

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 ON MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN CROATIA

NATIONAL REPORT (PART 2)



Source: Croatian National Tourist Board (Stipe Surać)

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EMN
European Migration Network
Europska migracijska mreža



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMIF - European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

CEPOL - European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training

EASO - European Asylum Support Office

Europol - European Police Office

Frontex - European Border and Coast Guard Agency

INTERPOL - International Criminal Police Organisation

OSCE - Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

SUMMARY

In 2019, there were legislative developments in the area of legal migration. The new Act on EEA Nationals and their Family Members (Official Gazette No 66/19) entered into force in 18 July 2019. The work on the proposal for the new Foreigners Act continued during 2019. This Act would, among other things, lay down the new model for regulating the employment of third-country nationals. Accordingly, in 2019, the employment of third-country nationals was subject to the annual quota for the employment of foreigners which was adjusted and increased several times in 2019 and a new quota was later on adopted for 2020.

With regard to the area of international protection, all decisions have been adopted within the legally prescribed time-limit, regardless of the increased number of international protection applicants recorded in 2019. Unfounded applications are being processed as a matter of priority, in addition to the applications of persons who require special procedural and reception guarantees, that is, applications of vulnerable groups of applicants and applicants in detention.

The Republic of Croatia fulfilled its obligation regarding resettlement in 2019 in line with the Decision of the Government of October 2017, by relocating 98 Syrian nationals from Turkey. The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted a third decision in February 2019, in which it pledged to receive up to 150 third-country nationals or stateless persons on the basis of resettlement, that is, on the basis of participating in other forms of solidarity with the Member States of the European Union.

The Inter-Agency Committee for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors was established in 2019 in line with the Protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors, and the new Foster Care Act entered into force on 1 January 2019 (Official Gazette, No 115/18).

The new Act on the amendments to the Croatian Citizenship Act (Official Gazette No 102/19) was voted in 2019 and entered into force in 1 January 2020, whereas, in the area of combating human trafficking, the new Protocol on the integration/reintegration of victims of human trafficking entered into force in 1 April 2019.

Human resources were strengthened in all areas in 2019 through national trainings and trainings in cooperation with other states and agencies. Efforts continued to be invested in the strengthening of border capacities through the procurement of new equipment.

New projects were also initiated in the area of international protection, integration and return, and work was continued on some of the projects from previous years. NGOs were particularly active through various projects.

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth Annual Report in Migration and Asylum drafted by the National contact point for the European Migration Network in Croatia. The European Migration Network (EMN) is a network of experts for migration and asylum whose activities are coordinated by the European Commission. National Contact Points (EMN NCP) have been established in each EU Member State and in Norway. The Ministry of the Interior is EMN National Contact Point in Croatia.

This Report covers the period between 1 January and 31 December 2019.

The purpose of the Annual Report on Migration and Asylum is to provide an overview of the most significant policies and legislative developments in the area of asylum and migration in Croatia, as well as an overview of political and public debates on asylum and migration. This Report covers the following topics: legal migration, international protection, unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups, integration, citizenship and statelessness, borders, Schengen and visas, return and readmission, illegal migration, including smuggling and the fight against trafficking in human beings.

The Report also presents relevant statistical data.

1.1. METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

The 2019 Annual Report on Migration and Asylum was drafted by EMN NCP Croatia on the basis of joint specifications developed by EMN in order to facilitate comparability between reports of all Member States. The format remained somewhat flexible in order to provide for drafting of a report which is focused on the national population. The terminology used in the context of this Report is based on the expressions and the definitions provided in the EMN Glossary (EMN, 2018). The 2019 Annual Report on Migration and Asylum reports on significant developments, progress in made in terms of legislation, statistics and the continuation of practices from previous years. The Report is based on research and no preliminary research has been conducted. Most of the information was delivered by individuals from relevant sectors of the Ministry of the Interior, other state administration authorities, expert services of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and non-governmental and international organisations.

2. CONTEXT FOR ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Given its geographical position, the Republic of Croatia has the longest land border of the European Union. In order to efficiently protect the border, ensure a non-selective approach to the international protection procedure and with the aim of meeting the Schengen standards, the Republic of Croatia continuously invests efforts in its institutional and administrative capacities in terms of enhancing construction on border crossing points and building facilities for the reception and accommodation of illegal migrants and asylum seekers, provision of technical equipment and training of border police officers, as well as building the technical surveillance capacities for the external border surveillance. This is all done with the use of EU funds under the framework of financial assistance allocated for the needs of the Republic of Croatia, through the Internal Security Fund (ISF) and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). Likewise, valuable EU experiences and best practices are used, by participating in FRONTEX activities, but also by participating in the working parties of EU institutions.

When it comes to the efforts invested with the aim of achieving Schengen standards, the European Commission sent a notification in October 2019 to the European Parliament and to the Council on the verification of the full implementation of the Schengen acquis in Croatia, stating thereby that the Republic of Croatia fulfils the technical criteria.

Likewise, the Republic of Croatia fulfilled its obligation regarding resettlement in 2019 in line with the Decision of the Government of October 2017, by relocating 98 Syrian nationals from Turkey. As an additional measure of solidarity, on 14 February 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on the resettlement of third-country nationals or stateless persons who meet the conditions for granting international protection in 2019 (Official Gazette No 16/19) by which it pledged to receive up to 150 third-country nationals or stateless persons on the basis of resettlement, that is, on the basis of participating in other forms of solidarity with the Member States of the European Union.

Over the course of 2019, the Republic of Croatia cooperated with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) with the aim of providing appropriate international protection. Cooperation took place through national contact points and through educational seminars organised by EASO. Likewise, Croatian experts provided assistance to Member States facing a large influx of migrants (Greece, Italy, Cyprus).

Within joint Frontex operations since the beginning of the migrant crisis, and in cooperation with EASO, the Republic of Croatia has been regularly deploying its police officers, patrol vessels and vehicles to countries which are facing large migrational pressure. The Republic of Croatia is also a host to foreign police officers in joint Frontex operations.

There were several joint contact point operations in the Croatian territory in 2019. Likewise, the Republic of Croatia participated in joint Frontex operations which took place in other EU and third-countries, most notably in Greece and Albania.

2.1. CROATIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FROM 1 JANUARY TO 30 JUNE 2020

From 1 January to 30 June 2020, Croatia took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time. During the six-month period, Croatia will steer the work of the Council, building cooperation and agreement among Member States in the spirit of consensus and mutual respect. On 30 October 2019, Prime Minister Andrej Plenković presented the [priorities of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#) in the first half of 2020 at the National and University Library in Zagreb. Based on Croatian national priorities, in line with the guidelines set by the EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 and drawing on the Trio programme, Croatia has prepared a detailed six-month Presidency programme built around four pillars:

- “A Europe that develops”,
- “A Europe that connects”,
- “A Europe that protects”,
- “An influential Europe”.

The four priorities are united in the motto “A strong Europe in a World of Challenges”, which encapsulates the vision of a Europe for the benefits of its Member States and citizens.

Some of the priorities that stand out under the pillar “A Europe that protects” are, among others, a **Comprehensive and Sustainable Migration Policy**, which includes enhanced control of the external borders of the EU and improved interoperability of relevant IT systems, a harmonised and comprehensive approach to external and internal aspects of migration, including legal migration, the reform of the Common European Asylum System, and the deepening of cooperation with third-countries, including South-Eastern Europe. The emphasis was placed on the **protection of freedom and democracy**, particularly on the return to full and efficient functioning of the Schengen area.

On 12 November 2019 in Split, a Conference was held for the presentation of the third priority pillar of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, “A Europe that protects”. The Conference was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior dr. sc. Davor Božinović, Minister of Justice Dražen Bošnjaković, President of the Croatian Firefighting Association Ante Sanader, Chief of General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces General Mirko Šundov, and many other state officials, representatives of local and regional authorities, academic community, but also students of the University of Mechanical Engineering, Naval Architecture and Electrical Engineering of the University in Split.

Minister Božinović used this opportunity to emphasize that the focus will be placed on the following five key priorities when it comes to the competencies or the Home Affairs Council:

- efficient and humane migration management,
- better protection of the borders of the European Union and return to the normal functioning of the Schengen area,
- interoperability of information systems and the strengthening of internal security of the EU,
- conclusions of negotiations on home affairs funds,
- establishment of all components of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

The [Programme of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union from 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2020](#) was adopted at the session of the Government of the Republic of Croatia held on 27 December 2019. This is a document which lists and details all measures and activities that the Republic of Croatia will tackle as a matter of priority during its Presidency of the Council of the EU and which it prepared on the basis of its national priorities and in line with the guidelines of the new EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024, building on the eighteen-month long Council's work programme proposed by Romania, Finland and Croatia, that was approved at the meeting of the EU General Affairs Council in December 2018. Priority themes and activities are developed across 10 EU Council formations. They provide a comprehensive description of the expected dynamics of the work that the Croatian Presidency will be carrying out with regard to the most important files, whereby Croatia will be working as a fair and unbiased mediator, building cooperation and agreement among Member States in the spirit of consensus and mutual respect.



Image 1. Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union Logo

Source: <https://eu2020.hr/>

2.2. CHANGES MADE TO THE INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

On its session on 8 March 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Regulation on the amendments to the Regulation on the Internal Organisation of the Ministry of the Interior (Official Gazette No 24/19). The said Regulation brought about significant changes to the internal organisation of the Ministry of the Interior, particularly in the area of asylum and migration. More precisely, the scope of work of the former Sector for Administrative Affairs, Aliens and Citizenship increased significantly, particularly when it comes to migration, both legal and labour migration, and international protection. Due to the above mentioned reasons, the following organisational units were established: the Directorate for Immigration, Citizenship and Administrative Affairs with two Sectors - Administrative Affairs and Citizenship Sector and Sector for Aliens and International Protection. The changes made to this segment of work are recommended also for all Police Administrations (Image 2.).

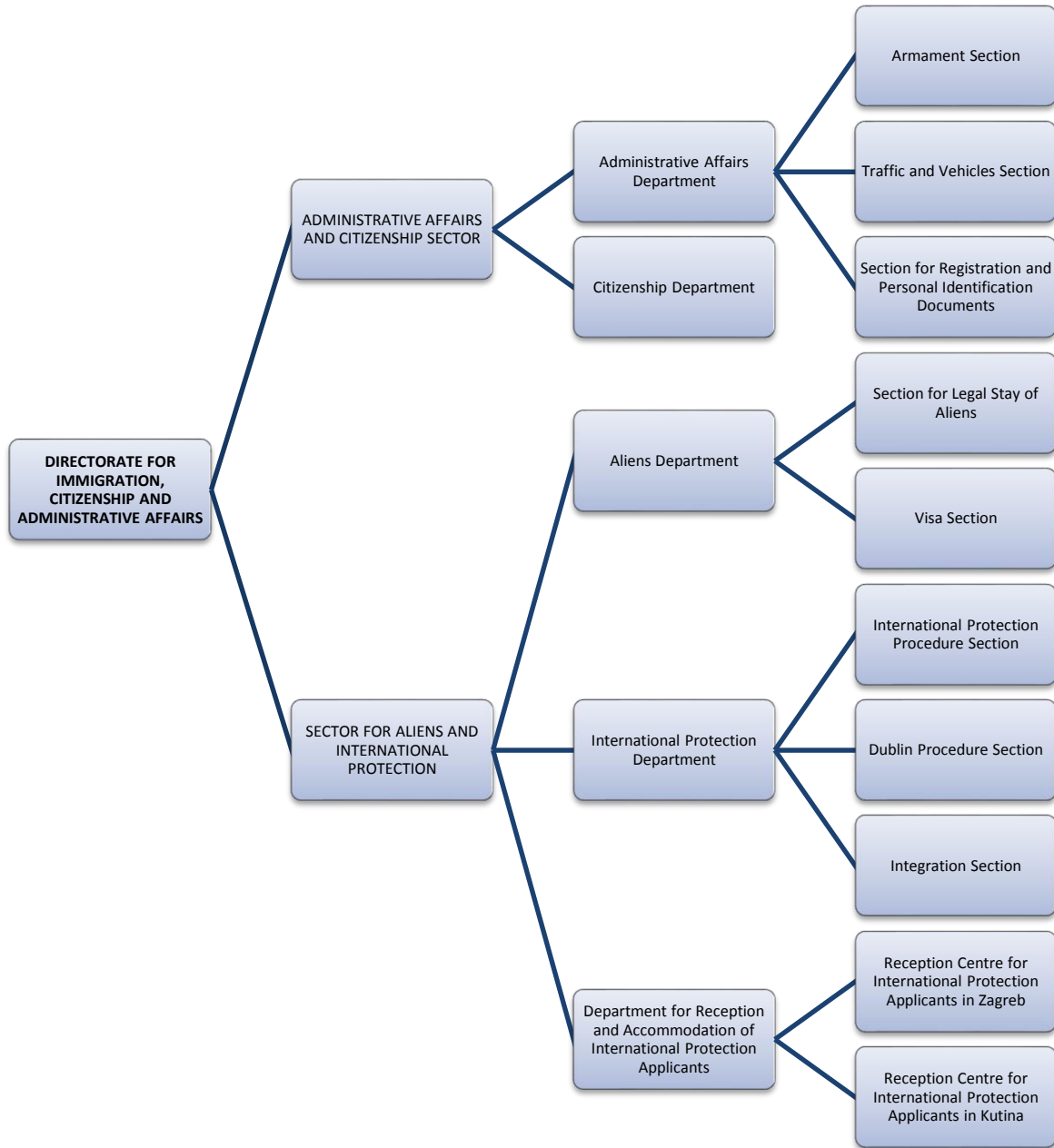


Image 2. Structure of the newly established Directorate for Immigration, Citizenship and Administrative Affairs

3. LEGAL MIGRATION

3.1. STATISTICS

According to preliminary data provided by the Ministry of the Interior¹ and in line with Eurostat methodology, a total of 50,455 first residence permits were issued in the Republic of Croatia in 2019² to third-country nationals. Out of the total number, 2,921 stays were granted for the purpose of family reunification, 332 stays were granted for the purpose of school and university studies, there were 46,578 stay and work permits granted, while 615 stays were granted for other purposes (Chart 1.).

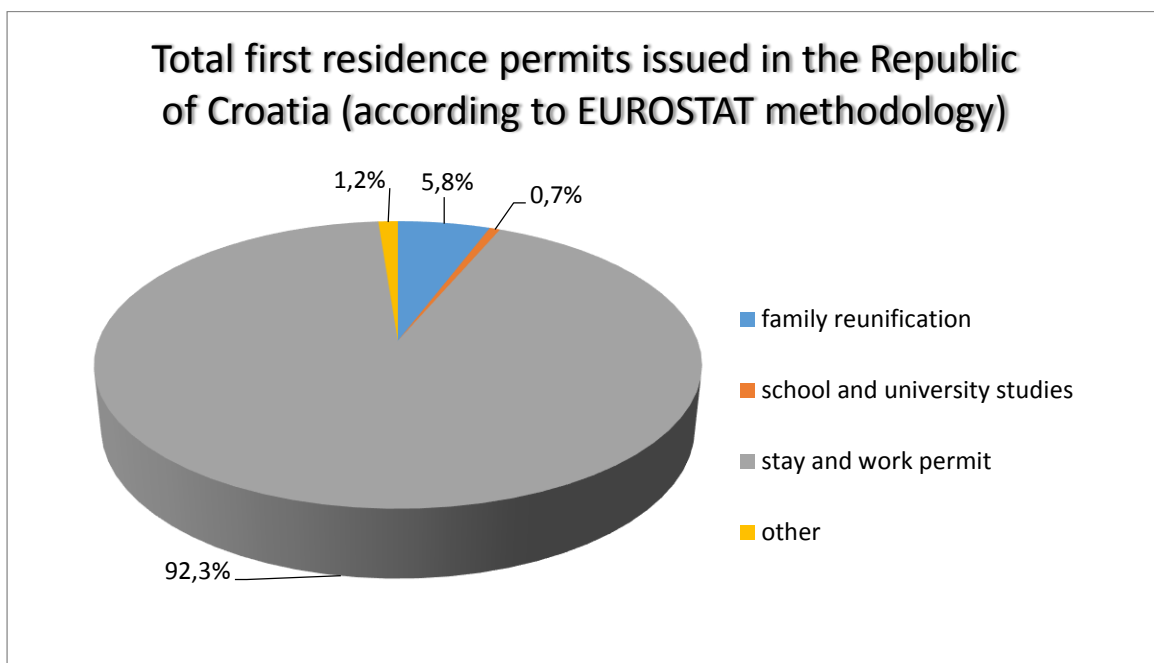


Chart 1. The total number of first residence permits issued in the Republic of Croatia in 2019

Source: Ministry of the Interior

¹ The data is preliminary and is still being processed. The data will be delivered to Eurostat by 30 June and Eurostat will publish the official data.

² The definition of first residence permits is available on the following website https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/Annexes/migr_res_esqrs_an1.pdf.

Furthermore, according to preliminary data on 31 December 2019, a total of 11,509 third-country nationals had granted long-term stay acquired on the basis of a five-year legal stay (EU-long term residence) or permanent stay.

3.2. LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS

The area of entry, stay and work of third-country nationals in the Republic of Croatia is regulated by the Foreigners Act (Official Gazette No 130/11, 74/13, 69/17 and 46/18)³.

The Foreigners Act contains provisions related to the entry of third-country nationals, visas, labour status, provisions related to family reunification, high-school education and university studies, as well as scientific research in the Republic of Croatia, granting the EU Blue Card to highly-qualified third-country nationals and regulating the status of third country nationals who have granted permanent stay in another EEA member state.

3.2.1. Act on EEA nationals and their family members

The Act on EEA Nationals and their Family Members (Official Gazette No 66/19) was adopted in 2019 and entered into force on 18 July 2019. Specifically, the area it covers used to be regulated by the Foreigners Act (Official Gazette No 130/11, 74/13, 69/17 and 46/18) which had been in force since 1 January 2012 and which was amended in 2013, 2017 and 2018. Given that the said Act became too extensive to enforce, it had to be divided into a part relating only to EEA nationals and their family members and a part relating only to the work and stay of third-country nationals.

The Act on EEA nationals and their family members has been harmonised with the Council Directive 2004/38/EC of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely in the territory of the Member States. The following is required in order to further harmonise the Act with the said Directive:

- define the terms “EEA nationals and their family members”,
- define the conditions for regulating temporary stay of EEA nationals and their family members,
- define the conditions for regulating permanent stay of EEA nationals and their family members,
- define the termination of temporary and permanent stay for EEA nationals and their family members,
- clearly define the conditions for the termination of legal stay for EEA nationals and their family members.

³ Pertains to 2019 and does not include the Act on the amendments to the Foreigners Act (Official Gazette No: 53/20)

3.2.2. Proposal for the new Foreigners Act

The work on the Proposal for the Foreigners Act continued in 2019.

