offences resulting from domestic violence.

⁹ Judita Popović, Slavica Đukić-Dejanović, Sonja Biserko, Mirjana Karanović, Latinka Perović, Vesna Pešić, Vesna Rakić Vodinelić, Milena Jerotijević, Natasa Mičić i Borka Pavićević.