



Serbs in the UK

Срби у Уједињеном Краљевству



Serbian Council of Great Britain
Српски Савет Велике Британије



SERBIAN SOCIETY
СРПСКО ДРУШТВО

Serbian City Club
Српски Сити Клуб



Overview

- Why are Serbs in the UK an important community?
 - Proud British citizens with strong Serbian roots
 - Contribute to multicultural society in modern UK
- Why is now a good moment to provide an update on the Serbian community in the UK?
 - New Parliament
 - APPG for Serbia/Western Balkans
 - Visa regime review in 2011

History of Serbs in the UK

- 1860's-1940's
 - European integration
- 1940's onwards
 - Three waves of immigration
 1. World War II
 2. 1960's
 3. 1990's until today



Map of Serbs in the UK

- London
- Oxford
- Birmingham
- Leicester
- Leeds
- Glasgow
- Cardiff





Serbian Organisations in the UK

- Association of Serbian Writers Abroad (ASWA)
- Chetnik organisations
- Medicus
- Norwich-Novi Sad Association
- Serbian City Club
- Serbian Council of Great Britain
- Serbian Orthodox Church
- Serbian Society

Serbian City Club

- Independent and non-political organisation established to promote the interests of the Serbian professional community in the UK
- Founded in the late 1990's as an informal club for young Serbian professionals
- Currently around 1,000 members and growing, mainly London-based including scientists, doctors, bankers, lecturers, civil servants...
- Monthly networking events, speaker events and “brain drain reversal” project

Serbian Society

- Charitable organisation established to nurture Serbian cultural heritage and promote Serbian culture in the UK
- Formed in 1995 by a number of enthusiastic Serbs; has been a cultural bedrock for the Serbian community in the UK since its formation
- Runs Saturday Serbian School for children (aged 3-14) teaching Serbian language, Serbian School for foreigners and English school for Serbian senior citizens
- Opened the first Serbian library in the UK
- Organises various cultural events: exhibitions, plays, book readings and has its own stand at the Parson's Green fair



Serbian Council of Great Britain

- Independent, non-profit, non-political organisation established to promote the interests of the Serbian community in the UK
- Formed in 2002 with support from the Serbian Embassy and Ministry for Diaspora
- Works closely with and supports other Diaspora organisations, foremost the Serbian Society and the Serbian Orthodox Church
- Represents the views of the Serbian Diaspora in the UK and Serbia through round table discussion and the Diaspora Assembly





Integration and key issues

- UK media coverage – working towards objective reporting
 - Majority of British Serbs perceive the UK media coverage of Serbia as one sided and biased. Positive example: coverage of our February 2008 protests in front of the Downing Street; First Serbian week in the UK
- Cambridge University – 7 students from a top Belgrade school admitted to Trinity College in the same year
- British Embassy in Serbia – Chevening scholarships



Integration and key issues

- Visa restrictions hamper cultural, educational and other links with Serbia:
 - Serbs coming to the UK are still paying very high fees and occasionally enduring lengthy application and entry process
 - The visa regime is costly for both sides
 - Visa regime review in 2011
- Re-establishment of the APPG for Serbia/
Western Balkans
- Re-introducing the Serbian language in the British educational curriculum

Conclusion

- Better integration in the UK
 - Serbian language in schools
 - Serbian Week in Great Britain and other cultural events
 - Media coverage
- Platform for the Serbian voice to be heard
 - Visa regime change, APPG for Serbia/Western Balkans
- Strengthening ties with Serbia
 - Brain drain reversal
 - Diaspora Assembly
 - FDI, trade

Celebration countdown

Visa Liberalisation Party

2011 (date TBA)