The Foreigners Act has been harmonised with a total of 23 directives, recommendations, decisions and resolutions from the European acquis. Therefore, a large number of the provisions in the current Act was harmonised with the European acquis. The Proposal for the Act no longer contains the provisions related to EEA nationals and their family members, as their status is now regulated by the Act on EEA nationals and their family members (Official Gazette No: 66/19).

On 31 October 2019, the consultations on the draft Proposal for the new Foreigners Act were launched and lasted until 29 November 2019.

The adoption of the new Act will make it possible to regulate temporary stay for humanitarian reasons for members of the Croatian people who have foreign citizenship and it lays down more favourable provisions for family members of Croatian nationals and members of the Croatian people with foreign citizenship when it comes to acquiring permanent stay in the Republic of Croatia.

The key change in relation to the existing Act is the laying down of a new model for the employment of third-country nationals. According to the Proposal for the Act, a positive opinion from the Croatian Employment Service must be provided during the application process for stay and work permits, given that the Government of the Republic of Croatia will no longer determine the annual quota of work permits for third-country nationals. A positive opinion from the Croatian Employment Service must be provided when submitting the application for the issuance of a stay and work permit. Exceptionally, an employer who intends on employing seasonal agricultural workers in duration of 90 days during the calendar year will not be obligated to provide an opinion from the Croatian Employment Service.

Upon the request of the employer, and prior to submitting the application for the issuance of a stay and work permit, the Croatian Employment Service would carry out “*labour market testing*” which would involve checking the unemployment records and a mediation procedure in cases where unemployment records include persons on the domestic labour market who meet employer’s requirements. If the labour market test shows that there are no unemployed persons who meet employer’s requirements or if these requirements cannot be met through domestic migration of unemployed persons, the employer can contact a branch office of the Croatian Employment Service and request an opinion regarding the possibilities of employing a third-country national.

Stay and work permits will no longer be granted on the basis of the available annual quota, but rather, on the basis of the labour market test and the opinion provided by the Croatian Employment Service.

Likewise, there are listed categories of jobs for which the Ministry of the Interior issues stay and work permits, through the competent police administration or police station, even without the opinion of the Croatian Employment Service (for example, the EU Blue Card, investors, service providers). Due to the new manner of employment, there is also a greater connection among state authorities and institutions (police administrations/stations, tax administration, pension and health insurance and other inspection authorities within the scope of their competencies) when it comes to monitoring and the protection of workers and their rights.

3.3. OTHER MEASURES RELATED TO LEGAL MIGRATION

Since 15 April 2019, the Ministry of the Interior made it possible for employers to submit the applications for stay and work permits under the annual quota electronically, to special e-mail addresses of all police administrations and some police stations, selected on the basis of an increased number of applications for stay and work permits. The submission of applications by e-mail is intended to unburden employers and reduce the crowds in police administrations and stations, as well as to speed up the actual issuance procedure for stay and work permits.

3.4. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

3.4.1. The quota system and labour market needs in 2019

Pursuant to the Foreigners Act, there is a quota system for employing third-country nationals in the Republic of Croatia. Each year, the Government of the Republic of Croatia determines in a decision the annual quota (a number) for the employment of foreigners, for the extension of already issued work permits within the quota, and for new employment, in line with the situation on the labour market.

A number of activities have been carried out with regard to determining the annual permit quota for the employment of third-country nationals in 2019. These include an analysis of the number of permits issued to third-country nationals according to the type of work and profession, analysis of the number of unemployed persons in activities for which permits have been issued, as well as a detailed analysis of employability, that is, the actual possibility of employing a person with such a profession who is registered as unemployed in the records of the Croatian Employment Service. The Proposal for a decision was initiated by the proposal from the Croatian Employment Service. Upon receiving the said proposal, a meeting of the inter-ministerial working group was held with the aim of drafting a Proposal for a decision determining the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2019, comprising representatives from the following ministries: Ministry of Labour and the Pension System, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of

Tourism, Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, as well as the representatives of the Croatian Employment Service, and the representatives of social partners, unions and employers. Following the proposal made by the Croatian Employment Service, the competent ministries, Croatian Chamber of Commerce, Croatian Chamber of Craft and the Croatian Employers' Association provided their opinions in the form of proposals and requests. The largest number of permits for the employment of third country nationals pertains to construction, tourism, hospitality and traffic, given that those areas have the most significant lack of work force in the Croatian labour market. Having in mind the number of extended permits in 2018, the Ministry of the Interior stated that 15,000 extensions of already issued permits need to be authorised for the following year. Likewise, the Ministry of the Interior proposed that 1,500 permits be authorised for strategic investment projects for the implementation of which the required professions are still undetermined.

Pursuant to the decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on determining the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2019 (Official Gazette No 116/18),⁴ the quota was set to a total of 65,100 permits, out of which 41,810 are intended for new employment, 15,000 for the extension of already issued permits, 6,540 for seasonal work (tourism and hospitality - 5,000 permits, agriculture and forestry – 1,540 permits), 250 permits for intra-corporate transferees, and 1,500 are intended for the implementation of strategic investment projects.

Given that it was not possible to accurately identify the business needs for the employment of foreigners in the area of Construction and Tourism and Hospitality when determining the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners in 2019, there was an imbalance in the number of set quota and the number of requested permits. The Ministry of the Interior received a large number of applications for certain professions in the area of Construction and Tourism and Hospitality where the number of applications was greater than the quota permits determined for 2019. Therefore, in June 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted a Decision on the amendments to the Decision determining the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2019 (Official Gazette, No 60/19)⁵. The said Decision increased the quota by 3000 permits for the employment of foreigners, out of which 1000 were determined for the area of Construction and 2000 were determined for Tourism and Hospitality (1,800 permits for seasonal work and 200 permits for new employment). Pursuant to the said Decision, the total annual quota for 2019 for the employment of foreigners in the Republic of Croatia amounts to 68,100 permits in the following areas: 43,010 permits for new employment, 8,340 permits for seasonal work in agriculture and forestry and tourism and hospitality, 250 permits for intra-

⁴ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2018_12_116_2310.html

⁵ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_06_60_1146.html

corporate transferees, 1,500 permits for strategic investment projects, and 15,000 permits for the extension of already issued permits for the employment of foreigners.

Furthermore, the said Decision authorises the minister responsible for labour to issue a decision which would increase and reallocate the quota determined for Tourism and Hospitality for up to a maximum 1,000 permits and for Construction in the maximum amount of 1,000 permits, under the condition that there are no available workers with the required professions in the records of the Croatian Employment Service.

Pursuant to the Decision issued by the Ministry of Labour and the Pension System on the increase of the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2019 in the area of Tourism and Hospitality (Official Gazette No: 67/19)⁶, the quota in the area of Tourism and Hospitality was increased by 500 permits, now amounting to 10,911 permits for new employment (increased by 100 permits) and 7200 for seasonal work (increased by 400 permits).

Finally, the quota for the employment of third-country nationals was increased once again in August 2019 by the Decision of the Ministry of Labour and the Pension System on the increase of the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2019 in the areas of Construction and Tourism and Hospitality (Official Gazette No: 74/19)⁷. The total quota for these areas was thereby increased from 18,800 permits to 19,800 (+1000) in the area of Construction, whereas 500 permits were determined in the area of Tourism and Hospitality (an increase of 180 permits for new employment and 320 permits for seasonal work).

The total annual quota for 2019 was finally set to a total of 70,100 permits, out of which 44,290 were for new employment and 9,060 were for seasonal work (Tourism and Hospitality - 7,520 permits).

Changes made to the annual quota are listed in the table below (Table 1.):

Table 1.

Annual quota for 2019	Before changes	1. changes	2. changes	3. changes
Permit extension	15000			
New permits, out of which:	41810	43010 (+1200)	43110 (+100)	44290 (+1180)

⁶ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_07_67_1353.html

⁷ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_08_74_1577.html

Construction sector	17800	18800 (+1000)		19800 (+1000)
Shipbuilding	1410			
Tourism and Hospitality	10611	10811 (+200)	10911 (+100)	11091(+180)
Culture	25			
Traffic	2314			
Health	120			
Social welfare	460			
Food industry	1200			
Manufacturing industry	700			
Agriculture and Forestry	1990			
Metal industry	2200			
IT	180			
Economy and Trade	2200			
Postal Services	600			
Seasonal work, out of which:	6540	8340 (+1800)	8740 (+400)	9060 (+320)
Tourism and Hospitality	5000	6800 (+1800)	7200 (+400)	7520 (+320)
Agriculture and Forestry	1540			
Intra-corporate transfers:	250			

Strategic investment projects	1500			
TOTAL	65100	68100 (+3000)	68600 (+500)	70100 (+1500)

By comparison, the total quota in 2018 amounted to 38,769 work permits, of which there were 27,479 work permits for new employment.

According to official data of the Ministry of the Interior⁸ on 27 December 2019, out of the total 55,100 permits for new employment, seasonal work, ICT and strategic investment projects, the [annual quota](#) was almost full, with a total of 49,317 issued permits, that is, 89,5%. There were 5,783 available posts for the employment of third-country nationals, with 2,839 permits being processed for granting.

More details on the uptake of the 2019 quota are available in the Statistics appendix – annex 1, page 77.

3.4.2. New quotas for 2020

In late November 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on determining the annual quota of permits for the employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2020 which was published in the Official Gazette No: 113/19. The annual quota for the employment of third-country nationals was determined in the amount of 64,604 permits for new employment, 12,770 for seasonal work, 96 permits for intra-corporate transferees, 1,000 for the implementation of strategic investment projects and 25,000 permits for the extension of already issued work permits.

The Proposal for the decision was initiated upon the proposal of the Ministry of Labour and the Pension System and on the basis of the number of stay and work permits issued to third-country nationals according to the activities and professions in 2019 and the number and type of unemployed persons in the records of the Croatian Employment Service. Opinions were provided on the said proposal by the competent ministries, Croatian Employment Service, Croatian Chamber of Commerce, Croatian Chamber of Crafts, and social partners.

8

<https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocImages/statistika/2019/Iskori%C5%A1tenost%20kvota/ISKORISTENOST%20GODISNJE%20KVOTE%20ZA%202019.%20NA%20DAN%2027.12.2019..pdf>

Proposals made by the competent ministries and institutions were adopted while taking into account the real needs and circumstances in the labour market, number of unemployed persons and the potential for the employment and education of the available work force. The largest number of permits for new employment of third-country nationals pertains to construction, tourism and hospitality, given that those areas have the most significant lack of work force.

The said Decision also authorises the minister responsible for labour to issue a decision which would increase and reallocate the quota determined for Tourism and Hospitality for up to a maximum 5,000 permits and for Construction in the maximum amount of 5,000 permits, depending on the needs and the circumstances in the labour market.

3.5. INFORMATION ON LEGAL MIGRATION ROUTES

All information on the conditions which need to be met by third-country nationals in order to work in the Republic of Croatia as well as other information (on stay, visas, international protection, citizenship, etc.) can be found on the website of the Ministry of the Interior: <https://mup.gov.hr/aliens-281621/281621> Information is also available on the website of the Ministry of Labour and the Pension System: <https://migracije.hr/drzavljani-3-zemalja-2/> and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs <http://www.mvep.hr/hr/konzularne-informacije/boravak-stranaca/odobrenje-boravka-u-hrvatskoj/>

Information on hosting foreign researchers can be found on the website of the Ministry of Science and Education: <https://mzo.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/znanost/ugoscavanje-istrazivaca-drzavljana-trecih-zemalja-u-republici-hrvatskoj/121>.

4. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

4.1. STATISTICS FOR 2019

According to the statistics of the Ministry of the Interior, [Statistical indicators of international protection applicants by their nationality and sex for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019](#), a total of 1,986 international protection applicants were registered in the Republic of Croatia in 2019. According to the available information, the most common countries of origin of registered international protection applicants were the following: Iraq (577), Afghanistan (295), Syria (288), Iran (218), Algeria (117) and Turkey (132) (Chart 2).

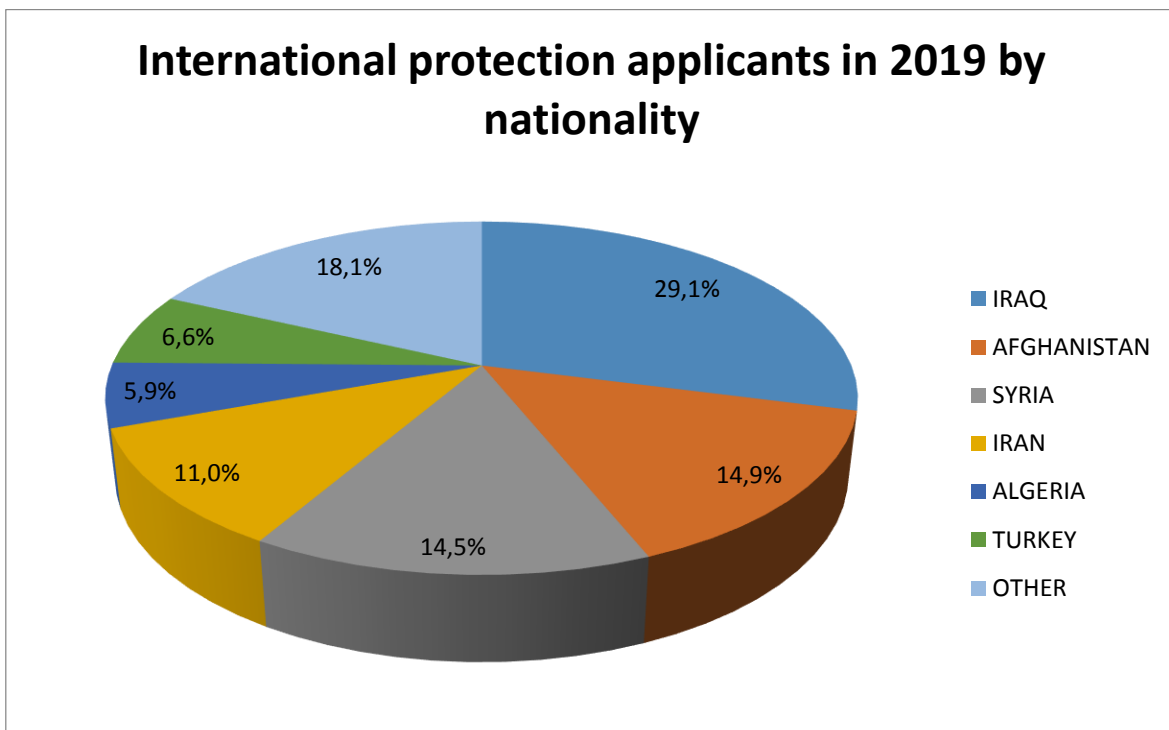


Chart 2. International protection applicants in 2019 by nationality

Source: <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>

In 2019, a total of 158 persons were granted international protection. Out of this number, 157 persons were granted asylum and one person was granted subsidiary protection (Chart 3) (more information about the structure of international protection applicants and the structure of persons who were granted international protection can be found in the Statistics appendix, annex 2, 3 and 4, pages 86 -91).

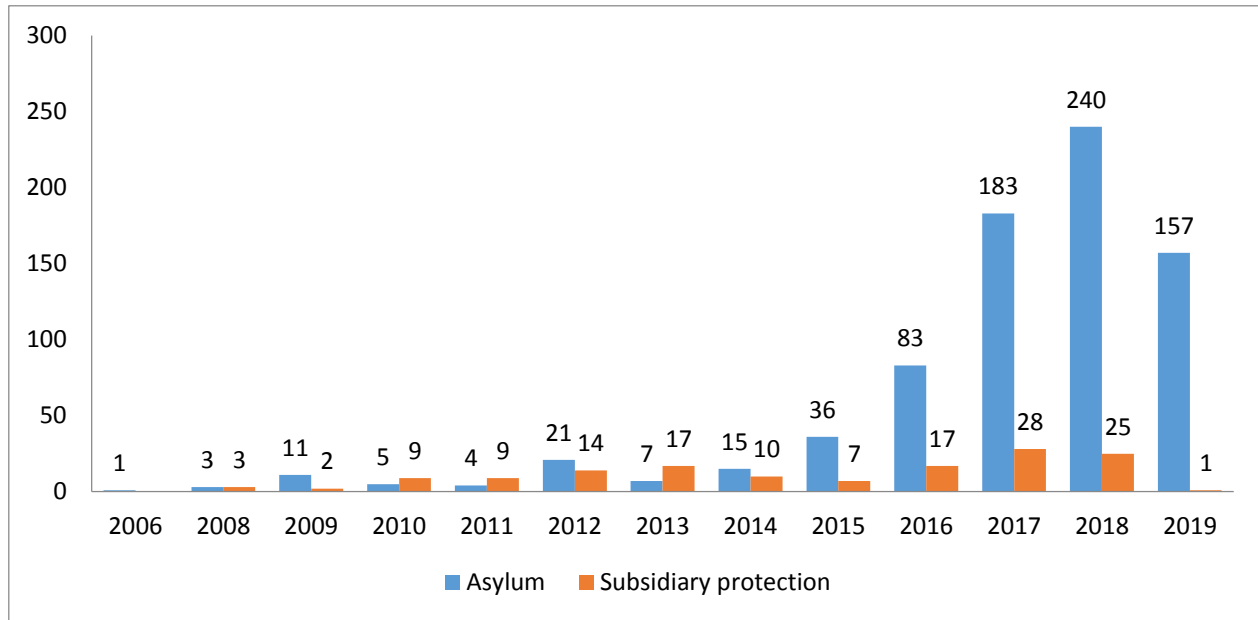


Chart 3. Number of persons who were granted international protection in the Republic of Croatia by 31 December 2019

Source: <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>

Although an increase in the number of international protection applicants was recorded in 2019, all decisions are still being issued within the legally prescribed time-limit. The applications which are clearly unfounded are being processed as a matter of priority, in addition to the applications made by persons who are in need of special procedural and reception guarantees, that is, vulnerable groups of applicants and applicants placed in detention.

Also, a large number of decisions on the suspension of the procedure was recorded in 2019, even 47.5%.

4.2. CAPACITY BUILDING

In 2019, in line with the amendments to the Regulation on the internal organisation of the Ministry of the Interior, the former Asylum Section was divided into three new sections: International Protection Section, Dublin Procedure Section and Integration Section. These Sections act within the framework of the newly formed International Protection Department.

Likewise, in line with the amendments to the Regulation, the Department for Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants was set up. The following sections have

been organised within the Department: The Reception Centre for international protection applicants in Zagreb and the Reception Centre for international protection applicants in Kutina.

