

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

I. INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS

Article 1

Pursuant to the Ombudsman Act, the Rules of Procedure of the Ombudsman govern internal organization of the Office of the Ombudsman, conduct and system of work of the ombudsman and his deputies, manner of planning and performing activities, methodology of writing annual and special reports, the scope of practice and number of members of the ombudsman's Human Rights Council, as well as other issues of importance for the successful performance of the ombudsman's activities.

Article 2

(1) Application of the Rules of Procedure ensures proper and timely performance of the ombudsman's activities.

(2) Ombudsman shall construe the provisions of these Rules of Procedure, provide instructions for their application and ensure they are applied properly.

Article 3

Any words or conceptual structures that have a gender-related meaning, regardless of whether they are used in their masculine or feminine form in these Rules of Procedure, shall equally pertain to both masculine and feminine genders.

II. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Article 4

(1) The Office of the Ombudsman shall be managed by the ombudsman.

(2) Activities that fall within the scope of the ombudsman's work shall be performed in the Office of the Ombudsman. Within the Office of the Ombudsman, internal organizational units shall be established for specific areas of activity.

Ombudsman's stamp and logo

Article 5

(1) Ombudsman shall use a round-shaped stamp of 37 mm in diameter bearing the coat of arms of the Republic of Croatia in the centre, with the inscription: "Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia" placed beneath it, arranged in a semi-circle. The stamp shall be affixed to all documents issued by the ombudsman that are dispatched from the Office.

(2) The stamp of the ombudsman that is used for financial operations of the Office shall have the same shape and content as the one referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the only difference being its diameter of 24 mm.

Ombudsman's specialist departments

Article 6

(1) Specialist activities that fall within the scope of the ombudsman's work shall be performed by officials who meet legally prescribed requirements for appointment to posts envisaged under the Ordinance on the Internal Order of the Office of the Ombudsman.

(2) The number of civil servants and professional qualifications they must hold shall be established by virtue of the Ordinance on the Internal Order of the Office of the Ombudsman, pursuant to the special act on civil servants.

Article 7

(1) The following departments are hereby established as internal organizational units competent for the performance of activities belonging to specific areas that fall within the ombudsman's scope of work:

1. Department for Human Rights Protection
2. Department for Persons Deprived of Liberty and National Preventive Mechanism
3. Anti-Discrimination Department
4. Department for Communication, Cooperation and Human Rights Promotion
5. General Affairs Department.

(2) On account of the nature and manner of performing certain activities within a particular department, the ombudsman may establish internal organizational units for specific types of interconnected areas or for particular activities the performance of which requires a certain degree of autonomy.

Department for Human Rights Protection

Article 8

Department for Human Rights Protection:

- acts upon citizens' complaints,
- prepares draft proposals for initiating criminal, misdemeanour or disciplinary procedures,
- prepares draft recommendations, opinions, proposals and warnings,
- participates in the preparation of draft annual and special reports to the Croatian Parliament,
- prepares draft documents encouraging amendments to the applicable acts and other regulations that pertain to protection of constitutional and legal rights of citizens,

- prepares draft requests for initiating procedures for the assessment of constitutionality of an act as well as procedures for the assessment of constitutionality and legality of other regulations,
- monitors realization of human rights and freedoms protection and provides the ombudsman with opinions and proposals for the purpose of warning the public about instances of their violation,
- inspects places for permanent or temporary accommodation of specific groups whose rights and freedoms are protected by the ombudsman and prepares reports on the conducted inspections,
- monitors, analyses and encourages approximation of laws and other regulations with international legal acts on human rights and freedoms, which the Republic of Croatia has approved, as well as with the practice of relevant authorities, with the *acquis communautaire*, as well as national, European and international case law,
- performs other activities as per instructions of the ombudsman.

