GORAN ZARIĆ

Program Director & Communications Lead | Social Inclusion · Human Rights · EU-Funded Programmes

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Co-founder and Program Director of Propulsion, one of the leading social impact communications agencies in the Western Balkans. Over 15 years of professional experience spanning the corporate, public, and nonprofit sectors, from early roles in corporate communications and marketing to building and leading an organisation whose thematic direction in social inclusion, minority rights, and EU-funded programming reflects deliberate strategic choices, not just client assignments. Actively shapes Propulsion's programme portfolio, organisational strategy, budget planning, team development, and external positioning, while personally representing the organisation in media appearances and public forums. Direct project experience with Roma inclusion (GIZ, REF), migration governance (IOM, UNHCR), gender equality (UN Women), and anti-discrimination sensitisation. Personal commitment to human rights protection, grounded in years of civic engagement with LGBTQ+ rights organisations in Serbia and in ongoing academic research on media framing of marginalised communities.

THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

Roma inclusion & integration · Anti-discrimination & minority rights · Migration governance · Gender equality & women's empowerment · LGBTQ+ rights · EU integration & civic engagement · Social impact communications

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Production Lead (Freelance) | OSCE, Vienna
Sep – Oct 2025

– Positioned and produced a digital awareness video series translating complex governance and anti-corruption topics into accessible, narrative-driven visual content for broader public audiences. Directed a multidisciplinary team including design, animation, and voice-over professionals, ensuring clarity and message impact.

Co-Founder & Program Director | Propulsion, Belgrade
2014 – present

– Co-founded Propulsion and has led the organisation's programme direction since establishment, shaping thematic focus areas (social inclusion, human rights, migration, gender equality), defining the service portfolio, managing organisational budgets, and building and evaluating the programme team over more than a decade. Personally represents the organisation in media, public forums, donor relations, and high-level stakeholder meetings.
– Produced the UN Women 'Unstoppable' regional campaign (2024–2025) marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, 13 human-interest stories from 13 countries across Europe and Central Asia, spotlighting women from underrepresented and marginalised communities. Served as project producer and primary client contact, coordinating teams and external cooperators across all 13 countries, and authored the story of Shpresa Agushi, a Kosovar Roma activist and program beneficiary. Delivered 13 documentary videos, 195 photographs, a 20-minute regional documentary film, and a comprehensive digital dissemination strategy.
– Led the full delivery of the GIZ 'Inclusion of Roma and Other Marginalised Groups in Serbia' project (2021) as project lead and main GIZ point of contact, producing awareness webinars on anti-discrimination laws and protection mechanisms (Ombudsman, Commissioner for Protection of Equality) for civil society organisations, citizens, future prosecutors, and judges; developing a standalone web platform; and designing a social media plan.
– Produced 10 documentary-style video profiles of Roma scholarship recipients for the Roma Education Fund (REF) Belgrade office (2019–2020), filmed across five locations in Serbia, capturing first-hand stories of Roma youth's educational journeys, challenges, and achievements to support REF's programme communication strategy.
– Led the IOM Serbia AVRR Information Campaign on Return and Reintegration (2024–2025) as sole program lead, full campaign delivery including strategic messaging, visual identity, multilingual content,

digital outreach, stakeholder events, capacity-building sessions, and a monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with IOM policy and gender mainstreaming standards.
- Co-led the CybHER regional initiative (British Council, 2025–2026) across six Western Balkan territories, increasing women's participation in the cybersecurity workforce through communications, institutional HR workshops, and internship placements. Led Serbia and Kosovo operations and authored the successful project bid.
- Developed and delivered the 'Nije to baš tako' (#NijeToBasTako) video and communication campaign under the EU-funded Resonant Voices Initiative, addressing the nexus of migration, security, and preventing radicalisation leading to violent extremism.
- Developed the national Communication Strategy and Action Plan on Migration Governance for IOM, UNHCR, and the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of Serbia.
- Led EU integration campaign 'Evropa, to si TI' (UNOPS, 2016–2017); directed the #MijenjamIgru influencer campaign (EU Delegation BiH) on inclusion, anti-discrimination, and hate speech, 5M+ impressions; managed the USAID-funded Media Initiatives and Partnerships Support programme on media and digital literacy.
- Led civil society strengthening programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Otkucaji (Open Society Fund) for transparent healthcare governance, and Imate Rijec (National Democratic Institute), an interactive citizen-politician dialogue platform contributing to peace-building and democratisation in BiH.
- Managed communications portfolios up to $3M; secured $2M+ in international project funding through EU and UN partnerships; achieved 10M+ digital views and 5M+ audience reach across integrated programmes.

Creative Mentor | Centar E8, Belgrade
2022 – 2025
- Mentored creative teams across multiple cycles of the Pop Culture Challenge and Pop Culture Lab, programmes supporting projects that advance democracy, human rights, and civic engagement through pop culture and digital formats. Provided structured mentorship on communications strategy, storytelling, and audience positioning. Mentored projects include: Tampon zona podcast (feminist audio-drama, 2022), Sex, droga, nasilje i strah web series (youth human rights, 2023/24 winning project), and Constructed Body campaign (body image and patriarchal norms, 2025).

Head of Sales Operations / Online Community Manager | Ebart Media Archive, Belgrade
2011 – 2014
- Established and led the sales department; developed marketing and sales strategies for market positioning; monitored client relations. Later transitioned to media analysis and online community management, directing analytical projects focused on media monitoring and narrative framing.

Early Career — Corporate Sector | UniCredit Bank Serbia · La Fontana · Trizma
2006 – 2011
- Held progressive roles in banking (Special Credit & Workout Officer, UniCredit Bank Serbia, 2009–2011), sales management (La Fontana, 2008–2009), and call centre team leadership (Trizma, 2006–2008). Developed foundations in client relations, operations management, team leadership, and strategic sales, establishing cross-sector professional grounding prior to moving into communications and social impact work.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

Founder & Representative | IDAHO Belgrade
2013 – 2015
- Contributed to policy development, public communications campaigns, and public speaking on LGBTQ+ rights. Organised and coordinated events, participated in public debates, and secured support from public figures for advocacy objectives.

Member & Volunteer | Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), Serbia
2011 – 2013
- Engaged in policy writing, campaign communications, media appearances, public speaking, and event organisation in support of LGBTQ+ rights and anti-discrimination advocacy in Serbia.

EDUCATION

MA in Communications and Public Relations (defence: September 2026), *Faculty of Media and Communications, Belgrade*

Thesis: "Media Framing of the Belgrade Pride Parade: A Comparative Critical Discourse Analysis of RTS and N1 (2009–2024)" — quantitative and qualitative study of representation and framing of LGBTQ+ rights in Serbian public and commercial media.

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (2023), *Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Belgrade*

Environmental Protection Specialist (2007), *Pristina University International Program*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Brand & Content Strategy Externship — TikTok (6-week programme, completed May 2026)

PR & Business Communication — Business Info Group (public speaking, media relations, strategic messaging) — 2019

Top-Tier Communicator — Persona Global (assertive communication and trust-building) — 2017

SELECTED CLIENTS & PARTNERS

UN Women (ECA) · International Organisation for Migration (IOM) · UNHCR · UNDP · UNOPS · USAID Serbia · GIZ Serbia · British Council · EU Delegation to BiH · Ministry of European Integration (Serbia) · Roma Education Fund (REF) · AstraZeneca (SEE Region) · A1 Serbia · Lidl Serbia · Microsoft Serbia

REFERENCES

Available upon request.