4.3. EFFICIENCY AND QUALITY OF THE RECEPTION OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICANTS AND OF THE NATIONAL ASYLUM SYSTEM

In 2019, some employees of the Department for Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants received the *EASO train the trainer* training in the following modules: Reception, Interviewing Children, Trafficking in Human Beings and Fundamental Rights, so that they could hold national training courses for other staff. The module on Fundamental Rights and International Protection was held on 26 and 27 March 2019 in Athens, and the modules on Trafficking in Human Beings were held on 11 and 12 June and 22 and 23 October 2019 on Malta. The module on Reception was held on 5 and 6 November 2019 in Athens, and the module on Interviewing Children was held on 9 and 10 July 2019 on Malta.

In 2019, 4 heads of procedure at the International Protection Procedure Section participated in the *EASO train-the-trainers* on-line training with F2F training in Malta for the following modules: Inclusion Advanced, in March 2019, Evidence Assessment in April 2019 and End of Protection in December 2019. Two national training courses were held: Evidence Assessment in October 2019 and Interviewing Vulnerable Persons in May 2019.

An employee from the Dublin Procedure Section participated in the EASO train-the -trainer training on Dublin III on Malta, from 19 to 22 February 2019.

4.4. ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In 2019, new standard operating procedures (SOPs) were drafted regarding the treatment of international protection applicants. A total of seven SOPs were drafted concerning the treatment of third-country nationals or stateless persons who have, upon being encountered within the territory of the country, made applications for international protection, those who already obtained the status of an applicant during previous procedures taken and are now again encountered acting illegally, those who were encountered after their status of an applicant already expired, when another Member State returns a third-country national or a stateless person to the Republic of Croatia under the Dublin treaty, when the Republic of Croatia returns a third-country national or a stateless person to another Member State under the Dublin treaty. SOPs were also drafted concerning the treatment of third-country nationals or stateless persons who were caught in the vicinity of the external EU border, who are staying illegally, do not want international protection in the Republic of Croatia and cannot be returned pursuant to readmission agreements, and concerning the treatment of third-country nationals or stateless persons who were encountered within the territory, who are staying illegally, do not want international protection in the Republic

of Croatia and who stated that they were applicants in another Member State but refuse to say which one, or oppose forcible removal to the country of origin claiming that they are in danger, or oppose forcible removal by refusing to cooperate in the procedure for establishing their identity (it is suspected that an illegal migrant is an applicant in another Member State and this has to be verified).

In 2019, a project was implemented entitled “Monitoring the procedures taken by police officers of the Ministry of the Interior in the area of irregular migration and asylum”. Its objective was, inter alia, to provide insight into the possibility that potential international protection applicants gain access to the international protection procedure and to allow civil society organisations to get insight into the protection of human rights during the actions taken by employees of the Ministry of the Interior with regard to illegal migrants and international protection applicants. The Ministry of the Interior, UNHCR and the Croatian Law Centre concluded the Project Implementation Protocol on 14 May 2019.

The Croatian Law Centre and UNHCR chose the cases that they will examine concerning the treatment of illegal migrants, that is, they chose international protection applicants with whom they will conduct interviews. In 2019, a total of 50 interviews were held with international protection applicants. Moreover, within the framework of the said project, the Croatian Law Centre organised four training courses for police officers at the Police Academy on Access to the International Protection System (14 May, 18 June, 22 October and 19 November 2019).

4.5. RECEPTION OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICANTS

4.5.1. Reception Centre for International Protection Applicants

As an organisational unit of the Ministry of the Interior, the Department for the Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants operates on two locations - in Zagreb and in Kutina. The Reception Centre in Zagreb serves for the accommodation all categories of international protection applicants (adult women, adult men, families, unaccompanied minors over the age of 16), whereas the Reception Centre in Kutina generally serves for the accommodation of vulnerable groups and persons arriving in the Republic of Croatia under the resettlement scheme pursuant to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on relocation and resettlement of third-country nationals or stateless persons who meet the requirements to be granted international protection.

The Reception Centre in Zagreb has a capacity to accommodate 600 persons and the Reception Centre in Kutina 100 persons. Given the fact that accommodation capacities were planned to be enhanced and that the residential part of the Reception Centre in Zagreb was being reconstructed, its accommodation capacity was reduced to 360 places from summer 2018 until summer 2019. The reconstruction and renovation of the Reception Centre in Zagreb included the adjustment of the

premises to be in line with the best practice and to comply with the highest standards, all with a view to improving the quality of everyday life of international protection applicants accommodated at the Reception Centre.

Within the framework of the project co-financed under AMIF, new equipment was procured for the premises where applicants are accommodated (beds, wardrobes, tables, chairs), as well as for kitchens and dining rooms, the laundry room and offices, all as part of continuous concern to improve the quality of life of international protection applicants, and the quality of the asylum procedure. Part of the overhead expenses in both Reception Centres was also co-financed under AMIF, as well as training of employees.

4.5.2. Alternative to detention

The freedom of movement of international protection applicants may be restricted in certain circumstances, pursuant to the provisions of the Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette No 70/15 and 127/17). In 2019, along with the restriction of freedom of movement by accommodating a person in the Detention Centre for Foreigners, a more lenient measure was also used on several occasions (with regard to three international protection applicants), namely they had to show at the Reception Centre at specific time, which was an alternative to detention.

4.5.3. Material reception conditions

In practice and while working with international protection applicants and persons who have been granted protection, a need has arisen to amend the existing Ordinance on material reception conditions (Official Gazette, No 135/15 and 61/19). Given the fact that the structure of international protection applicants in the Republic of Croatia has changed over the past several years, there have been situations which were not regulated by the Ordinance and which were the result of everyday practice. Therefore, the Ordinance valid at the time was amended in 2019.

The amendments included the following:

- The list of documents that the applicant has to enclose if he/she resides at a different address in the Republic of Croatia was extended.
- If the applicant has been granted absence from the Reception Centre for up to two weeks, the Reception Centre has an obligation to keep the room that was allocated to the applicant. In case of absence exceeding two weeks, the provisions of the Ordinance which prescribe residence at another address in the Republic of Croatia have to be applied.
- The deadline that the applicant accommodated at the Centre has for submitting the absence form is shortened from four to two days. It is prescribed that the applicant who has been granted

absence from the Reception Centre is not entitled to accommodation and meals at the Reception Centre during his/her absence. Also, the procedure was prescribed in case the applicant fails to return to the Reception Centre two days after the date until which he/she was granted absence, as well as how to handle his/her possessions in such a case.

- Amendments were made in the absence application form.

4.5.4. Cooperation with government authorities

Employees at the Reception Centre cooperate on a daily basis with other organisational units of the Ministry of the Interior, in line with their competencies, and with the Ministry of Health, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, more specifically healthcare institutions, competent social welfare centres and social care providers, as well as primary and secondary schools.

The Agreement signed between the Ministry of Health and medical centres defines the provision of emergency medical care, which implies the provision of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures essential for eliminating an immediate threat to life and health, as well as urgent primary healthcare and indispensable specialist consultant healthcare to international protection applicants.

Applicants are provided with healthcare in contractual medical institutions designated by the Ministry of Health (in Zagreb - Healthcare Centre Zagreb-Centar, clinic in Dugave, in Kutina - Healthcare Centre Kutina). Within the Healthcare Centre, a competent clinic (family medicine) was designated for the provision of primary healthcare for chronic life-threatening diseases. Specialist clinics for vulnerable groups are designated by the Ministry of Health and local healthcare centres.

Cooperation with the Ministry of Health is also carried out through the adoption of the new Ordinance on healthcare of international protection applicants in the Republic of Croatia. Two meetings were held in 2019.

As regards education, children applicants for international protection are entitled to primary and secondary education, as do children who are Croatian nationals, with the aim of successful integration in the educational system. Those children applicants who are accompanied by their parents are enrolled into school by the employees of the Reception Centre, whereas unaccompanied children are enrolled by special guardians. The aim is to include children into the educational system in the shortest possible time period. In that regard, good cooperation has been achieved with primary schools in Zagreb and Kutina as well as the competent state and municipal authorities.

4.5.5. Cooperation with NGOs

International protection applicants accommodated at Reception Centres for International Protection Applicants are also provided with support within the framework of the project entitled “Psychosocial services and support to international protection applicants” funded under AMIF and implemented by the Croatian Red Cross. The Project Implementation Agreement was signed on 14 January 2019, and its amendment was signed on 30 December 2019, whereby the project was prolonged until 15 February 2020. International protection applicants whose freedom of movement has been restricted are also provided with support in detention centres for foreigners.

In 2019, the Croatian Red Cross carried out various activities in reception centres within the framework of the project entitled “Psychosocial services and support to international protection applicants” (Table 2).

A psychosocial support team is also available in reception centres. As regards the majority of applicants, initial assessment of needs is made, their physical and psychological condition is assessed, as well as the need to provide them with medical and other types of assistance and psychosocial support. Applicants who wish so or who have serious psychosocial problems work individually with professionals from the Croatian Red Cross (social workers and psychologists). In 2019, psychosocial support was provided for 861 especially vulnerable applicants, and 625 applicants were informed about the increased risk of potential human trafficking and other forms of violence.

Within the framework of the above project, the Croatian Red Cross provides assistance in accessing healthcare services. Thus, access to healthcare services was provided for 297 applicants. Consultations with specialists have been provided in paediatric surgery, paediatric and gynaecology clinics, child and adolescent psychiatry and dental polyclinics, and many other institutions. In addition to numerous medicines, all applicants in need were provided with prescription glasses, orthopaedic appliances, pregnancy tests and many other medical devices.

The employees of the Croatian Red Cross have also assisted in reception centres in the enrolment of children to primary schools. The Croatian Red Cross has carried out the activities aimed at preparing children for their enrolment into school, assisting them with the enrolment, as well as monitoring their progress at school, providing help in mastering the school curriculum and doing their homework, and it also provided support to parents and teachers during the children’s adaptation to school. In 2019, support was provided to 376 children. In order to ensure faster integration into Croatian society, the employees of the Croatian Red Cross organised Croatian language courses for adults in reception centres. 285 international protection applicants attended the Croatian language workshop organised by the Croatian Red Cross in 2019.

In order to familiarise the applicants with the Croatian culture and natural landmarks, trips were organised, as well as visits to museums and other cultural institutions, cultural and sports events, with a total of 340 applicants participating.

There is a creative workshop and children’s playroom organised in reception centres, as well as sports premises.

The Croatian Red Cross continued with the work of the working group for psychosocial support to international protection applicants at the Reception Centre in Zagreb.

Table 2. Overview of activities of the Croatian Red Cross in Reception Centres for International Protection Applicants in Zagreb and Kutina

Activity	Number of beneficiaries
Psychosocial support provided	861
Access to healthcare services provided	297
Children’s workshop	580
Assisting children in learning	376
Croatian language workshop for adults	285
Sports workshops	976
Creative workshop	245
Cultural and sports events	340
TOTAL	3,960

Source: Croatian Red Cross

Likewise, on 5 December 2019, a tender was launched under AMIF for the implementation of the new 3-year project for providing psychosocial support and social welfare services.

Other non-governmental organisations are also active in the Reception Centres in Zagreb and Kutina on the basis of agreements signed with the Ministry of the Interior, agreements within the framework of projects and other activities, all with a view to enhancing the quality of life of international protection applicants. Those NGOs include the following: Jesuit Refugee Service, Croatian Law Centre, Ruka nade association (Croatian Baptist Aid - CBA), Zemljani - Are You Syrious, Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma, Volunteer Centre Osijek. Under the above mentioned agreements, various activities were carried out in Reception Centres in 2019: IT

workshop, creative workshop, gym, football, Croatian language course, technical workshop, medical assistance, legal counselling, homework, hygiene kits handout, etc.

In addition, MDM Belgique was also present in Reception Centres in Zagreb and Kutina in 2019 within the framework of the project “Illness prevention, psychological support, access and assistance in healthcare for international protection applicants - 4P”, which was also co-financed under AMIF. MDM Belgique provides for the initial examination of international protection applicants once they arrive in the Reception Centre and organises subsequent medical examinations in family medicine practices or after their discharge from the hospital. It also provides for transport and interpreters and organises vaccination of children, gynaecological and psychiatric examinations for those in need, as well as transport and examination of addicts in a healthcare centre.

Considering a large number of associations present in Reception Centres, their employees and volunteers, and in order to facilitate the coordination of activities and information exchange, the staff working in Reception Centres organised regular meetings with representatives of associations every Friday throughout the year.

The Department for Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants initiated the development of Standard Operating Procedures on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior with regard to a timely response to sexual and gender based violence in Reception Centres for international protection applicants in the Republic of Croatia. The final version is almost finalised. Apart from the Ministry of the Interior, other NGOs are also involved in the entire process - UNHCR, the Croatian Red Cross and MDM Belgique.

4.6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM (CEAS)

In the Republic of Croatia, asylum procedure is an administrative procedure prescribed by the Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette, No 70/15, 127/17).

4.6.1. Access to information and provision of legal aid

A Project financed under AMIF has been implemented since 1 April 2019 in the facilities of the Reception Centre for International Protection Applicants in Zagreb, entitled “Provision of legal advice in the procedure for granting international protection” which actively contributes to the efficient protection of rights and interests of international protection applicants in the procedures following their applications. The project is implemented by the Croatian Law Centre. When submitting their application, applicants are provided with a leaflet containing the following information: who is entitled to legal counselling, what is included in legal counselling, and where and from whom can the applicants request legal counselling. The legal counselling project is

available to all international protection applicants who are located at the Reception Centres for International Protection Applicants in Zagreb and Kutina, as well as those located at the Detention Centre for Foreigners in Ježevo. The implementation of the project will last until 30 March 2020.

The Centre for Cultural Activities has been implementing the project “Video info corner for asylum seekers” since October 2019. The funds for the project were provided within the framework of the call for projects aimed at reducing and preventing social exclusion and at social inclusion and integration of socially vulnerable groups for 2018/2019 which was announced by the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy. The project aims at informing asylum seekers about the rights and obligations related to their status and about customs and culture of their new community.

4.6.2. Dublin procedure

The greatest challenge posed to the Dublin Procedure Section in its work are the activities related to Greece. In accordance with the Commission Recommendation of 8 December 2016 (EU) No 604/2013, Croatia implements the Dublin procedure with Greece. In 2019, upon examination of the results of a fingerprint-based search, 145 cases were identified with a Greek “hit” of category 1, 60 cases with a Greek “hit” of category 2, as well as 119 cases with a Greek “hit” 1 and 2. A total of 172 readmission requests were sent to Greece on the basis of these results, as well as 38 requests for the reception of international protection applicants. Of the total number of requests sent to Greece, only one positive decision was received. Furthermore, due to the inefficiency and the longevity of the procedure in cases of international protection applicants arriving from the countries that are considered safe countries of origin, we do not send requests for a re-examination of the decision in procedures involving Greece if we consider the chances for a positive decision to be too small.

Detailed statistical indicators of the implementation of the Dublin procedure for the period from 1 January until 31 December 2019 can be found in the Statistics appendix, annex 5, on page 92.

4.6.3. Procedure following an application for international protection

Although an increase in the number of international protection applicants was recorded in 2019, all decisions are still being adopted within the legally prescribed time-limit. Those applications which are clearly unfounded are being processed as a matter of priority, in addition to the applications made by persons who are in need of special procedural and reception guarantees, vulnerable groups of applicants and applicants placed in detention.

Also, a large number of decisions on the suspension of the procedure was recorded in 2019, even 47.5%.

A list of safe countries of origin was established by the Decision of the Minister of the Interior on the list of safe countries of origin in the international protection procedure (Official Gazette No 45/2016), of 13 May 2016. Safe countries of origin are on the list which can be found in Annex I, an integral part of the Decision. They are considered to be safe countries of origin in the procedure for granting international protection, pursuant to the provisions of Article 44 of the Act on International and Temporary Protection. With regard to the said Decision of the minister, no changes were made to the list. However, in 2019, applications made by Turkish international protection applicants were processed in a regular procedure. Likewise, the Ministry issues a decision on refusal of application for those persons who are nationals of safe countries of origin and who have willingly left the Reception Centre for International Protection Applicants and have not registered their new temporary address within the legal time-limit if it is assessed, based on the established facts and circumstances, that the conditions for granting international protection have not been met (Articles 39(4) and 41(1)(9) of the Act on International and Temporary Protection).

4.7. SUPPORT TO OTHER MEMBER STATES

The Republic of Croatia cooperates with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) with a view to providing appropriate international protection. This cooperation is carried out through national contact points and educational seminars organised by EASO. Likewise, Croatian experts provide assistance to Member States facing a large influx of migrants (Greece, Italy, Cyprus).

In 2019, the International Protection Department participated in the EASO operational plan as support for Greece, Cyprus and Italy in 5 missions with 1 person per mission, totalling 5 persons. Three missions were carried out in Greece (2 April 2019 - 10 May 2019 on the island of Samos, 30 April 2019 - 7 June 2019 on the island of Leros, and 19 July 2019 - 30 August 2019 in Thessaloniki), one on Cyprus (2 September 2019 - 11 October 2019 in Kofinou) and one in Italy (30 September 2019 - 8 November 2019 in Rome).

At the same time, four employees from the Department for Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants also participated in EASO support mission in Greece (2 August 2019 - 20 September 2019 and 25 November 2019 - 20 December 2019 in Thessaloniki) and Cyprus (3 June 2019 - 12 July 2019 in Kofinou, 15 July 2019 - 30 August 2019 also in Kofinou).

4.8. EU JOINT RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

Within the framework of the European Resettlement Programme, the Republic of Croatia carried out its fifth selection mission in Istanbul, Turkey, from 18 to 22 February 2019.

98 Syrian nationals were resettled from Turkey to Croatia in 2019, pursuant to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on the resettlement of third-country nationals or stateless persons who meet the requirements to be granted international protection of 6 October 2017⁹.

The first group of Syrian nationals was resettled from Turkey on 29 and 30 May 2019. It included ten Syrian families, or more specifically 50 nationals of the Syrian Arab Republic, 23 of which were minors. The second group of refugees was resettled to the Republic of Croatia on 21 August 2019, as part of the seventh group from the Republic of Turkey. It included 8 Syrian families, or more specifically 41 nationals of the Syrian Arab Republic, 24 of which were minors. The remaining part of the seventh group, 2 families, or more specifically 7 persons, 3 of which were minors, were resettled to the Republic of Croatia on 30 August 2019.

With the arrival of the seventh group of Syrian nationals in the Republic of Croatia under the resettlement scheme, the Republic of Croatia resettled a total of 250 Syrian nationals, thus fulfilling its commitment under the 2015 and 2017 Government Decisions, as a form of international solidarity and sharing of responsibilities with third countries into which or within which a large number of persons in need of international protection were displaced.

As regards cooperation during the resettlement procedure, the Ministry of the Interior has concluded agreements with the International Organisation for Migration, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), having in mind various aspects of the resettlement scheme and needs of resettled persons.