Department for Persons Deprived of Liberty and National Preventive Mechanism

Article 9

(1) Department for Persons Deprived of Liberty and National Preventive Mechanism:

- acts upon complaints of persons deprived of liberty or those with limited freedom of movement,
- prepares draft proposals for initiating criminal, misdemeanour or disciplinary procedures,
- prepares draft recommendations, opinions, proposals and warnings,
- participates in the preparation of draft annual and special reports to the Croatian Parliament,
- prepares draft documents encouraging amendments to applicable acts and other regulations pertaining to protection of constitutional and legal rights of persons deprived of liberty or those with limited freedom of movement,
- prepares draft requests for initiating procedures for the assessment of constitutionality of an act, as well as procedures for the assessment of constitutionality and legality of other regulations,
- monitors realization of human rights protection for persons deprived of liberty or those with limited freedom of movement and prepares draft opinions and press releases for the purpose of warning the public about instances of their violation,
- inspects premises occupied by persons deprived of liberty or persons with limited freedom of movement and prepares reports on the conducted inspections,
- monitors, analyses and encourages approximation of laws and other regulations with international legal acts on human rights and freedoms, which the Republic of Croatia has approved, with the *acquis communautaire* of the European Union, as well as national, European and international case law,

(2) In accordance with its competences stipulated under the special act, Department for Persons Deprived of Liberty and NPM also performs the following activities:

- Regular and control visits of premises occupied or potentially occupied by persons deprived of liberty for the purpose of strengthening their protection against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and preparing a record and report on the performed visit,
- preparation of draft proposals for competent authorities and institutions in order to ensure improvement of treatment of persons deprived of liberty, as well as conditions of their accommodation, for the purpose of preventing torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,
- preparation of draft proposals and comments to acts and other regulations, as well as to draft acts and other regulations, in order to promote protection of persons deprived of liberty against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,
- collaboration with the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as with other international institutions and associations involved in the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,
- preparation of draft annual report in the part that pertains to the performance of activities under National Prevention Mechanism for prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,
- performs other activities as per instructions of the ombudsman.

Anti-Discrimination Department

Article 10

(1) Anti-Discrimination Department:

- acts upon citizens' complaints,
- prepares draft proposals for initiating criminal, misdemeanour or disciplinary procedures,
- prepares draft recommendations, opinions, proposals and warnings,
- participates in the preparation of draft annual and special reports to the Croatian Parliament,
- prepares draft documents encouraging amendments to acts and other regulations concerning protection against discrimination and makes proposals to the Government of the Republic of Croatia with respect to appropriate strategic solutions,
- prepares draft requests for initiating procedures for the assessment of constitutionality of an act, as well as procedures for the assessment of constitutionality and legality of other regulations,
- monitors instances of discrimination and prepares draft opinions and press releases in order to warn the public about instances of discrimination,
- pursuant to the special act, collects and analyses statistical data on occurrences of discrimination,
- inspects premises for permanent or temporary accommodation of certain particularly vulnerable groups, whose protection against discrimination falls under the ombudsman's competence, and prepares reports on the conducted inspections,

- monitors, analyses and encourages approximation of laws and other regulations with international legal acts on human rights and freedoms, which the Republic of Croatia has approved, as well as with the practice of relevant authorities, with the *acquis communautaire*, as well as national, European and international case law,

- when it comes to combating discrimination, it cooperates with social partners, civil society organisations, churches and religious institutions and with the Council for National Minorities, as well as with specialized ombudsmen,

- cooperates with the Government bodies and state authorities, international organisations, academic institutions, bodies for combating discrimination and equality promotion, as well as with European Network of Equality Bodies.

(2) Pursuant to the powers granted under the special act, Anti-Discrimination Department also:

- organizes and carries out mediation procedures with the option of concluding out-of-court settlements,

- prepares draft proposals for indictment and other submissions and performs other activities in misdemeanour procedures initiated by the ombudsman,

- prepares draft claims and other submissions and performs other activities within the procedures the ombudsman is entitled to initiate when the right to equal treatment of a larger number of persons has been violated as a result of the respondent's conduct,

- prepares draft submissions and performs other activities within procedures in which the ombudsman is entitled to participate as an intervening party in favour of the discrimination plaintiff,

- performs other activities as per instructions of the ombudsman.

