

**Annex to the Universal Periodic Review on human rights in the
Republic of Croatia – recommendations based on the Ombudsman’s
Report in cooperation with the Ombudsman for Children, the
Ombudswoman for Gender Equality and the Ombudsman for
Persons with Disabilities
September 2019**

I. INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND REPORTING PROCESS

1. To submit the reports to the Committee on International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

II. LEGISLATIVE AN INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

2. To ensure sufficient budgetary funds for financing free legal aid, particularly primary;
3. To establish Victim and Witness Support Services in all courts where they have not yet been established;
4. To adopt a new National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development;
5. To adopt a new National Programme of Protection and Promotion of Human Rights;
6. To adopt a new National Gender Equality Policy;
7. To implement the recommendations issued by the Ombudsman, Ombudsman for Children, Ombudswoman for Gender Equality and Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities;

III. DISCRIMINATION

8. Competent authorities to create well-coordinated expert teams of police, judiciary, educational and health-care systems, SWCs, CES and LRGUs, schools, CSOs, local population and representatives of Roma dedicated to solving Roma-specific problems, especially children and the youth;
9. Reintroduce basic services such as water and electricity to Serbs who returned to their pre-war places of residence, in particular to those elderly and with low incomes, who live in undeveloped rural areas;
10. Competent authorities should intensify implementation of the Croatian language, culture and history courses, as well as continuously increase opportunities for the employment of migrants, and develop local level integration strategies;
11. To continue encouraging the work of CSOs with the expertise and capacity for initiating collective anti-discrimination claims;

12. To continue organising trainings of key stakeholders in combating discrimination (judges, lawyers, prosecutors, civil servants, employers, unions, media);
13. To continually carry out activities to raise awareness of the occurrence and unacceptability of discrimination, in particular of the denial of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities as a specific form of discrimination;

IV. HATE CRIME, HATE SPEECH AND DEFAMATION

14. To act in accordance with the Protocol on the Treatment of Hate Crimes with an emphasis on compliance with the obligation to record each and every hate offenses and hate crimes;
15. To improve the police/prosecutors track records of hate offenses/crimes in such a way as to start keeping track on what discriminatory basis hate crimes were committed;
16. To continue organising trainings for police officers, state attorneys and judges on recognising, qualifying and prosecuting hate crimes and to introduce a professional development program for prosecutors and judges who deal with hate crimes and anti-discrimination cases;
17. To officials and political parties to condemn speech that spreads intolerance, urge their members and followers to refrain from it and to condemn those that use such speech;

V. PRISON/TORTURE

18. To adapt accommodation conditions in all penal institutions to comply with legal and international standards;
19. To draft a proposal of the amendments to the Act on Execution of the Prison Sentence and to the Criminal Procedure Act that pertains to execution of remand imprisonment;
20. To investigate in detail all allegations indicating possible torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, including allegations of verbal abuse and use of excessive force;

VI. GENDER EQUALITY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

21. To establish an effective health care system for the care and treatment of transgender persons in such a way that it is aimed at the prompt and efficient resolution of the problems of individuals applying for gender change, or gender identity, in order to protect their dignity and human rights;
22. For the competent bodies to bear the burden and risk in the case of administrative, legal, medical, or any ambiguities and obstacles in the treatment of gender reassignment, interpretation of the law or costs in order to avoid discrimination;
23. To organize systematic training in transgender educational institutions, encourage and organize public sensitization campaigns for the equal acceptance of transgender persons;
24. To adjust domestic legislative framework with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence;

25. To introduce special police departments with mixed (male-female) professional and highly educated police personnel that will deal exclusively with gender-based violence and domestic violence in a gender-sensitive manner;
26. To introduce systematic, regular and continuous training of police officers, public prosecutors and judges about gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence, with particular emphasis on international standards related to the prevention of violence against women, in particular the Istanbul Convention, and their direct applicability in domestic law;
27. To continue continuous education of the personnel of the centres for social care and health care institutions about the need for sensitive approach and comprehensive assistance to the victims of violence and the need for coordinated action with other bodies involved in the treatment of violence - reporting to the police, offering accommodation in a safe house, providing psychological and other assistance to the victim;
28. To provide police and judicial statistical monitoring of the procedures in all cases of violence against women and domestic violence, broken down by the number and sex of the perpetrators holding appealable and unappealable court decisions and the unified organization of a database on victims and perpetrators of domestic violence for easier monitoring of recidivists;
29. To increase resources for conducting psychosocial treatment of perpetrators of violence against women and domestic violence, with a significant strengthening of the network of psychosocial assistance providers;
30. To continue media campaigns in order to raise awareness that domestic violence is not a private matter, but a criminal or misdemeanour offence and a public social problem;
31. To expand the definition in the Criminal Code of close persons in such a way that it includes close partners regardless of whether they live in a shared household or not;
32. To amend the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, so that it applies also to persons who are in current of were in former intimate partnerships;

VII. CHILDREN

33. To draft a public policy in relation to early childhood intervention, so that a single and comprehensive early intervention system at national, regional and local level is established ensuring cross-sectoral co-operation;
34. To introduce a mandatory two-year preschool program for all Roma children;
35. To base educational contents, teaching methods and learning outcomes on the real needs of children and youth, and to undertake additional activities to prevent violence in educational institutions;
36. To undertake additional activities aimed at encouraging participation of children;

VIII. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

37. To ensure measures to eliminate inequalities in the health system, especially with regard to the availability of health care to persons with disabilities;

38. To systematically conduct trainings of all health professionals on how to communicate with and provide information to citizens, especially persons with disabilities with regard to specificities disability;
39. To ensure affordable housing for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility by setting up a fund to finance reconstructions, regardless of property being owned privately or publicly;
40. To establish continuous and systematic support and reasonable adjustment to children and youth with disabilities at all stages of education;
41. To intensify the activities of developing networks of providers that will support the independent living of persons with disabilities in the community in accordance with their choice, in particular for persons with autism as socially most excluded group of persons with disabilities;
42. To implement measures that will enable the real inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, in particular in education and employment by ensuring accessibility, mobility and use of all publicly available services in accordance with the CRPD;
43. To ensure participation of persons with disabilities in the planning and implementation of support and accommodation measures;

IX. NATIONAL MINORITIES

44. To implement necessary measures to allow the registration of schools as institutions working in the minority language and script;

X. REFUGEES, RETURNEES

45. To ensure additional funds and housing units for beneficiaries provided housing;

XI. MIGRANTS, ASYLUM SEEKERS

46. To enable access to international protection to all migrants within the jurisdiction of the Republic of Croatia;
47. To carry out efficient investigations into allegations of ill-treatment of migrants by police officers;
48. To enable access to the Ombudsman to all information referring to the treatment of irregular migrants, in line with the OPCAT and national legislation;

XII. POVERTY

52. To introduce measures through Act that would aim at reducing the at risk poverty, particularly of older persons;
53. To harmonise pensions based on general and special regulations.