The Agreement between the Ministry of the Interior and the Jesuit Refugee Service on the integration of persons resettled from Turkey was signed in December 2018. Likewise, in January 2019, the Ministry of the Interior signed agreements with the International Catholic Migration Commission (logistic support and support regarding coordination during the selection missions, including the activities of coordination related to pre-departure medical examinations and cultural orientation) and with the International Organisation for Migration (pre-embarkation checks, visa processing logistics, movement and travel assistance, assistance in post-arrival reception in a Member State).

More information about the work of the International Catholic Migration Commission and the Jesuit Refugee Service in terms of resettlement can be found in the Integration chapter.

In February 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on the resettlement of third-country nationals or stateless persons who meet the criteria to be granted international protection for 2019¹⁰. Pursuant to this Decision, Croatia committed to receive 150 third-country nationals or stateless persons under the resettlement scheme, that is, on grounds of participating in other forms of solidarity with European Union Member States.

⁹ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2017_10_99_2276.html

¹⁰ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_02_16_323.html

5. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

5.1. TREATMENT OF UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The treatment of unaccompanied minors is based on the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: protection of the child's well-being, protection against all forms of discrimination, right to life, security and development and right to participate and freely express one's own opinion.

5.1.1. The Inter-Agency Committee for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors

At its session held on 30 August 2018, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Conclusions for the adoption of a new Protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors (hereinafter: the Protocol). Once the new Protocol was adopted, the Protocol on the Treatment of Children Separated from Parents - Foreign Nationals of 18 July 2013 ceased to apply.

In February 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia appointed the Inter-Agency Committee whose work is coordinated by the ministry responsible for social welfare matters. The Inter-Agency Committee comprises of representatives of the ministry responsible for social welfare matters, ministry responsible for internal affairs, ministry responsible for education, ministry responsible for health, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities and international organisations dealing with the protection of rights of children and refugees (UNICEF, UNHCR, the Croatian Red Cross). The Inter-Agency Committee was set up for the purpose of enhancing inter-departmental cooperation between state administration authorities and other stakeholders involved in the protection of unaccompanied minors.

5.1.2. Capacity building

Further to the Protocol adopted, four inter-departmental training courses were held in 2019 on practical application of the Protocol with a view to enhancing human resources in the area of protection of unaccompanied minors. The training courses were held in November and December 2019, more specifically, on 5 November in Rabac, on 19 November in Vodice, on 26 November in Jastrebarsko and on 4 December in Zagreb. 154 persons received training, including 71 police officers for irregular migration and 83 professionals from social welfare centres who deal with unaccompanied minors and professionals working in social welfare institutions that provide accommodation to unaccompanied minors. The first training cycle focused on the identification of unaccompanied minors pursuant to the Protocol. Unaccompanied minors themselves also participated in training by sharing their experience. Training also included group work during

which real cases were discussed. Lecturers included representatives of the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, Ministry of the Interior, Office of the Ombudsman for Children, Croatian Law Centre, Croatian Red Cross, Centre for Missing and Exploited Children and UNHCR. In September 2019, the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy assigned two social welfare homes as the so-called contact points for the reception and accommodation of unaccompanied minors who are encountered in the territory of the Republic of Croatia: Community Service Centre Zagreb-Dugave and Community Service Centre Split. The Protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors prescribes that a multidisciplinary/team assessment of a child needs to be made no later than three months from the accommodation of an unaccompanied minor. Such a team assessment results in a personalised plan in which it is proposed that a decision on a more durable solution for an unaccompanied minor be made, such as family reunification, launching of an international protection procedure, return to the country of origin or integration in the Republic of Croatia by accommodating the minor in an adequate institution or foster family.

Professionals from social welfare centres and professionals from social welfare homes that provide accommodation to unaccompanied minors continuously received support and professional assistance in improving their treatment of unaccompanied minors.

Furthermore, training was held at the Police Academy, on 27 February 2019, for criminal police officers on the new Protocol, as part of the Specialist training course for juvenile delinquency and crime against youth and family.

From 8 April to 15 May 2019, EASO training was held on interviewing vulnerable persons. 30 employees from the Department for the Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants and the Department for International Protection received this training.

As already mentioned in the chapter on International protection and asylum, EASO train-the-trainer module on “Interviewing Children” was held on Malta, on 9 and 10 July 2019. It was attended by two employees from the Department for the Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants so that they could carry out national training in this module for other employees. The employees from the Department for the Reception and Accommodation of International Protection Applicants also participated in a MDM coordination workshop entitled “Development of guidelines for acting in cases of sexual violence against children and women refugees”.

5.2. FOSTER CARE ACT

The new Foster Care Act (Official Gazette, No 115/18) entered into force on 1 January 2019¹¹. This Act provides for the accommodation of unaccompanied minors into foster families.

The accommodation of an unaccompanied minor in a foster family is a new institute which requires preparations to be made by the foster family, the foster family has to receive training and continuous support and supervision need to be ensured given the fact that this is a very specific group of children beneficiaries, more specifically one of the most vulnerable groups of children. The Republic of Croatia has made progress in protecting this vulnerable group of children by adopting legislation which provides for the accommodation of unaccompanied minors in foster families.

5.3. COOPERATION

In 2018, the UNHCR and the Centre for Missing and Exploited Children produced leaflets with relevant information for unaccompanied minors who were accommodated in social welfare institutions. Those leaflets are still available in social welfare homes. The Croatian Red Cross also offers leaflets translated into the languages most commonly spoken by unaccompanied minors.

In 2019, the Croatian Law Centre partnered up with the Community Service Centre Zagreb-Dugave, Home for children and youth with behavioural problems in Rijeka and Home for children with behavioural problems in Ivanec, for the purpose of carrying out a project entitled “Standing up for the rights of unaccompanied children!”, financed by the Ministry for Demography, Family, Social Policy and Youth. The said project was carried out from 1 November 2018 to 30 October 2019. During the implementation of the project, the focus was on improving the rights of unaccompanied minors with an emphasis on education, healthcare and family reunification, which were recognised as most difficult to realise in practice. The conclusions resulting from the said activities can be found on the following link: <https://www.hpc.hr/2019/10/29/zakljucci-na-temelju-aktivnosti-provedenih-po-projektu-ostvarimo-prava-djece-bez-pratnje/>.

¹¹ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2018_12_115_2240.html

6. INTEGRATION

Pursuant to the Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette, No 70/15, 127/17) the Ministry of the Interior is competent for drafting the plan for integration and for monitoring its implementation in relation to persons who were granted international protection as well as for providing assistance with inclusion into Croatian society in the first three years from the date of acquiring that status. However, given the lack of staff and the increase in the number of persons who have acquired this status in the past few years, it has become increasingly difficult to fulfil these obligations. The Ministry therefore launched a tender in October 2019 for civil society organisations which would satisfy the conditions related to ensuring an individualised approach to supporting persons in exercising the rights guaranteed to them by the Republic of Croatia. The name of the project is "Support in assistance to inclusion of persons with approved international protection in Croatian society" and the general objective of the project is to contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of society through ethnic, national and cultural diversity of integrated persons with granted international protection. Funds will be provided under the AMIF National Programme and the selection procedure for the organisation is underway (during October and November 2019, a public tender was carried out for the implementation of the project).

Furthermore, according to the Act on International and Temporary Protection, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia coordinates the work of all ministries, NGOs and other bodies involved in the process of inclusion of asylees or foreigners under subsidiary protection into Croatian society. The Office does that within the Standing Committee for the Implementation of the Integration of Foreigners into Croatian Society and the associated Working Group, which drafts proposals for national strategic documents in this area.

6.2. PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON INTEGRATION AND LEGAL AID

At the beginning of 2019, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities published an updated edition of the Guide through Integration - Basic Information for the Integration of Aliens into Croatian Society. Updated edition includes basic information about the Republic of Croatia, information on status regulation, employment and work, housing, education, social welfare and health care, with an overview of civil society organizations and relevant state and public bodies. The Guide through Integration was prepared by the Working Group for the operational implementation of the tasks of the Standing Committee for the Implementation of the Integration of Foreigners into Croatian Society and has been translated into English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu and Ukrainian. The publication was published within the project "Support to the integration

of third-country nationals in need of international protection", which is co-financed by the AMIF National Programme (Image 3).

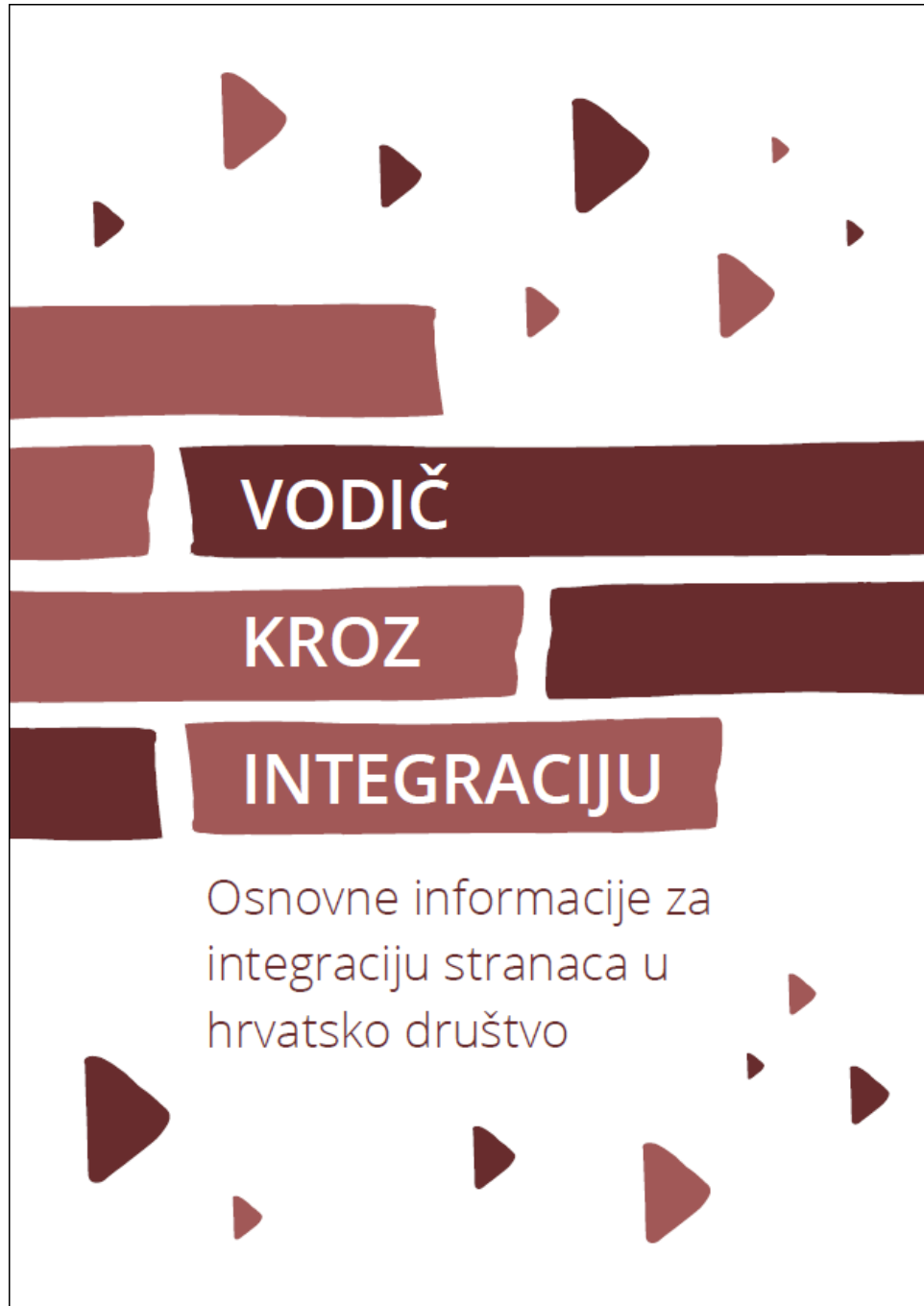


Image 3. Updated edition of the Guide through Integration

Source: <https://ljudskaprava.gov.hr/vijesti/objavljeno-dopunjeno-izdanje-vodica-kroz-integraciju/853>

The Croatian Law Center, in cooperation with UNHCR Croatia, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, prepared information for persons with approved international protection on the family reunification procedure in the Republic of Croatia in the form of a leaflet. The leaflet was made in Croatian and translated into Arabic, Farsi and English so that the information could be also available to family members of persons with granted international protection who wish to reunificate with them in Croatia (Figure 4).



SPAJANJE OBITELJI U HRVATSKOJ

Informacije za osobe s odobrenom međunarodnom zaštitom



Image 4. Leaflet on family reunification procedure in the Republic of Croatia

Source: <http://www.hpc.hr/2019/12/19/informacije-o-postupku-spajanja-obitelji-za-osobe-s-odobrenom-medunarodnom-zastitom/>

Once a month, the Croatian Law Center, in cooperation with the Croatian Red Cross, and with the financial support of the UNHCR Croatia, provides free legal aid to persons with approved

international protection in the Integration House of the Croatian Red Cross. If necessary, consultations are additionally held in the office of the Croatian Law Center. On 15 October 2019, the Croatian Law Center and UNHCR organized an expert meeting on this topic, after which certain conclusions were reached that should facilitate the exercise of this right, which were addressed, in addition to the relevant ministries, to all other interested stakeholders in the system.

In their daily work, the employees of the Croatian Red Cross provide advisory services related to the rights of persons who were granted international protection. If necessary, the employees would go to the field with the users, most often with an interpreter because of the language barrier. Workshops were held on the topic of socio-cultural orientation, as part of which users are informed about life in the Republic of Croatia and thus empowered and more independent. During 2019, a workbook for users and a manual for educators on the topic of socio-cultural orientation were made (in Croatian, English, Arabic and Farsi), on the basis of which the above-mentioned workshops for the persons who were granted international protection will continue.

On 7 May 2019, final conference of the project “The Danube Region information platform for economic integration of migrants – DRIM“, funded by the INTERREG European Union Program, was held. The project in the Republic of Croatia was carried out by the civil society organization and was implemented in cooperation with 10 institutions from eight countries of the Danube Region. The key project outcomes were presented at the conference, outlining the information platform “Danube Compass“, which is designed to facilitate migrants' economic and social integration into the community, providing key information on all important aspects of life in an easily accessible way. The “[Danube Compass](#)” is therefore a central place for all integration issues that migrants can use, as well as institutions and organizations that work with migrants. The Croatian version of “Danube Compass“ is available in Croatian and English and the most widely spoken languages among people who have been granted international protection.

6.3. INTEGRATION OF PERSONS WITH APPROVED INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

6.3.1. Measures to enhance language skills and schooling

For all children and young people who are in the process of inclusion in the education system, support is provided in primary and secondary schools within the integration process by approving preparatory and supplementary classes, pursuant to Articles 43, 45 and 46 of the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette, No 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11, 5/12, 16/12, 86/12, 126/12, 94/13, 152/14, 07/17, 68/18, 98/19).

In accordance with the Ordinance on the provision of preparatory and supplementary classes for students who have no knowledge or have insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language and of the mother tongue and culture education of the country of origin of the student (Official Gazette,

No 15/13), and based on the data submitted by the school on the justifiability of the request or the decision of the state administration office competent for education, the Ministry of Science and Education grants approval for implementing preparatory and supplementary classes in the Croatian language for a duration of 35 or 70 hours.

In 2019 the Ministry of Science and Education approved the inclusion of 43 students who had no knowledge of or who had insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language in preparatory and supplementary Croatian language classes. 22 students participated in preparatory classes, and 21 students in supplementary Croatian language classes.

Preparatory and supplementary classes of the Croatian language were organized in seventeen (17) secondary schools in Croatia (City of Zagreb, Istria County, Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, Varaždin County, Split-Dalmatia County, Karlovac County and Osijek-Baranja County), based on the decision to include students in preparatory or supplementary Croatian language classes delivered by the secondary school founder.

The Ministry of Science and Education covers the funding of the primary education programme for Croatian citizens between 15 and 65 years of age. In 2019 the right of access to this programme for asylum seekers, foreign nationals under subsidiary protection and foreign nationals under temporary protection was for the first time explicitly mentioned in the Ministry's Financing decision on implementing primary education and training for simple jobs in occupations for adult persons for the year 2019, and as such it is continuously implemented further on.

For all persons who have been granted international protection, and who are not included in the education system, the inclusion in the Croatian language course is provided within the framework of the Programme of learning the Croatian language, history and culture for asylees and foreign nationals under subsidiary protection with the aim of their inclusion in the Croatian society (Official Gazette, No 154/2014) for a duration of 280 ((70 + 210) hours). In 2019 Croatian language courses were organized in Sisak and Karlovac for persons who arrived in Croatia within the framework of the European Resettlement Programme (98 persons), as well as in Zagreb and Slavonski Brod for persons with residence in the Republic of Croatia (34 persons).

In 2019 professional training programmes of the Ministry of Science and Education were underway for adult persons granted subsidiary protection or asylum status and they will continue in 2020.

The adoption of the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia for 2019 and the projections for 2020 and 2021 (Official Gazette, No 113/18) created the preconditions that from 1 January 2019, AMIF will finance all activities related to the implementation of inclusion persons with the status of asylee and foreigner under subsidiary protection in the Programme of learning the Croatian language, history and culture for a duration of 280 hours; translations and certifications of documents necessary for continuing education of persons with the status of asylee and foreigner under subsidiary protection (certificates and diplomas) and continuing education and / or inclusion in professional training of persons with the status of asylee and foreigner under subsidiary protection.

The activities are carried out within the project "Integration of asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection into Croatian society, education and preparation for inclusion in the labor market" which was prepared by the Ministry of Science and Education in cooperation with the Independent Sector for Schengen Coordination and EU funds of the Ministry of the Interior in order to achieve preconditions for quality integration of asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection into Croatian society.

For students / children / young people with asylum status and foreigners under subsidiary protection whose family members are guaranteed minimum fees, co-financing of textbooks and related supplementary teaching resources (atlases, workbooks and / or collections of tasks) is provided - funds are provided by the Government of Croatia through a special decision on the budgetary positions of the Ministry.

Furthermore, the Central State Office for Croats Abroad in cooperation with Croaticum - Center for Croatian as a second and foreign language of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, offers a free online Croatian language course level A-1 and A-2 with English interface.

During 2019 the Croatian Red Cross produced video materials for learning the Croatian language, which is adapted to persons with approved international protection. An additional individual Croatian language course has been provided for three persons under international protection with the aim of their employment. The Croatian Red Cross also has a number of educated volunteers who have helped children master school materials. To one high school graduate an individual tuition was funded in order to prepare for the state high school graduation exam in two subjects.

6.3.2. Access to social and health care

There have been no legislative changes with regard to social welfare. Access to social welfare and assistance is also provided within the social welfare system. Rights in the social welfare system under the conditions laid down in the Social Welfare Act (Official Gazette, No 157/13, 152/14, 99/15, 52/16, 16/17, 130/17) are granted to foreigners and stateless persons with permanent stay in the Republic of Croatia. Foreigners under subsidiary protection, foreigners with the status of a human trafficking victim, asylees and their family members staying legally in the Republic of Croatia, are granted rights in the social welfare system under the conditions prescribed in this Act and special regulation.