Department for Communication, Cooperation and Human Rights Promotion

Article 11

Department for Communication, Cooperation and Human Rights Promotion:

- monitors and analyses realization of human rights protection in the Republic of Croatia and promotes human rights in public,

- prepares draft recommendations, opinions, proposals and warnings,

- participates in the preparation of draft annual and special reports to the Croatian Parliament,

- conducts research and expert analyses in the field of human rights based on data provided by the ombudsman, as well as other sources of information,

- encourages and upholds continuous cooperation between the ombudsman and specialized ombudsmen,

- encourages and upholds continuous cooperation between the ombudsman and civil society organizations, academic community and other institutions as well as the media,

- collects and keeps documentation materials, scientific literature, case law, legal opinions and other documents necessary for ombudsman's work,

- organizes public discussions, round tables, debates and consultations necessary for the ombudsman’s work,
- performs activities related to public relations and cooperation with the media, and updates the professional and general public in a timely and regular manner on the latest topics in human rights,
- performs activities related to design, editing, updating and maintenance of the ombudsman’s official website, and activities related to the ombudsman’s use of social media,
- performs activities related to international cooperation and researches and prepares expert documents for the ombudsman’s appearances at international forums,
- performs advisory and expert activities related to cooperation with international institutions, embassies and missions in the Republic of Croatia,
- encourages, coordinates and participates in the implementation of projects that fall within the scope of ombudsman’s work, in cooperation with national and international partners,
- develops and carries out educational programmes on human rights for different target social groups,
- performs other activities as per instructions of the ombudsman.

General Affairs Department

Article 12

General Affairs Department:

- proposes recruitment, training and professional development plans for civil servants, monitors their realization and performs other tasks related to civil servants’ employment and human resources management and development,
- prepares financial plan proposals for the fiscal year, monitors its realization and supervises trends in spending of designated funds,
- prepares budget proposals and performs activities related to balancing of the ombudsman’s budget; prepares, analyses and submits reports on spent budget funds,
- enters requests for payment of budget funds into the State Treasury system,
- prepares financial, statistical and other reports in connection with paid salaries,
- performs financial activities related to implementation of projects,
- cooperates with other state administration bodies competent for finances and internal audit,
- performs administrative and professional activities related to the procurement plan and investments,
- performs other financial-planning and accounting activities, as well as activities related to procurement of goods, works and services,
- performs office management activities; receives letters, complaints and other documents and forwards them to competent departments to be dealt with; performs activities of dispatch and archival storage,

- manages the registry book and data bases on submitted complaints and other activities of the ombudsman,
- organizes appointments with clients and telephone communication with citizens,
- performs general, technical and other auxiliary activities,
- performs activities related to occupational health and safety, fire protection, as well as other general, technical and other auxiliary tasks,
- ensures proper and orderly maintenance and use of assets, equipment, car park, as well as furnishing of the Office of the Ombudsman,
- keeps records on official ID cards referred to in Article 16 of these Rules of Procedure,
- participates in the preparation of draft annual and special reports to the Croatian Parliament,
- performs other activities as per instructions of the ombudsman.

III. ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY THE OMBUDSMAN AND DEPUTY OMBUDSMEN

Deputy ombudsmen

Article 13

Deputy ombudsmen:

- manage one or more departments and ensure regular and proper performance of activities within the department under their management,
- monitor instances of discrimination and human rights violation within the scope of activities of the department under their management and participate in the resolution of most complex cases,
- participate in the activities of the ombudsman’s collegiate body and prepare and research expert documents in connection with topics discussed by the collegiate body,
- coordinate and participate in the preparation of draft annual and special reports to the Croatian Parliament,
- based on powers conferred by the ombudsman, perform inspections of premises occupied by persons deprived of liberty or persons with limited freedom of movement and premises for permanent or temporary accommodation of certain groups whose rights and freedoms are protected by the ombudsman,
- perform other activities as per instructions of the ombudsman.

Ombudsman’s collegiate body

Article 14

- (1) Ombudsman’s collegiate body is composed of the ombudsman and his deputies.
- (2) By way of derogation, ombudsman’s advisers may participate in the work of the collegiate body.

(3) Ombudsman's collegiate body:

- discusses and coordinates preparation of the annual operational plan,
- discusses the proposals for the ombudsman's budget, financial plan and annual statement of accounts,
- discusses draft annual and special reports that the ombudsman must submit to the Croatian Parliament,
- discusses draft documents representing an encouragement for adopting or amending laws and other regulations that pertain to human rights and freedoms protection and protection of the rule of law,
- discusses draft proposals for initiating or participating in criminal, misdemeanour or disciplinary procedures pursuant to the Ombudsman Act and special acts,
- discusses proposals of subordinate legislation adopted by the ombudsman,
- takes care of proper and efficient implementation of procedures based on individual complaints, and discusses particularly complex cases,
- ensures achievement of the highest-level cooperation and communication between departments,
- proposes the design and content of the official ID card of the ombudsman, deputy ombudsmen as well as of civil servants and external associates for the purposes of carrying out inspection of premises occupied by persons deprived of liberty or those with limited freedom of movement or premises for permanent or temporary accommodation of certain particularly vulnerable groups whose discrimination protection falls under the ombudsman's competence,
- discusses candidate members for the Human Rights Council,
- proposes topics to be discussed by the ombudsman's Human Rights Council and discusses strategic guidelines and other proposals made by the Council,
- proposes fundamental office management principles for the Office of the Ombudsman,
- performs other activities important for the work of ombudsman.

