



A formal ceremony of exchange of handicrafts made within the 2015 public works project "Handicrafts as an element of the state protocol" took place today at Serbia Place.

The ceremony was opened by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dacic, who thanked women of the Ethno Network for turning their artistry into gifts to be presented to foreign senior officials.

"The care for preserving the Serbian tradition is woven into the handicrafts they have made," said Minister Dacic, adding that he, personally, delivered many such gifts to foreign diplomats, like the former US Ambassador Michael Kirby and former High Representative of the European Union Catherine Ashton.

"The beauty of our country is reflected in an authentic way and turned into beautiful gifts," said Dacic, who received from the Ethno Network a towel with the motif of the Chilandari Monastery.

The President of the Board of Directors of Ethno Network, Violeta Jovanovic, said that unemployed women in Serbia seldom got a chance to find a part-time paid job.

The 2015 public works were conducted by Ethno Network, in cooperation with NALED and 10 municipalities, from which 46 unemployed women were hired.

"We wish to offer sustainable solutions for this problem, and to present the public works project as an outstanding model of institutional support for empowering women," said Jovanovic.

She pointed out that, in the past six years, over 400 women and 50 people with disabilities had been engaged through the Ethno Network works, who then became professional market producers, developing skills from which they could earn a long-term income.

The Director of the National Employment Service, Zoran Martinovic, promised that this programme would continue, announcing the competition for public works would be open until 18 March.

This year, the works would last for four months, and the remuneration would be 18 thousand, instead of 15 thousand, he said.

Along with congratulations for the 8th of March, International Women's Day, Minister Dacic gave a red rose to all women present.