The following rights are granted in the social welfare system pursuant to the said Act: guaranteed minimum compensation, compensation for living costs, right to compensation of heating costs, compensation of costs related to personal needs of accommodated persons, one-time fees, compensation related to education, personal disability allowance, assistance and care allowance, parent caregiver status or caregiver status, unemployment allowance, electric energy allowance for vulnerable customers, and social services (provision of information, recognition and initial needs

assessment, counselling and assistance, assistance at home, psychosocial support, early intervention, assistance in terms of inclusion in education and regular education programmes - integration, stay, accommodation, family mediation, organised housing).

Coordinators have been appointed in all social welfare centres and branch offices who work with persons under international protection. Coordinators are tasked with assisting persons under international protection in exercising their social welfare rights as well as including them in the community.

Asylees and persons under international protection most often exercise their right to guaranteed minimal compensation (the right to an amount which ensures that persons living alone or houses with insufficient means for covering their basic living costs, have their basic needs met).

Third-country nationals exercise their right to healthcare in line with national legislation which has been harmonised with EU acquis.

Even though this is somewhat difficult due to certain obstacles (language barriers, persons who are not ensured in the healthcare system), migrants/refugees are provided with healthcare regardless of whether they are accommodated in Detention Centres for Foreigners / Reception Centres for International Protection Applicants or whether they are provided with it at any healthcare institution in the public healthcare system network.

In 2019, the Working Group for drafting by-laws of the Ministry of the Health prepared a Draft of the Ordinance on the healthcare standards for international protection applicants and foreigners under subsidiary protection. On 11 July 2019, the e-consultation process on the said draft Ordinance began.

6.3.3. Housing

The Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care is from 1 January 2018 in charge of accommodation of persons who have been granted international protection in line with the Act on the amendments to the Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette, No 127/17). The international protection holders are provided with housing solution in duration of two years from the date they were granted international protection. During mentioned two years, the costs of accommodation and the utilities expense are paid from the State Budget, with the exception of the State owned housing units where only the utilities expense is covered.

According to available data, the international protection holders are accommodated in 28 state owned flats (3 in Zagreb, 1 in Požega, 9 in Karlovac and 15 in Sisak) and 121 private flats that are rented for this purpose on the free market (90% of them are in Zagreb). All of these flats are located

in towns where International Protection Holders have access to employment, health care, social care and everything else needed for a living.¹²

6.3.4. Labour market integration

Beneficiaries of international protection are noted as one of the target groups for active labor market measures which help them integrate better in the Croatian labor market.

Generally, unemployed beneficiaries of international protection have rights and obligations equal to unemployed nationals. They have access to Active labour market policy measures (ALMP) and in several measures are recognized as vulnerable group, thus have access to measures under more beneficial conditions regarding the duration of unemployment (within the measures “Employment support” and “Working with public“).

An ALMP measure that has been recognized as the most useful in a sense of overall integration into the society is a measure called On-the-job training established with an aim of acquiring public document certifying competence. It is a six-month programme during which a refugee learns both through classes in school and through work experience under mentorship provided by employer (e.g. for being able to work on simple jobs in kitchen, elderly care, construction), with financial support from Croatian Employment Service.

Persons under international protection form a group with very specific needs and require different approach because they are not familiar with national employment and work related rights and obligations, often have different views on punctuality, working hours or (especially women) have never worked before. To solve this problem, in 2018. each regional office nominated one employment counsellor responsible for beneficiaries of international protection. They are regularly updated on the news in legislation, information, brochures etc. covering this group. A leaflet with rights, obligations, date for counselling and contact details of counsellor translated to Arabic, Persian, Somali, English and French is also handed over to refugees after first contact with Croatian Employment Service.

In 2019, 152 TCNs took advantage of some of the ALMP measures, of which 18 persons under international protection. On 31 December 2019 a total of 852 TCNs were registered as unemployed with the Croatian Employment Service (of which 172 persons under international protection).

In the period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, 1 448 registration of TCNs to the Croatian Employment Service were recorded of which 307 persons under international protection. During the same period, 812 TCNs (of which 257 persons under international protection) were removed from Croatian Employment Service database due to commencing employment.

¹² Data from the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care from 11 December 2019

NGOs also provide support in this area. In cooperation with the Croatian Employment Service, the Croatian Red Cross helped to include persons under international protection in the on-the-job training program. The Croatian Red Cross has a network of employers with which it cooperates, and if necessary, meetings were organized between employers and persons under international protection. Workshops on the topic of life skills were organized, which covered, among other things, the topics of writing a resume, preparing for an interview, work culture and similar.

The Jesuit Refugee Service has been continuously working on the inclusion process of persons who were granted international protection on the labor market through continuous activities, Croatian language courses, meetings of people with international protection and employers, providing support and counseling at the SOL Refugee Integration Center (opened in May 2019). Nine persons under international protection successfully passed the final exam in the process of retraining for the profession of care workers of the elderly.

In cooperation with the Croatian Employment Service, the Open University Zagreb, and the Pave Ćorluka Sanatorium for the elderly, the Jesuit Refugee Service carries out vocational training measures, additional courses of language for professional purposes and sous-chef and care worker training. A total of nine persons under international protection successfully passed the programme of which three are single mothers.

In October 2019, an inaugural conference was held at which the Jesuit Refugee Service and the Open University Zagreb presented a joint project "TRAZILica - social inclusion and strengthening the competitiveness of asylees in the labor market in the Republic of Croatia", funded by the European Social Fund, Operational Program Effective Human potentials 2014-2020. This project provides support, education and integration into society and the labor market to persons who have the status of persons under international protection in the Republic of Croatia, which also responds to the current market need for targeted skilled labor force in accordance with deficient occupations. The project nurtures inclusiveness, reflects the common desire of the Jesuit Refugee Service and the Open University to create a modern, solidary, inclusive and economically, demographically and socially sustainable society that, responding to the needs and respecting the rights of socially marginalized groups and paving the way for their independence and training seeks to build a long-term perspective on the progress of Croatian society as a whole. The programs take place in Sisak and Zagreb, while the conference itself served as an opportunity to present good practices, to intensify existing and open new collaborations with employers in search of labor force, as well as all stakeholders in the integration process.

Since October 2019, the Rehabilitation Center for Stress and Trauma has been implementing the project "Skills for the future - encouraging the integration of women and children under international protection through the acquisition of digital and STEM competences". The project is funded by the Call of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy for projects aimed at reducing and preventing social exclusion and for social inclusion and integration of socially vulnerable groups for 2018/2019, ie for projects aimed at providing support in the

integration into the community of persons with approved international protection. The goal is to improve IT and communication skills and increase the employability of 15 women with approved international protection in Zagreb and Zagreb County, to improve STEM skills in basic programming of at least 10 preschool children with approved international protection, to sensitize at least 10 employers to employ women with approved international protection.

6.3.5. Social integration

NGOs are active in promoting social integration. Thus, the Croatian Red Cross organized public events with the participation of persons under international protection, such as public forums where persons under international protection presented themselves and told their story. In cooperation with the local community various activities were organized such as e.g. a fashion show of works made by the users themselves, an exhibition at the Museum of Broken Relationships entitled "What We Left Behind" in which people under international protection participated with their contribution.

In 2019, the Jesuit Refugee Service continued to interactively and inclusively communicate the needs and rights of refugees and all forcibly displaced persons to the local community through the magazine *Staze*. The magazine is created in collaboration with people in the integration process, and is designed as a platform on which people can express themselves and create content under the mentorship of the editorial board of the Jesuit Refugee Service. *Staze* magazine is presented and distributed continuously to all stakeholders in the integration process, applicants and persons with approved international protection, the interested public, representatives of civil society organizations at the local level, partners, volunteers and others.

In October 2019, experts from the Jesuit Refugee Service held a seven-day training for young people who were granted international protection in Croatia, together with representatives of partner organizations from Italy and Greece, as part of the Erasmus plus project "Stripped of choice, but given a voice!" whose intention is to empower young people who have been granted international protection for active participation in society, advocacy of their own rights, interconnection and acquaintance with resources in the local community. In one week, the training brought together twenty young people with international protection from all over Croatia, offering them training in various skills, empowerment, education and fieldwork in Zagreb and Osijek. Twenty young people between the ages of eighteen and thirty, with approved international protection in Croatia, opened a space for intercultural dialogue among young people within a week. They also learned what their rights are, but also their obligations in the community, where they can seek support and help, how to advocate for their own rights and how to connect with young people from the local community and local and foreign civil society organizations. All that in Croatian, English, Arabic and Farsi language. A special added value of this project is the documentary film, shot during the training, where young people with international protection had the opportunity to

show their talents, tell their story and what motivates them and ultimately evaluate the entire training.

Since October 2019, the Center for Women Victims of War has been implementing the project "Support program for social inclusion of persons with approved international protection" funded by the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy for projects aimed at reducing and preventing social exclusion and social inclusion and integration of socially vulnerable groups for 2018/2019. The aim of the project is to reduce the social exclusion of asylum seekers in Croatia through improving the quality of life, social inclusion, the position of persons with international protection (psycho-social treatment, legal aid, language learning, child care - instruction and creative workshops) and through continuous support.

6.4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON INTEGRATION OF PERSONS RESETTLED THROUGH EU RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMMS

6.4.1. Integration measures before coming to Croatia

Persons from the resettlement programme who arrived in Croatia during 2019, passed a 3-day cultural orientation programme in the Republic of Turkey in April 2019, prepared in cooperation with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC). For this purpose, the ICMC, Ministry of the Interior and the Jesuit Refugee Service cooperated in the drafting of the Croatian Cultural Orientation Trainer's Knowledge Manual so that experienced trainers could pass over all relevant information on living in the Republic of Croatia in the most efficient way possible. Given that practice has shown that previously resettled persons had difficulties understanding provided information on living in Croatia, additional emphasis had to be placed on preparing refugees for the journey, shaping realistic expectations with regard to continuing their life in the Republic of Croatia and steering them in terms of cultural norms.

As part of the project "Establishment of a resettlement mechanism", in 2019 the Ministry of the Interior began preparations to record a professional video that will be used in cultural orientations during future selection missions and the development of a mobile application for individuals who will be selected in selection missions. The aim of making this video and mobile application is to get acquainted with the resettlement program, arrival in the Republic of Croatia and the integration process and way of life in Croatia.

6.4.2. Integration measures upon arrival in Croatia

As a partner to the Government of the Republic of Croatia in the project entitled "Integration of persons under international protection resettled from Turkey and integration and accommodation of persons based on other forms of solidarity with EU Member States", Jesuit Refugee Service

acted in Sisak and Karlovac in 2019, as the new locations for some of the persons from the resettlement programme. In this regard, Jesuit Refugee Service held regular meetings and consultations throughout the year with cities' authorities, as well as individuals in competent services, institutions who were involved in direct contacts with the beneficiaries. In such a way, Jesuit Refugee Service presented to all relevant stakeholders on the local level of Sisak and Karlovac the programme for the integration of resettled persons and made itself available for communication, partnership, support, and cooperation which took place on a daily basis upon resettlement and which involved representatives of the cities, competent services, schools, religious communities, employers, civil societies, and volunteers.

The Croatian Red Cross implemented the project "ARCI - Activities of the Red Cross for the integration of resettled and relocated refugees", a transnational project funded by AMIF, led by the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, and implemented in cooperation with the Croatian Red Cross, Germany Red Cross and the Bulgarian Red Cross. The aim of the project is to improve and encourage the process of integration of persons coming to the Republic of Croatia through the resettlement and relocation programme.

In addition to daily activities related to assistance in exercising the rights of beneficiaries, the following activities were carried out within the project: three workshops were held for women with the aim of empowering and involving them in activities, activities were conducted in the local community to acquaint beneficiaries with the local community and to sensitize the population about the issue of integration (tourist tour in Zadar, fashion show in the City Library Dugave and Advent in Zagreb), a pocket edition of the guide on the rights and obligations of beneficiaries was published in English, French, Arabic and Farsi, a manual for educators and workbook for beneficiaries on the topic of socio-cultural orientation was made (in Croatian, English, Arabic and Farsi), the design was made and is currently in the process of proofreading and preparation for printing, workshops for beneficiaries on the topic of socio-cultural orientation and life skills were held and a series of workshops / trainings for employees and volunteers of the Croatian Red Cross and for service providers in the local community were also held. Materials for a Croatian language course adapted to people with granted international protection and their level of knowledge and understanding were developed, two videos were made and distributed on the topic of integration and the role of the Croatian Red Cross in the integration process, a draft version of the publication on the examples of good practice in the integration process was made.

Coordination meetings with relevant institutions and non-governmental organizations in the local community were held regularly in order to improve the integration process.

As part of the project, a contract was signed with the Vocational school in Zagreb for training of 10 women for profession of maids, but unfortunately the contract was terminated because there were no interested candidates.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) was implementing the project COMMIT “Facilitating the integration of resettled refugees in Croatia, Italy, Portugal and Spain”. During 2019, 11 sensitization sessions for host community and refugees already resettled (in cities: Zagreb, Karlovac, Sisak, and Pozega) were conducted. Sensitization sessions were primarily targeting education institutions, parents and children. Two main local stakeholders’ meetings were held in Sisak and Karlovac, aimed at informing to sensitize and to raise awareness among all representatives included in the integration process of newly received refugees. Additional value of those sessions was to raise preparedness of cities (Karlovac and Pozega) that resettled refugees for the first time.

In 2019, in order to promote integration at the local level, the Jesuit Refugee Service "Christmas Lunch with Refugees" was conducted for the fourth time, through which more than 30 families with the status of persons granted international protection were hosted by the same number of local families, monasteries and communities in Zagreb, Karlovac and Sisak. The project was supported by UNHCR Croatia.

6.5. NON-DISCRIMINATION MEASURES AND AWARENESS RAISING ON MIGRATION

6.5.1. Activities of state institutions

At the beginning of 2019, the publication "Challenges of Integration of Refugees into Croatian Society: Attitudes of Citizens and Readiness of Local Communities" of the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities was published within the project "Supporting the integration of third-country nationals in need of international protection", co-financed by AMIF (Image 5). The purpose of this publication, ie the purpose of the research conducted within the mentioned project is to provide support to local and regional self-government units in recognizing the challenges and possibilities of integration.

The Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, in cooperation with the Centre for Peace Studies and the Judicial Academy, organised a cycle of 5 half-day seminars on the provisions of the Criminal Code related to hate crimes and hate speech for judges, state attorneys, attorneys, police and civil society organisation representatives, particularly with regard to hate crimes against representatives of national minorities and hate crimes based on sexual orientation. Seminars were held in Split (6 February 2019), Osijek (5 April 2019), Varaždin (17 May 2019), Rijeka (7 June 2019), and Zagreb (12 June 2019), with a total of 109 participants. The seminars addressed the criminal and misdemeanour aspect of hate crime and hate speech - from the moment the crime is reported or becomes known, through the process of identifying hate elements in the motive and its adequate classification, all the way to processing and adequate sanctioning. They also reflected on the relevant practice and identified challenges, as well as the relevant practice of the European Court for Human Rights with a particular emphasis on discriminatory cases against the Republic of Croatia. These activities

didn't relate exclusively to the rights of persons who are in need of or have been granted international protection.



Image 5. Challenges of Integration of Refugees into Croatian Society: Attitudes of Citizens and Readiness of Local Communities

Source: <https://ljudskaprava.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Izazovi%20integracije%20izbjeglica%20u%20hrvatsko%20dru%C5%A1tvo.pdf>

The Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, in cooperation with the Centre for Peace Studies, follows the implementation of the Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online through posts on social networks (Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Dailymotion, Instagram, Snapchat, French platform). The results of the fourth cycle of Code of conduct monitoring indicate, for example, that some social networks have improved its algorithms for content removal and have employed additional staff in charge of monitoring post content, whereas some social networks do not remove any of their content.

6.5.2. Activities of non-governmental organizations

Throughout 2019, the Croatian Red Cross conducted trainings for employees and volunteers of the Croatian Red Cross and city Red Cross societies on the topic of integration of persons under international protection. Trainings on the topic of the integration procedure were also conducted for employees who work with persons under international protection in competent institutions, such as kindergartens, schools, health care institutions. They regularly communicated and organized meetings with important stakeholders such as the City of Zagreb, the Croatian Employment Service, the relevant social welfare centers, educational institutions, relevant ministries, NGOs and others. They have established good cooperation with the Libraries of the City of Zagreb with which they carry out various activities in the local community (fashion show, exhibitions, workshops).

The Croatian Red Cross regularly celebrates the World Refugee Day and the International Day of Migrants, which are covered by the media (radio, television). They publish all their activities on the website of the Croatian Red Cross, Facebook and Twitter.

On the streets of Zagreb, on four Zagreb squares (Ban Jelačić Square, Preradović Square, Republic of Croatia Square and King Tomislav Square) in April 2019, a photographic exhibition *Oni / They* was set up consisting of pop up installations with portraits of four people with international protection from Syria, Iraq and Iran currently living in Croatia. This was an exhibition from the accompanying program of the Festival of Tolerance, organized under the auspices of UNHCR Croatia and in cooperation with the Jesuit Refugee Service.

On the Europe Day and before the European Parliament elections, the Jesuit Refugee Service, in partnership with the European Commission Representation in Croatia, held a socializing of youth on 10 May at the European Square in Zagreb, where it presented to more than 500 high school graduates from all over Croatia and other participants its advocacy tendencies and concrete activities, with an emphasis on the project of resettlement and integration of Syrian citizens from Turkey to Croatia. As part of the event, the Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service for Southeast Europe, Fr. Tvrtko Barun, SJ, together with the State Secretary at the Ministry of the Interior, Mr. Žarko Katić, presented the cooperation between the Jesuit Refugee Service and the Ministry of the Interior on the resettlement program with emphasis on the integration activities that the Jesuit Refugee Service continuously carries out in its SOL Refugee Integration Center in Zagreb and

throughout Croatia. The coordinator of volunteers and social worker of the Jesuit Refugee Service Mirna Varga held an intercultural workshop on youth rapprochement entitled "Yesterday Strangers, Today Neighbors". The aim was to acquaint Croatian high school students with their peers who are in the status of persons with international protection, to make them aware of the importance of acceptance, support, but also the benefits of mutual exchange of language, cultural and other knowledge and skills and prevention of discrimination. Young people with approved international protection in the Republic of Croatia were also involved in the event as active participants.

The Jesuit Refugee Service also took part in a public cooking operation that took place on 10 May on Rijeka's Korzo. As part of the "Food and Community" project, the Jesuit Refugee Service, together with new fellow citizens and chefs from Syria and Iran, prepared about 500 portions for the citizens of Rijeka from food donated by retail chains. The aim of this action was to make citizens aware of, among other things, the rich culinary and cultural tradition brought to Croatia by persons who exercised their right to international protection.

In September 2019, the Jesuit Refugee Service presented the results, conclusions and methodology of the two-year project "Creating a counseling method for refugee women victims of gender-based violence (CCM-GVB)". This project, which was implemented simultaneously in 13 European countries, focused on the well-being, empowerment, counseling and integration of refugee women. This does not only mean women whose refugee status has been determined on the basis of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, but all women who are in the process of determining refugee status (ie seeking asylum), who have received international protection (subsidiary protection or asylum) or are in the process of deportation. The overall goal of this project is to inform, support and encourage the registration of refugee women victims of gender-based violence, providing them with access to support services. The aim of the project is to improve access to support services and to improve the capacity of professionals to help victims by training, mutual learning and the creation of a new support service (counseling methods). The activities carried out included creating a counseling method for refugee women, victims of gender-based violence, encouraging capacity building among counselors, collecting and evaluating data on the needs of victims, and establishing a network of experts.

On the International Human Rights Day, on 10 December 2019, the Jesuit Refugee Service organized a round table on the topic of integration of refugees into Croatian society at the European House in Zagreb. The round table was moderated by the Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Southeast Europe, Fr. Tvrtko Barun, SJ, while the discussion was attended by Giuseppe DiCaro, a representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; Alen Bowman, Ambassador of Canada to the Republic of Croatia, Asylum Seeker from Iran Donya Spanta and Fr. Jose Ignacio Garcia, SJ, Director of the European Office of the Jesuit Refugee Service on a special visit to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. All speakers agreed that additional efforts should be made in sustainable and inclusive policies, which should include people

with international protection as active participants in any debate concerning their lives and status, thus giving them the opportunity to point out all the needs and to offers possible solutions. Good cooperation between the governmental, non-governmental and civil sectors as well as religious communities was highlighted as particularly important.

6.6. MEASURES OF INTEGRATION OF THE CROATIAN DIASPORA

6.6.1. Pre-departure measures in countries of origin

In order to help the members of Croatian diaspora to get a language training prior to their return/integration in Croatia, the Central State Office for Croats Abroad in cooperation with the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences was offering free online Croatian courses A1. HR and A2. HR. They consist of 80 units of 45 minutes each. The interface, instructions and support are available in English and Spanish. In November 2019, there were more than 4,500 Level A1 users and 310 Level A2 users. The online users in USA, Australia, Canada, Chile, Argentina and Brazil were among the most represented users.

6.6.2. Integration measures in the Republic of Croatia

The Central State Office for Croats Abroad supports financially and operationally those diaspora organisations and NGOs in Croatia, which help diaspora and returnees to connect with the local Croatian communities and authorities in order to facilitate their integration in Croatia on a daily basis. The programs and activities of these organisations are being promoted and supported by the Office in view of developing awareness of contributions of the diaspora and of returnees. These actions aim at implementation of integration activities and higher visibility of those programs in public. For instance, the Office had financially supported a project called MEETING G2, a conference aimed at networking business people of Croatian origin from all over the world with increasing investment in Croatia and export of Croatian products. The organizers of the conference are a multidisciplinary group of Croats from the Diaspora and Croatia, whose goal is to create and strength business networks between the professionals in the Diaspora and in Croatia. The conference was held from 4 to 6 November 2019.

The Central State Office for Croats Abroad developed an educational program with a personal experience for young adults of Croatian descent between the ages of 18 – 30 who want to learn about their heritage, explore Croatia, connect with their Croatian identity and meet other young Croatian adults. Program is called The Domovina Birthright Program and during the programme, diaspora youth had the opportunity to connect with the members of national and local government, explore studying in Croatia and the Croatian way of life. The Domovina Birthright Program was created and established as a partnership program between the Association of Croatian American

Professionals (ACAP) and the State Office for Croats Abroad. Two-week educational program was held in July 2019.

New Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) measure, On the Job Training of Croatian Returnees from Emigration, has been developed, targeting Croatian emigrants' descendants, returnees and their family members. The measure lasts for 6 months, consists of on the job training under mentor's supervision and (if needed) classes related to workplace and/or Croatian language skills. Main purpose of the measure is integration into the labour market. In 2019, no training for this target group has been realized yet.

7. CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

7.1. ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP

Croatian citizenship and the requirements for its acquisition and termination are stipulated by the Croatian Citizenship Act (Official Gazette, No 53/91), which entered into force on 8 October 1991. The amendments to this Act were published in the Official Gazette No 28/92, 113/93, 130/11 and 110/15.

The Croatian Citizenship Act contains basic principles and standards known in the European legislation, such as the following principles: legal continuity of citizenship, prevention of statelessness, exclusivity of Croatian citizenship, equality of marital, extramarital and adopted children.

On 18 October 2019, the Croatian Parliament adopted the Act on amendments to the Croatian Citizenship Act (Official Gazette, No 102/19)¹³, which entered into force on 1 January 2020.

When it comes to the acquisition of citizenship by third-country nationals who are legally staying in the Republic of Croatia, the obligation to have full legal capacity has been removed, whereas the obligation to respect the legal order of the Republic of Croatia has been supplemented by the obligation to meet all the taxes and other government fees and to have no security obstacles for being admitted into Croatian citizenship.

Furthermore, some of the amendments to the Act include the following: the age limit for registering into the records of Croatian nationals has been lifted from 18 to 21 years of age, for acquiring Croatian citizenship by origin when it comes to a child who was born abroad and whose one parent was a Croatian national at the time of the child's birth. This amendment was introduced to enable applicants to personally register into the records of citizens if their parents failed to do so by the time they reached the age of majority.

Moreover, there is now no generational limit for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by emigrants' descendants, and they and their spouses are also exempted from the obligation to have knowledge of the Croatian language and Latin script, Croatian culture and social organisation. Likewise, the term emigrant is defined more precisely, as is the person who is not considered an emigrant. It is also proposed that a person who acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalisation makes a solemn oath, and that the procedure for gathering evidence is simplified for those members of the Croatian people who do not have personal evidence of belonging to the Croatian people but for whose parents this membership has been undoubtedly ascertained. Furthermore, the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalisation is enabled for minor children born abroad whose one

¹³ https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_10_102_2050.html

parent has acquired Croatian citizenship after the child was born, as an emigrant from the Republic of Croatia or an emigrant's descendant, or as a member of the Croatian people.

Finally, the new amendments prescribe that a person who has renounced Croatian citizenship cannot reacquire Croatian citizenship under any legal grounds.

7.2. STATELESSNESS

As an UNHCR implementing partner, the Civil Rights Project Sisak has been implementing the project entitled "Prevention of statelessness in Croatia" ever since 2017. The following activities were carried out in 2019:

- provision of free legal aid to stateless persons and persons in risk of losing citizenship
- field visits to Roma settlements within the framework of legal aid
- advocating activities throughout the Republic of Croatia in cooperation with the Ombudsman's Office
- the Coordination for the Prevention of Statelessness has been set up, whose members are all the relevant stakeholders in this area, from the Ministry of the Interior, Ombudsman's Office, professors from the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb, social welfare centres, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, a member of the Parliament, Mr Veljko Kajtazi, etc.
- advocating activities within the framework of the European Network on Statelessness, whose associate members we are
- continuous monitoring of e-consultations and provision of comments on laws, action plans and strategies
- cooperation with embassies, consular sections (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, etc.).

Within the framework of this project, the Civil Rights Project Sisak cooperates with UNHCR in providing legal aid to stateless persons and those in risk of losing citizenship.

Since 1 May 2020, the Civil Rights Project Sisak will be implementing a project entitled "Provision of support to persons under international protection aimed at their inclusion in the local community and labour market", together with the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy as the contracting authority.

8. BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

8.1 EXTERNAL BORDER MANAGEMENT

The Republic of Croatia, with the aim of protecting the external borders, has 6,500 border police officers and modern technical equipment that is constantly evolving. For the purpose of state border control, the border police uses various equipment: stationary thermovision devices, mobile thermovision devices, hand-held and remote controlled thermovision devices, night vision devices, binoculars, day / night surveillance cameras and systems, GPS devices, personal vehicles, vans, off-road vehicles and motorcycles, type C river vessels and other equipment. In border patrols, police dogs are used for protection and search.

On 26 September 2019, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted a new Integrated Border Management Strategy and Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy (Government Conclusion, Class: 022-03/19-07/342, Reg. No. : 50301-29/23-19-3 of 26 September 2019).

The purpose of adopting the new Integrated Border Management Strategy at the national level is:

- introduction of a new European concept of integrated border management in order to further consolidate all participants at the national and European level, with an emphasis on effective control of external borders,
- positioning the strategic role of integrated border management at the national and European level,
- harmonization of political and operational expectations in an effective integrated approach to border management,
- establishing a vision and mission of integrated border management,
- setting strategic goals for border management.

The Action Plan, adopted in accordance with national regulations, is based on the model of cooperation and implementation through the vertical and horizontal component and the model of control of the four pillars. It sets deadlines and determines the bodies responsible for the implementation of individual measures.

The Inter-Agency Working Group for Integrated Border Management monitors the implementation of measures identified in the framework of inter-agency cooperation.

The Strategy and Action Plan are jointly implemented by representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Border Directorate (holders of activities and leads the work of the Inter-Agency Working Group) and representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture (now phytosanitary, veterinary and border sanitary inspection bodies are in the State Inspectorate), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Tourism and Personal Data Protection Agency.

8.1.1. Equipping for the purpose of external border control

In 2019, surveillance systems were established at the green border and stationary cameras were installed at 20 locations: 12 at the border with the Republic of Serbia, six at the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina and two at the border with Montenegro. Locations on the border with Serbia are: Tovarnik Railway Station, Tele2 telephone pole in Tovarnik, Sitnatovo - Strošinci, Sotin - Dunav, Silos Vupik-Vukovar, pole Anić-Bajakovo, pole Njemci - Amarilis, pole - Radoš, pole Šarengrad - Dunav, VIP telephone pole Principovac - Ilok, Bapska - Telek, pole Borovo - Dunav. Locations with Bosnia and Herzegovina are: Vinjani Donji border crossing, Volinja railway bridge, VIP Dvor, Bojna, Brdo Buhača, Brdo Čelopek. Locations with Montenegro are: Kaštid and Vitaljina.

Vehicles and various equipment were procured through completed projects in 2019. 60 laptops were procured through the project "The procurement of laptops for the purpose of more efficient control of the external EU border", 49 dogs and vehicles for the transport of dogs were procured through the project "The procurement of dogs and dog transport vehicles", 50 cameras for crossing points were procured through project "The procurement of cameras for the purpose of monitoring crossing places on the external border". 200 binoculars were procured through the project "Binoculars for the purpose of external border control" and 400 day / night cameras through the project "Setting up perimeter protection on the external EU border". All equipment was sent for use in the field (in 10 police administrations at the external border and to the Mobile Unit for the implementation of state border control).

In order to strengthen border check, in 2019 two new border crossings were built: Gornji Brgat and Vitaljina. A technical protection system was set up on five border crossings points: Slavonski Brod, Vinjani Gornji, Podprolog, Slivno and Pašin Potok. 12 density measuring devices and 179 computers, 172 travel documents readers and 46 license plate recognition cameras were procured to renew the infrastructure used by NBMIS.

8.1.2. Capacity building for border police

8.1.2.1. National trainings

During 2019, many trainings were carried out for the border police. Thus, four basic border police training programmes were held, which were successfully completed by 120 police officers (in Kupari - 52 police officers, at the Police Academy - 43 police officers in Spačva - 25 police officers). The implementation of basic training is co-financed by the Internal Security Fund.

A significant number of additional professional trainings courses for multipliers were conducted. Thus, from 1 to 5 April 2019 and from 27 to 31 May 2019, training of 21 new multipliers in the field of fundamental rights was held. From 13 to 17 May 2019, training of 12 new multipliers in

EU and Schengen law was conducted. From 20 to 24 May 2019, training of ten new multipliers in combating trafficking in human beings was conducted.

In September 2019, 26 new multipliers in state border surveillance were trained. From 28 to 30 October 2019, the second seminar for multiplier lecturers in state border surveillance was held, which was completed by a total of 23 police officers. From 26 to 28 November 2019, the third seminar for multiplier lecturers in state border surveillance was held at the Police Academy, which was completed by a total of 15 police officers.

From 9 to 18 October 2019, a training program for new multipliers in document counterfeiting was held at the Police Academy, which was successfully completed by 15 police officers.

A large number of training sessions were held by multipliers on local level, which included 1,639 police officers who underwent additional training in certain modules (Table 3), in order to further strengthen human resources in the area of borders and Schengen:

Table 3

Type of training	Number of participants (police officers)
EU AND SCHENGEN LAW	338
PREVENTING DOCUMENT MISUSE	43
DETECTION OF STOLEN VEHICLES	25
SECOND LINE BORDER CHECKS	105
FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	448
NBMIS FUNCTIONALITIES (NATIONAL BORDER MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM)	133
COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING	201
RISK ANALYSIS	247
VISA ISSUANCE ON BCPS	99

Source: HR EMN NCP

Furthermore, at the joint training of customs and police officers within the CELBET 2 project (Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert Team), on the topic of examining and search of persons and means of transport, at the border crossing point Bajakovo and Stara Gradiška, from 16 to 20 September 2019, eight police officers participated in the training and two police officers as lecturers.

From 9 to 11 October 2019, the Customs Training Center, on the topic of examining and search of persons and means of transport, held an additional joint training for customs and police officers as part of the CELBET 2 project. The training was attended by eight police officers and two police officers as lecturers.

Based on the projects of the Border Police Directorate, and co-financed through the Internal Security Fund, other trainings were conducted. In the period from 7 to 18 October 2019, safe off-road driving training was conducted for 101 border police officers. In the period November-December 2019, 200 police officers attended an English language course A2 degree.

8.1.2.2. Cooperation with other countries and Frontex

In cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany, from 12 to 14 November 2019, training in document misuse was held at the Border Police Accommodation and Training Center in Spačva. The training was held by two police experts from the Federal Republic of Germany, and 16 police officers from the border police participated in the training. From 2 to 5 December 2019, a seminar in vehicle smuggling was also held at the Border Police Accommodation and Training Center in Spačva, as part of the professional training for border police officers, to which a total of 15 police officers from 11 police departments were sent. The lecture was given by two police officers from the Federal Republic of Germany and a national multiplier for combating vehicle smuggling.

In cooperation with the Republic of Slovenia, from 20 to 22 November 2019, in Gotenica, Republic of Slovenia, an advanced seminar in combating counterfeit documents was held with the participation of two border police officers, and from 6 to 8 November 2019 in Gotenica, an advanced seminar in detection stolen vehicles was held with the participation of two border police officers.

During 2019, and as part of the American EXBS (Export Control and Related Border Security) program, EXBS training in combating vehicle smuggling was conducted with the participation of two police officers (in March 2019), followed by EXBS training in stolen vessels where two police officers also participated (in May 2019) and an EXBS document identification and verification training attended by three participating police officers and two police officers as lecturers (in October 2019).

In 2019, border police officers also participated in 52 profile trainings / workshops / meetings organized by the Frontex Training Unit. A total of 70 border police officers were sent to trainings / workshops / meetings (more in the table in the Statistical appendix, annex 6, on page 94)

8.1.3. Participation in Frontex joint operations

During 2019, the Republic of Croatia actively participated in Frontex joint operations.

Joint operations Focal Points and FOA Western Balkans were conducted in Croatia. A joint operation Focal Points were conducted at the following border police stations: Bajakovo, Tovarnik, Stara Gradiška, Nova Sela and Karasovići. Also, a joint operation Focal Points Sea was conducted in Dubrovnik. A joint operation FOA Western Balkan was conducted at the Bajakovo, Tovarnik and Karasovići police stations.

The Republic of Croatia also participated in Frontex operations joint: Focal Points, Coordination Points, Poseidon Sea, FOA South Eastern and others conducted in other EU Member States and third countries, especially in Greece and Albania.

8.1.4. Cooperation with third countries

In the field of border management, in 2019 Croatia also cooperated with third countries.

Pursuant to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on cooperation in the border control (as of 29 March 2007), a total of 1 132 mixed patrols were held in 2019, of which 568 were in Croatia and 564 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Pursuant to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on police cooperation (dated 25 May 2009), the Training Program for Police Officers for the Conduct of Mixed Patrols was agreed in accordance with the Training Program, which included seven hours of theoretical instructions (first day) and demonstration exercise – six hours (second day). The demonstration exercise involved the exercise of the powers of visiting police officers in conducting mixed patrols.

Since all the preparatory actions prescribed by the bilateral agreements on cross-border police cooperation with the Republic of Serbia have been completed, it is still necessary to agree at the level of ministries on the time of establishing of mixed patrols. On 3 June 2019, representatives of the Border Police Directorate and representatives of the police of the Republic of Serbia held a working meeting related to the implementation of mixed patrols with the Republic of Serbia in the police administration Vukovar-Srijem, border crossing point Bajakovo.

8.2. THE SCHENGEN ISSUE

In October 2019, the European Commission submitted a Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the verification of the full implementation of the Schengen acquis in Croatia, stating that the Republic of Croatia fulfilled the technical criteria.

9. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND MIGRANT SMUGGLING

The area of irregular migration is regulated by the Foreigners Act with several ordinances, the Protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Children, standard operating procedures for applicants for international protection and readmission agreements.

During 2019, new standard operating procedures were developed in relation to the treatment of applicants for international protection, and they are described in Chapter 4.4. Access to international protection.

9.1. STATISTICS

In 2019, the number of illegal state border crossings increased by 147.1% compared to 2018, amounting to 20,278 irregular state border crossings (Table 4). Most third-country nationals are accepted by the police of other countries. The top five countries of origin for third-country nationals are Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iraq and Syria. The largest increase was recorded among Iraqi citizens.

Table 4

Nationality	Number of illegal border crossings			Place of occurrence			
	2018.	2019.	+ -%	border crossing point	near the border	in the depths of the territory	accepted from the police of other states
Afghanistan	1669	3776	126,2	1663	337	382	1394
Albania	428	463	8,2	29	64	277	93
Algeria	285	1223	329,1	18	82	168	955
Bangladesh	255	1129	342,7	34	90	35	970
Bosnia and Herzegovina	92	90	-2,2	23	24	37	6
India	161	389	141,6	9	52	34	294

Iraq	356	1730	386,0	28	512	611	579
Iran	900	894	-0,7	41	139	294	420
Kosovo	501	662	32,1	96	86	349	131
Morocco	132	829	528,0	30	68	54	677
Pakistan	1186	4060	242,3	71	356	95	3538
Syria	416	1258	202,4	30	198	313	717
Serbia	79	85	7,6	10	23	39	13
Tunisia	83	241	190,4	18	48	54	121
Turkey	942	1874	98,9	157	140	1145	432
Remaining	722	1575	118,1	130	259	399	787
Total	8207	20278	147,1	2387	2478	4286	11127

Source: Ministry of the Interior,

https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/Statisticki_pregled_2019_WEB.pdf

During 2019, a total of 946 criminal offenses were reported under Art. 326 of the Criminal Code “Illegal entry, movement and stay in the Republic of Croatia, another EU Member State or a signatory to the Schengen Agreement” for which 983 suspects were reported. During 2018, 619 criminal offenses and 620 persons were recorded. The number of criminal offenses in 2019 compared to 2018 increased by 53%. In 2017, there were 365 criminal offenses when 321 persons were reported.

9.2. PREVENTION OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND MIGRANT SMUGGLING

Police officers of the Ministry of the Interior carry out on a daily basis measures and actions aimed at prevention, detection and prosecution of criminal offenses and other punishable behaviour related to smuggling of people and illegal entry of migrants, as well as identifying organisers of criminal activities of new forms of this type of crime, activities and areas of work of organised criminal groups, especially in parts of the Republic of Croatia that are assessed as particularly threatened by this type of punishable behavior.

Enhanced activities, related to combating irregular migration and crimes related to smuggling of people are continuously carried out within the framework of operations with the following code names: OA "ISTOK", OA "KORIDOR II", OA "KORIDOR-ZAPAD", OA "KORIDOR SJEVER" and OA "KORIDOR JUG".

The work of the EU Policy Cycle is an important contribution to the fight against organized crime groups that facilitate irregular migration, in which Europol has a significant role to play in supporting the exchange and analysis of information and operational coordination.

As regards co-operation with third countries in combating irregular migration and migrant smuggling, bilateral and multilateral activities and efforts to combat human trafficking on the Western Balkans route have been enhanced through the use of the Joint Operational Office (JOO). The Joint Operations Office was established in Vienna in 2016 at the initiative of Austria. Under existing agreements, such as Prüm or PCC SEE, JOO officials conduct investigations from a single joint location.

9.3. PROJECTS

As already mentioned in the chapter "International Protection and Asylum", in 2019 the project "Monitoring the procedures taken by police officers of the Ministry of the Interior in the area of irregular migration and asylum" was implemented. On that occasion, 20 observations of treatment of irregular migrants were conducted. The observation was performed by lawyers from the Croatian Legal Center and UNHCR staff.

10. TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

10.1. NATIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the period from 2018 to 2021 covers all areas of the current national documents dealing with the issue of combating trafficking in human beings, and the proposed measures and activities include work experience of all relevant state administration bodies, civil society organizations and international organizations. Special attention is paid to further strengthening cooperation between the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of the Interior in criminal proceedings in cases of trafficking in human beings.

Several adopted measures aim to strengthen the prevention and identification of third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking, including: the development of indicators, guidelines and tools for the identification of victims of trafficking among migrants and asylum seekers; and conducting training and information workshops on trafficking in human beings for staff and volunteers working in reception centers for international protection applicants.

Combating trafficking in human beings is further regulated by protocols. Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia in 2019, as a developer of measure 2 - Adoption of amendments to the Protocol on the integration/reintegration of human trafficking victims under the Normative Framework of the National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2018 to 2021, and within its regular scope of work developed a new Protocol on the integration/reintegration of human trafficking victims, in cooperation with the co-developers of this measure, the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia, Croatian Employment Service, PETRA network and Centre for Women War Victims - ROSA, as well as civil society organisations. The Protocol entered into force on 1 April 2019. This Protocol, together with the Protocol for the identification, assistance and protection of human trafficking victims, the Protocol on the actions to be taken in voluntary and safe return of human trafficking victims and the Standard Operating Procedures of the ministry competent for social welfare and the ministry competent for exercising rights under the healthcare system (which were adopted in the years preceding 2019) regulates the comprehensive treatment of human trafficking victims.

Purpose of new Protocol is to specify the procedures to be followed and those responsible for them in the process of integration/reintegration of human trafficking victims into the society. This Protocol will result in the implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy and it will take into account the interests of a child. The Protocol takes into consideration specific health and other

needs and risks of human trafficking victims given their sex, age, disability, pregnancy, parenthood, sexual orientation and gender identity. The provisions of this protocol do not specifically refer to persons who have been granted international protection, but rather to all victims of human trafficking, regardless of their status or origin.

According to the Protocol for the identification, assistance and protection of human trafficking victims, human trafficking victim may use Aid and Protection Program for Human Trafficking Victims (Program). In 2019, three victims of trafficking in human beings were identified, and one victim of trafficking in human beings of third country citizenship exercised the rights from the Program achieved through the cooperation of all civil society organizations and state institutions involved in the Program.

10.2. IMPROVING IDENTIFICATION OF AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONAL VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

10.2.1. Educations

10.2.1.1. National trainings

On 27 and 28 February 2019, police officers from the Organised Crime Department of the National Police Office for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime participated in a two-day specialised training for members of mobile teams for combating human trafficking which was held in Opatija, in the Republic of Croatia and was organised by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Red Cross.

In accordance with the National Plan for Combating Human Trafficking for the period 2018-2021 and based on the Police Training Plan for 2019, the Police Academy organised, in cooperation with the Judicial Academy, two two-day seminars for judicial officials and police officers on combating trafficking in persons. The seminars were held on 11 and 12 March, and on 13 and 14 March 2019 in Josip Jović Police School museum at the Police Academy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. The seminars were attended by police officers working on organised crime, as well as assistant heads of criminal police departments in police stations and heads of sector/heads of criminal police departments in all police administrations, who then shared the knowledge acquired with regard to combating trafficking in human beings to other police officers in their organisational units. From March to June 2019, more than 1 500 police officers have been educated on the subject of trafficking.

A police officer from the Department for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime in Zagreb participated as a lecturer in an additional training for new multipliers - border police officers, which was held from 20 to 24 May 2019 in Admiral Hotel in Zagreb. The training was conducted under

the module entitled “Combating Trafficking in Human Beings” and was financed from the EU funds allocated to the Republic of Croatia under the EMAS Emergency Assistance project entitled “Strengthening the activities of border control on the Croatian part of the external border due to enhanced migratory pressure”.

In July 2019, the Croatian Red Cross organized a training for border police officers on the identification of victims of human trafficking among the migrant population.

10.2.1.2. Cooperation between (Member) States

Police officers participated in many different anti-trafficking courses / seminars / conferences held in other Member States.

Thus criminal police officers participated in the ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy) course on Human Trafficking which was held in Budapest, Hungary from 18 to 22 February 2019.

From 20 to 24 May 2019, police officers participated in CEPOL seminar 6/2019 on Trafficking in Children which was held in Loures, Portugal. From 20 to 24 May 2019, police officers participated in CEPOL seminar 5/2019 on Trafficking in Human Beings - Multidisciplinary Approach which was held in Szczytno, Poland. From 17 to 20 September 2019, police officers participated in CEPOL seminar 7/2019 on Trafficking in Human Beings - Labour Exploitation which was held in Stockholm, Sweden.

From 17 to 18 October 2019, police officers participated in a conference on combating trafficking in children, non-EU nationals, which was held in Lisbon, Portugal.

From 5 to 8 November 2019, police officers participated in CEPOL course 8/2019 on Trafficking in Human Beings - Protection of Victims which was held in Heraklion, Crete. From 25 to 29 November 2019, police officers participated in CEPOL course 73-19 on joint investigation leadership, which was held in Lyon, France.

10.2.1.3. Cooperation with third countries

Regarding anti-trafficking activities, there was active cooperation with third countries.

From 13 to 17 May 2019, Module 1 of the Partnership for Education on complex criminal investigations was held at the premises of the Police Academy, in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy to the Republic of Croatia, within the framework of the Partnership for Education Programme which has been carried out since 2013. From 27 to 31 May 2019, Module 2 of the Partnership for Education on criminal investigations of human trafficking and smuggling was held at the premises of the Police Academy. Modules were intended for regional police and state attorney

offices. During this module, concrete cases of human trafficking and smuggling were presented. Police officers from the Criminal Police Directorate of the National Police Office for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime participated in the module.

As regards neighboring countries, from 28 to 29 May 2019, police officers participated in a Regional European meeting of the INTERPOL's Human Trafficking Expert Group (HTEG), which was held in Belgrade, the Republic of Serbia. From 17 to 21 June 2019, police officers participated in CEPOL's Western Balkans Financial Investigation training programme entitled "Financial investigations in connection with trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling", which was held in Podgorica, Montenegro and on 30 October 2019, police officers participated in a regional seminar on "Enhancing cross-border cooperation in investigations and criminal prosecution of migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings in South East Europe" which was organised by the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, French Ministry of the Interior and UNDOC and held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

10.2.2. Implementation of joint action days

Police officers in police administrations also carried out preventive and repressive activities through joint operations. Thus, within the framework of the EU Policy Cycle and EMPACT priorities concerning "Human Trafficking", in cooperation with Europol and in coordination with the General Police Directorate, police officers participated in the implementation of EMPACT Action Days (EAD 2019), Joint Action Days 2018 (EMPACT 2018 - JAD - Joint Action Days,) organised by Europol and dedicated to combating human trafficking which were also held in all EU Member States. During the Joint Action Days, a number of operational activities planned by Operational Action Plans were coordinated.

So in the period from 8 to 10 April 2019, they participated in the implementation of priorities "Trafficking in Human Beings - Labour Exploitation", in cooperation with the Labour Inspectorate, the Ministry of Labour and Pension System of the Republic of Croatia. During this period, 2,196 police officers checked a total of 18,353 persons and 11,160 vehicles in 288 locations. One minor human trafficking victim was identified who was trafficked for the purpose of illicit or forced marriage and 10 persons were suspected of having committed a criminal offence of "Trafficking in Human Beings".

In the period from 18 to 20 June 2019, they participated in the implementation of priorities "Trafficking in Human Beings - Combating Trafficking in Children", during which 4,567 police officers checked a total of 67,554 persons and 62,077 vehicles in 545 locations. No human trafficking victims were identified.

In the period from 16 to 20 September 2019, they participated in the implementation of Large-Scale Joint Action Days 2019 (LSJAD 2019) under the priority "Trafficking in Human Beings -

with special emphasis on combating trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation and exploitation for forced criminality, in particular when it comes to minors (children)". During this time, 7,286 police officers checked a total of 99,742 persons and 25,118 vehicles in 474 locations. One female adult victim of trafficking in human beings, a national of the Republic of Croatia, was identified who was sexually exploited by a national of the Republic of Croatia.

10.2.3. Meetings, visits

On 18 January 2019, a working meeting was held with representatives of the U.S. Embassy with a view to developing the annual State Department Trafficking in Persons Report for 2018 (the so-called TIP Report).

As a body that coordinates the work of the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and its Operational Team, and at the request of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia organised an official visit of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to the Republic of Croatia. The OSCE delegation visited Croatia from 3 to 5 September 2019. On 4 September 2019, in the presence of the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, police officers held a meeting with representatives of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights on the referral mechanism, suppression of criminal offenses of human trafficking and identification of victims of trafficking in human beings in the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

This official visit will result in an official report and analysis of the system for combating human trafficking in the Republic of Croatia, as well as recommendations for its further improvement. The focus of this activity is not in particular on persons who have been granted international protection, but rather on all victims of human trafficking, regardless of their status or origin.

Upon an invitation of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe for the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia organised a third-in-a-row evaluation visit to the Republic of Croatia of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) with a view to evaluating the implementation of this Convention. The third evaluation cycle started in November 2018 and it focused on access to justice and efficiency (availability) of legal remedies to human trafficking victims. The Republic of Croatia is one of the first signatory countries to this Convention to enter into the third evaluation cycle carried out by GRETA experts. The GRETA delegation visited the Republic of Croatia from 16 to 20 September 2019. The program of the official visit was first harmonised with the goals and special interests of GRETA experts and it included seven meetings with a total of 58 representatives from 17 institutions (Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of

Croatia, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Judicial Academy, coordinators of the Network of Support and Cooperation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences, representatives of the judiciary, State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Health, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, Ministry of Science and Education, Education and Teacher Training Agency, Ombudsman, Ombudsman for Children, Gender Equality Ombudsman, Croatian Employment Service and State Inspectorate). Two field visits were also organised to the Detention centre for Foreigners in Ježevo and a national shelter for human trafficking victims at the request of the delegation. This official visit will result in an official report of the Council of Europe on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the Republic of Croatia and recommendations for its further improvement.

On 12 December 2019, a working meeting was held with representatives of the U.S. Embassy with a view to developing the annual State Department Trafficking in Persons Report for 2019 (the so-called TIP Report).

10.2.4. Awareness raising

As already mentioned, in July 2019, the Croatian Red Cross organised an education training for border police officers on the identification of human trafficking victims among migrant population. Practical guidelines and a pocket guide for field staff were also disseminated, entitled "Identification of human trafficking victims in the countries of transit and destination in Europe".

The guidelines and the pocket guide are the result of cooperation between the employees of the Croatian Red Cross, the Department for programmes aimed at preventing trafficking in human beings and providing psychosocial support and the France terre d'asile organisation within the framework of the STEP project "Integration of human trafficking victims through proactive identification and protection". The materials designed should facilitate the identification of potential human trafficking victims among migrants and enhance intersectoral cooperation in this area. The guidelines and the pocket guide were printed in the Croatian, English and French language (Image 6).

In cooperation between the Croatian Red Cross and the Education and Teacher Training Agency trainings are being conducted for employees in the education system with a view to organising workshops on combating trafficking in human beings as part of the civic education in schools. Leaflets aimed at raising the awareness about the risk of trafficking in human beings have also been distributed in cooperation between the Croatian Red Cross and the Croatian Employment Service.

On the occasion of the European Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October 2019, a round table on "Trafficking for the purpose of sexual and labour exploitation of children and youth - examples from the practice" was organised by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities

of the Government of the Republic of Croatia at the conference hall of the European Commission Representation in the Republic of Croatia. The aim was to raise public awareness about trafficking in human beings, in particular children. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) provided lecturers who participated in the Round Table and it presented a guide which it published and which concerns unaccompanied children in EU Member States (“Children deprived of parental care found in an EU Member State other than their own. A guide”). The participants of the Round Table also included representatives of the Office of the Ombudsman for Children, the Municipal Criminal Court in Zagreb, the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy and the Ministry of the Interior. The focus of this activity is not in particular on persons who have been granted international protection, but rather on all victims of human trafficking, regardless of their status or origin.

On the occasion of the European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings, a Facebook campaign of the Croatian Red Cross was conducted. Every day, messages related to the prevention of human trafficking were published on the Facebook profile of the Croatian Red Cross.

In December 2019, a training of educators for volunteers of the City Society of the Red Cross Zagreb was held on the topic of prevention of human trafficking. Upon completion of the training, educators were trained to hold trainings in primary and secondary schools. Throughout the year, human trafficking prevention workshops were held for primary and secondary school students at the Croatian Red Cross Education Center.

A leaflet entitled “Living and working in Croatia” was published with a view to raising awareness about potential risks of human trafficking when it comes to employment. The leaflet was published in the English, Arabic, Farsi and Croatian languages. The leaflet is intended for applicants for international protection and migrant population in general.

Furthermore, flyers containing information on human trafficking risks were published, as well as posters in the English, Pashto, Farsi and Arabic languages.

All those materials were published by the Croatian Red Cross within the framework of the programme of integration of human trafficking victims through proactive identification and protection.



Identifikacija žrtava trgovanja ljudima u zemljama tranzita i odredišta u Europi

Džepni vodič za djelatnike na terenu



HRVATSKI CRVENI KRIŽ



Projekt sufinancira Fond Europske unije za azil, migracije i integraciju (AMIF)

Image 6. Pocket guide

Source: <https://www.hck.hr/novosti/identifikacija-zrtava-trgovanja-ljudima-u-zemljama-tranzita-i-odredista-u-europi/9862>

11. RETURN AND READMISIJON

Regarding the return process, it is carried out in accordance with the regulations described in the chapter "Irregular migration and migrant smuggling".

The Republic of Croatia has signed 26 readmission agreements. The Service for Illegal Migration of the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the implementation of the agreements. In terms of the return of third-country nationals, the most important are the agreements signed with neighboring countries. Cooperation in the field of readmission with Slovenia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro takes place almost every day according to the established practice, both informal and formal procedure of acceptance and return of third-country nationals.

11.1. STATISTIC

During 2019, the total number of third-country nationals who returned to their country of origin was 2,456. Of those who returned, 1,566 were forced returned (64%), while 890 returned voluntarily (36%). During 2018, the total number of third-country nationals who returned to their country of origin was 2,212, of which 894 (40%) returned voluntarily and 1,318 (60%) were forced returned. An overview of return statistics from 2014 to 2019 can be seen in Table 5, and an overview of readmission statistics with neighboring countries in 2018 and 2019 in Table 6.

Table 5

	2014.	2015.	2016.	2017.	2018.	2018.
Voluntary return	830	1250	940	1040	894	890
Forced return	1415	690	950	1085	1318	1566
Total	2245	1940	1890	2125	2212	2456

Source: Eurostat migration statistics, Ministry of the Interior

Table 6

Acceptance and return based on readmission agreements for 2018/2019						
Border toward	Acceptance		+-%	Return		+-%
	2018.	2019.		2018.	2019.	
Bosnia&Herzegovina	0	29		604	612	1,32
Montenegro	0	0		15	16	6,67
Hungary	23	301	1208,70	0	0	
Slovenia	2170	10620	389,40	15	29	93,33
Serbia	5	2	-60,00	48	213	343,75
Total	2198	10952	398,27	682	870	27,57

Source: Ministry of the Interior

11.2. PROJECTS

The Ministry of the Interior has implemented many return-related projects during 2019. Some projects are implemented in collaboration with international organizations or NGOs. All these projects are funded by AMIF.

During 2019, the project "Assisted voluntary return" was implemented, for which a contract was concluded between the Ministry of Interior and the International Organization for Migration on 13 December 2018. The duration of the project is 24 months, so the project will continue in 2020. The project plans to inform 1,000 third-country nationals residing illegally in the Republic of Croatia, applicants for international protection and other third-country nationals who wish to return voluntarily to their country of origin or another third country. The program also plans to implement 200 voluntary returns and provide 30 reintegration assistance packages.

During 2019, the International Organization for Migration conducted eight assisted voluntary returns.

Regarding forced return, on May 27, 2019, the Decision on the allocation of funds for the implementation of the project "Monitoring of forced return" within the national program of AMIF was made. The Croatian Law Center started implementing the project on 4 April 2019. An Agreement on financing the implementation of the project was concluded between the Directorate for European Affairs, International Relations and EU Funds as the responsible body in the

management and control system for national programs of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund and between the Croatian Law Center as a beneficiary. During 2019, based on this agreement, the Border Police Directorate announced 310 forced returns to the monitoring organization, and the monitoring organization monitored 64 forced returns. The monitoring organization also observes the conditions in the detention centers for foreigners.

Through the project, a new kitchen and laundry were built in the Reception Center for Foreigners Ježevo, and equipment for laundry, kitchen, hall and exterior decoration was procured. The project "Strengthening the capacity of the Reception Center for Foreigners" began on 5 October 2017 and ended on 22 November 2019, and since then the kitchen and laundry are fully operational.

Two more projects were in progress in 2019 at the Detention Center for Foreigners in Ježevo - "Assistance in maintaining adequate accommodation for the Detention Center for Foreigners" and "Improving the conditions of accommodation and work in the Detention Center for Foreigners in Ježevo".

Through AMIF, the project "Implementation of the return procedure for the return of third-country nationals", was also approved. Project covers the costs of preparation and implementation of return operations for third-country nationals.

The project "Free legal aid in the return process" was also implemented during 2019. The aim of this project is an efficient and fair return system for third-country nationals. As part of the project, third-country nationals who are in the process of return are provided with free legal aid. Free legal aid includes legal advice, lawsuits and representation before an administrative court. On 22 March 2017, an agreement was signed between the Independent Sector for Schengen Coordination and European Union Projects and the Ministry of the Interior on the direct allocation of financial resources for the implementation of the project "Free legal aid in the return process". On 29 October 2018, the Independent Sector for Schengen Coordination and EU Funds concluded with the Ministry of Interior an annex to the Agreement on direct allocation of funds for the implementation of the project "Free legal aid in return process", which extends its duration until the fourth quarter of 2020. In the first quarter of 2021, the final reporting and closing of the project will follow.

During 2019, the project "Translation and expansion of the network of translators in the return procedure" was implemented. The aim of this project is an effective system of return of third-country nationals in accordance with the regulations of the European Union and the Republic of Croatia. The purpose of this project is to ensure that third-country nationals in the return process have a translation into a language they understand, and thus the conditions for implementing an effective return system in accordance with EU and Croatian legislation are ensured, thus contributing to the protection of third-country nationals' rights in the return process. The project has been implemented since 2016, and in the second quarter of 2018, an annex to the contract was signed, which assured continuation of the implementation of this project, the duration of which was expected until the fourth quarter of 2019. On 28 November 2019, the second annex to the grant

agreement for the implementation of this project under the AMIF was signed, extending the duration of the use of translation services in the return process until the fourth quarter of 2022, followed by the final project reporting and closure in the first quarter of 2023. As part of the project, contracts were signed with translators to provide translation services. List of translators has been compiled and updated regularly if necessary.

11.3. NEWS IN THE FIELD OF RETURN

As far as voluntary return is concerned, the project "Assisted voluntary return" started in 2019. Organization of charter flights is a novelty in the field of forced return. On 25 October 2019, in cooperation with the Slovenian police and on 29 November 2019, independently, the Detention Center for Foreigners organized charter flights, which, accompanied by police officers, forced returned five citizens of the Republic of Kosovo on the route Zagreb - Pristina. The costs of organizing the flight were reimbursed from AMIF.

11.4. EDUCATION

Regarding capacity building, in November 2019, a training of return experts was organized by the National Contact Point for the European Migration Network in the Republic of Croatia and the Border Police Directorate. Approximately 30 people participated, namely heads of services / departments for illegal migration from 20 police administrations, heads of three detention centers for foreigners, representatives of decision-making services in the process of granting international protection and representatives of service for accommodation of applicants for international protection.

11.5. COOPERATION

Police officers from the Detention Center for Foreigners participated in joint Frontex operations.

Thus, from 7 January to 8 March 2019, one police officer was engaged in Sofia, in the Migration Service of the Republic of Bulgaria as a return expert.

Six police officers were engaged on the island of Lesbos in Greece in a joint Frontex operation JO Poseidon Readmission activities 2019 - readmission of third-country nationals to Turkey, and fingerprinting / registration of third-country nationals at Camp Moria (Lesbos), at different times periods. One police officer was in the period from 30 January to 27 February 2019, one police officer from 27 February to 27 March 2019, one police officer from 27 March to 24 April 2019, one police officer from October 8 to November 6, 2019 and two police officers from November 6 to December 5, 2019.

STATISTICS APPENDIX

Annex 1. Utilization of the annual quota for 2019 on December 27, 2019.

Source: Ministry of the Interior

<https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2019/Iskori%C5%A1tenost%20kvota/ISKORISTENOST%20GODISNJE%20KVOTE%20ZA%202019.%20NA%20DAN%2027.12.2019..pdf>

ACTIVITIES	NAME OF OCCUPATION	QUOTA	REMAINING PLACES	IN PROGRESS
Construction	Carpenter	3700	322	291
	Mason	3620	224	215
	Reinforced concrete worker	1650	132	131
	Concrete worker	1150	131	108
	Construction machinery manager	550	48	30
	Electrical - installation	740	44	39
	Electrical	400	93	29
	Roofer	620	69	29
	House painter	740	125	90
	Ceramist	810	115	85
	Welder	1075	172	82
	Plumber	390	41	30
	Plasterer	1060	64	63
	Geo drillworker	80	36	6
	Isolation worker	550	146	26

	Driver	240	48	17
	Asphalt worker	160	41	4
	Mechanic	80	11	5
	Woodworker	400	66	45
	Stonemason	90	9	6
	Floor layer	110	28	9
	Auxiliary construction worker	1800	97	108
	Construction worker	1850	110	97
	Fitter	2250	258	195
	Total:	24115	2430	1740
Shipbuilding	Shipfitter	230	30	12
	Straightener	5	5	0
	Electro-welder	120	28	10
	Welder	205	44	32
	Locksmith	80	24	10
	Ship-pipeworkers	160	21	6
	Shipferryman	20	10	1
	AKZ worker /painter	80	23	7
	Grinder and metal cleaner	110	28	4
	Shipwoodworker	30	8	0
	Shipmechanic	10	7	0

	Shipelectrician	40	14	5
	Cargo driver	10	6	0
	Total:	1100	248	87
Tourism and catering	Tourist animator	165	19	5
	Masseur special types of massage	190	28	7
	International cuisine chef	70	19	5
	Chef	1085	118	63
	Travel agent	50	5	2
	Diving instructor	10	4	0
	Auxiliary worker in tourism	7560	170	126
	Waiter	1560	129	74
	Receptionist	120	14	1
	Baker	260	29	10
	Confectioner	130	38	6
	Lifeguard	45	1	0
	Tourist train driver	10	6	0
	Yoga therapist	1	1	0
	A physician of traditional Chinese medicine	10	8	0
	Shaver	10	2	2
	Spa therapist	20	7	0
Auxiliary worker in tourism -	7220	250	39	

	SEASONAL WORK up to 6 months			
	Total:	18516	848	340
Culture	Ballet artist	10	8	0
	Orchestral artist	10	8	1
	Opera singer	5	5	0
	Total:	25	21	1
Traffic	Truck driver	1650	196	133
	Bus driver	400	118	10
	Motor vehicle driver	240	15	33
	Vehicle repair and maintenance worker	94	5	6
	Aircraft mechanic	15	13	0
	Cabin crew	5	5	0
	Total:	2404	352	182
	Doctor of Medicine with specialist education	15	10	1
	Doctor of Medicine on specialist training	10	10	0
	MD, doctor	20	6	1
	Dentist with specialist education	5	3	0
	Nurse/technician	30	23	1

Zdravstvo	Dental assistant	5	5	0
	Master of Pharmacy	5	1	0
	Total:	90	58	3
Social care	Psychologist	5	4	0
	Speech therapist	5	5	0
	Nurse/technician	55	23	2
	Caregiver	80	8	5
	Physiotherapist	10	9	0
	Occupational therapist	10	10	0
	Social worker	10	10	0
	Cook	10	10	0
	Assistant cook	15	7	1
	Cleaning lady	50	6	5
	Total:	250	92	13
	Baker	500	41	32
	Fish processing worker	180	36	5
	Fruit and vegetable processing worker	15	15	0
	Butcher	400	41	12
	Confectioner	150	26	3
	Commercialist - a specialist in the sashimi market	5	5	0

Food industry	Delivery vehicle driver	25	7	1
	Machine service technician	10	1	2
	Miller	15	10	1
	Total:	1300	182	56
Manufacturing	Clothier	180	0	6
	Tanner	20	4	0
	Tailor	20	2	1
	Woodworker	190	20	13
	Knitter of aluminum rattan furniture	5	5	0
	Upholsterer	10	7	0
	Glassblower	5	5	0
	CNC operator	50	10	0
	Production worker	320	17	8
	Total:	800	70	28
	Auxiliary cattle breeder and shepherd	120	21	4
	Mechanization operator	80	34	0
	Woodman	70	20	3
	Cutter	110	11	0
	Worker on fishing vessels	40	32	0

Agriculture and forestry	Worker pruning fruit trees and vines	20	17	0
	Physical worker	20	18	0
	Agricultural worker	390	91	95
	Shepherd	10	4	0
	Aquaculture worker	30	21	0
	Veterinarian	10	8	1
	Agricultural technician	30	27	0
	Auxiliary worker (agriculture, fisheries, forestry)	450	116	6
	Fruit picker - Seasonal worker up to 6 months	220	21	0
	Fruit and grape grower - Seasonal work up to 6 months	20	12	0
	Total:	1620	453	109
	Welder/ electro-welder	630	79	32
	Locksmith	710	122	54
	Gnawer	15	11	0
	Turner	50	27	0
	Pipeman	120	28	4

Metal industry	Lacquerer	120	13	1
	CNC operator	60	48	22
	Metallurgical worker	120	28	1
	Mechanic	50	19	2
	Fitter	180	35	15
	Installer	115	19	2
	Technician in the metal industry	15	9	0
	Metal industry operator	20	15	1
	Grinder / metal cleaner	45	13	2
	Total:	2250	466	136
Computing	Software engineer	60	19	1
	System engineer	20	12	0
	Business analyst	20	9	2
	Electro technical Engineer	20	12	0
	Mechanical engineer	25	11	0
	Product designer	20	13	1
	Computer game designer	10	8	0
	Database administrator	10	4	1
	Information systems designer	10	6	2

	Total:	195	94	7
Economics and trade	Seller / Trader	1550	194	83
	Bucher	50	42	5
	Driver	100	56	2
	warehouse worker	190	5	24
	Florist	10	8	1
	Total:	1900	305	115
Postal services	Postman	10	8	0
	Driver	10	8	1
	Counter / salesman	5	5	0
	Total:	25	21	1
Shifting within society	Manager	40	13	1
	Expert	30	22	3
	Intern	10	7	0
	Total:	80	42	4
Strategic investment projects	In accordance with strategic investment projects	430	101	17
	Total:	430	101	17
	Total:	55100	5783	2839

Annex 2. Statistical indicators of applicants for international protection by citizenship and gender for the period 01.01.-31.12.2019.

Source: Ministry of the Interior, (<https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>)

Statistical indicators of applicants for international protection by citizenship and gender for the period 01.01.-31.12.2019.			
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	M	F	TOTAL
AFGHANISTAN	196	99	295
ALBANIA	1		1
ALGERIA	108	9	117
BANGLADESH	8		8
WITHOUT NATIONALITY	9	9	18
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	3		3
BURUNDI	1		1
DR CONGO		3	3
EGYPT	16		16
ERITREA		2	2
PHILIPPINES		1	1
GANA	1		1
INDIA	13	6	19
IRAQ	327	250	577
IRAN	119	99	218
YEMEN	2	2	4
JORDAN		1	1
CAMERUN	1		1

KAZAKHSTAN	4	3	7
CHINA	7	1	8
KOSOVO	5		5
CUBA	11	10	21
LATVIA	1		1
LEBANON	4	3	7
LIBYA	29	6	35
NORTH MACEDONIA	1		1
MOROCCO	34	4	38
NEPAL	2	2	4
NIGERIA	5		5
GERMANY		2	2
IVORY COAST		1	1
PAKISTAN	30	3	33
PALESTINE	29	15	44
RUSSIA	3	2	5
SIERA LEONE	3	2	5
SYRIA	180	108	288
SOMALIA	4	5	9
SERBIA	1		1
SUDAN	2	1	3
SRI LANKA	1		1
TUNISIA	22	11	33
TURKEY	98	34	132

UKRAINE	1	1	2
VIETNAM	4	4	8
WEST SAHARA	1		1
Total	1.287	699	1.986

Annex 3: Statistical data on international protection applicants of UAM by age and sex until 31.12.2019.

Source: Ministry of the Interior, <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>)

Statistical data on applicants for international protection of UAM by age and gender until 31.12.2019.												
Sex / Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	total
M	21	38	194	69	54	10	5	163	251	59	65	929
0-13 UAM	3		3				2	15	23	11	3	58
14-15 UAM	4	6	18	11	8		1	47	62	13	12	172
16-17 UAM	14	32	173	58	46	10	2	101	166	35	50	640
F			3	1	1			1	10	5	5	26
0-13 UAM								1	4	2	1	7
14-15 UAM									1		2	2
16-17 UAM			3	1	1				5	3	2	13
TOTAL	21	38	197	70	55	10	5	164	261	64	70	955

Annex 4. Statistical data of persons granted international protection in the Republic of Croatia until 31.12.2019.

Source: Ministry of the Interior, <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>)

Type of protection	2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
Asylum	1	3	11	5	4	21	7	15	36	83	183	240	157	766
M		3	6	4	4	15	4	12	31	50	132	152	90	503
0-13			3			3	2		3	7	33	42	30	123
14-17			1	1	1	3				5	4	14	9	38
18-34		3	1	3	1	4		9	21	29	80	65	25	241
35-64			1		2	5	2	3	7	9	15	31	26	101
F	1		5	1		6	3	3	5	33	51	88	67	263
0-13			3			2	2		2	15	22	35	25	106
14-17						1				1	2	14	5	23
18-34	1			1		3		3	2	15	17	17	17	76
35-64			2				1		1	2	10	21	19	56
65 >												1	1	2

Subsidiary protection		3	2	9	9	14	17	10	7	17	28	25	1	142
M		3	2	6	4	8	9	10	5	11	18	13	1	90
0-13				1	1	2	3			3	5	6		21
14-17				2	1	1	1	1		2	3	3	1	15
18-34		3	2	1	2	2	5	8	3	6	5			37
35-64				2		3		1	2		5	4		17
F				3	5	6	8		2	6	10	12		52
0-13				1	3	2	3		1	1	2	8		21
14-17							2				4			6
18-34				2	2	2	2			2	3	2		15
35-64						2	1		1	3	1	2		10

Annex 5. Statistical data on the implementation of the Dublin procedure for the period 01.01.-31.12.2019.

Source: Ministry of the interior, <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>)

Incoming transfers were made from the following Member States:	
Member state	2019
Austria	21
Belgium	4
Denmark	1
France	11
Luxemburg	1
Netherlands	8
Norway	1
Germany	28
Slovenia	6
Sweden	3
Switzerland	13
Ujedinjeno Kraljevstvo	2
TOTAL	99

Incoming transfers by nationality:	
Nationality	2019
Afghanistan	18
Algeria	25
Bangladesh	2
Iran	13
Iraq	5
Kuwait	1
Libia	4
Morocco	5
Nigeria	2
Palestina	2
Syria	10
Sri Lanka	1
Turkey	11
TOTAL	99

Number of outgoing transfers (from HR):	
Member state	2019
Denmark	1
France	3
Italy	2
Germany	1
Switzerland	1
Total	8

Number of outgoing transfers (from HR):	
Nationality	2019
Afghanistan	1
Dr. Congo	1
Kosovo	2
Kirgistan	1
Morocco	1
Tunisia	1
Ukraine	1
Total	8

Annex 6.: Data on Frontex trainings in 2019

Source: HR EMN NCP

FRONTEX training program	Number of police officer
<i>Training for Border Surveillance Officer – Maritime Operations Course I/2019</i>	1
<i>IMINT for Border Surveillance-Special focus on Cross-Border Crime activities Training</i>	1
<i>European Course for Specialists on Identity and Security Documents</i>	2
<i>EU course for Customs and Border Guard cooperation advisers</i>	1
FSO – Frontex Support Officer	3
Course for Advanced level document officers I/2019	1
Regional Profile Training Course for Screening Experts I/2019	3
2nd Development meeting of a Joint Pilot Training on the Coordination of Law Enforcement and Navy Actions in Maritime Border Security	1
3rd Workshop under Reference Manual 2019 Pilot Project	1
European course for IBM strategy advisers - Course I/2019	1
ABC systems vulnerabilities training – Course I/2019	1
Common Core Curriculum for Border and Coast Guard Mid – Level Management Training in the EU	1
<i>The kick-off meeting for the development of the Advance Information Training Course</i>	1

Third Plenary Meeting of the Expert Group on Document Control (EXP-DOC)	1
Invitation to participate in the 2nd WS of Reference Manual 2019	1
"IMINT for Border Surveillance" Training	1
Seminar about rail border traffic with Border Guards and Customs Officers	2
European Coast Guard Functions Officers training	2
Mid-level Management Course	1
Land Border Surveillance Officer Training	3
European course for IBM strategy advisers	2
Mid-level Management Course; contact week 2	1
European Coast Guard Functions Officers training	2
EBCGT Frontex Support Officer Training	2
EBCGT Land Border Surveillance Officer Training	1
Pre-Deployment Dog handlers workshop on drug detection	3
Frontex course for registration officer	2
Profile related advanced specialisation training-3rd development meeting	1
Development. meeting for European course for Specialists on Identity and Security Documents	1
Border Surveillance Officer – Maritime Operations, mid-term trainers meeting	1
Reference Manual Workshop 2019 focusing on Seafarer's Documents	1

Pre-Deployment induction training - expert meeting	1
Course for Forced Return Escort Leaders in Return Operations	1
EBCGT Land Border Surveillance Officer Training V/2019	1
European Course for IBM Strategy Advisers - Course III/2019	1
EBCGT LBS 2019	2
Profile related advanced specialisation training (screening experts, debriefing experts)	1
The 8th Reference Manual Workshop	1
Pre-Deployment Dog handlers workshop on tracking	1
Course for Advanced Level Document Officer	1
Development meeting I - The European Course for Customs and Border Guard cooperation advisers	1
Mid-level Management Course (MLC) 2019	1
European Border and Coast Guard standing corps training programme (Cat.1) - development workshop 2	1
EBCGT LBS IV/2019	2
EBCGT FSO III	1
European Coast Guard Functions Officers, training 5/2019	1
Entry-Exit-System Training - Development Meeting	1
Mid-level Management Course; contact week 2	1

CCC-Basic need based: development of training programme for the European SC (Cat.1) workshop 3	1
Border Surveillance Officer – Maritime Operations Evaluation meeting 1/2019	1
Mid-level Management Course; contact week 3	1
EDA-Frontex Joint Pilot Training	1