Article 15

Ombudsman or deputy ombudsmen shall convene meetings to successfully perform tasks that fall within their scope of activities, improve coordination of work and resolve other important issues that are vital for the fulfilment of ombudsman's duties.

Official ID card

Article 16

(1) Ombudsman and his deputies shall be issued an official ID card.

(2) The official ID card shall display a photograph and identification information and shall be used by the ombudsman and his deputies to prove their status before the officials of state authorities, units of local and regional self-government and legal entities with public powers in the Republic of Croatia (hereinafter: state bodies).

(3) The ombudsman and his deputies shall use the ID card to prove their rights based on immunity as laid down under Article 93 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia.

Article 17

(1) Civil servants authorised by the ombudsman to perform inspections of premises occupied by persons deprived of liberty or persons with limited freedom of movement, as well as to perform activities under the National Preventive Mechanism, i.e. to perform inspections of premises for permanent or temporary accommodation of certain particularly vulnerable groups whose discrimination protection falls under the ombudsman's competence, shall have official ID cards to prove their official status, as well their identity and powers.

(2) The representatives of associations and academic community appointed to participate in the performance of activities under the National Preventive Mechanism shall have an official ID card to prove their official status, identity and powers.

Article 18

(1) Ombudsman shall decide on the design and content of the official ID card referred to in Article 16, as well as on the manner of its issuance and use.

(2) Records shall be kept on issued official ID cards referred to in Article 16, and the exact content of such records shall be decided upon by the ombudsman.

IV. PROCEDURAL PROVISIONS

Complaints handled by the ombudsman

Article 19

(1) Ombudsman shall consider complaints submitted by citizens on the grounds of threatened or violated constitutional or legal rights and freedoms through unlawful or irregular conduct of state bodies, bodies of local and regional self-government units and legal entities vested with public authority.

(2) Pursuant to special laws, the ombudsman shall also consider complaints submitted by citizens on the grounds of discrimination committed through conduct of state bodies, bodies of local and regional self-government units and legal entities vested with public authority, as well as through conduct of legal and natural persons.

Article 20

Ombudsman shall not represent citizens before state bodies, bodies of the local and regional self-government units and legal entities with public authority; he shall not provide legal aid or construe applicable laws and other regulations.

Method of complaint filing

Article 21

A complaint may be filed to the ombudsman in writing or orally.

Allocation of cases

Article 22

(1) Received complaints shall be allocated to deputy ombudsmen and civil servants from the Office of the Ombudsman.

(2) No one shall have the right to provide information on the civil servant to whom the case has been allocated.

Handling of incomprehensible and incomplete complaints

Article 23

(1) A complaint must be comprehensible and complete or, more specifically, it must contain the information necessary for the complaint to be acted upon by the ombudsman.

(2) If the complaint is incomprehensible or incomplete, the ombudsman shall invite the complainant to clarify or complete the filed complaint within 30 days.

(3) If the complainant fails to act in line with the invitation referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article within the indicated time period, it shall be considered that he/she has set aside the complaint.

Handling of repeat complaints

Article 24

(1) If the complainant again files a complaint that, with respect to the one previously filed, contains no new facts, circumstances or evidence, such complaint shall be considered as already resolved by the ombudsman.

(2) Ombudsman shall notify the complainant on the reasons referred to under paragraph 1 of this Article based on which such complainant's complaint is held to be already resolved.

Handling a complaint

Article 25

(1) Ombudsman shall freely decide whether a complaint shall be considered and to what extent.

(2) When deciding whether a complaint shall be considered and to what extent, the ombudsman shall in particular pay attention to the following:

- importance or significance of the protected values that have been violated or might be violated,
- possibility that rights of a larger number of persons have been violated,
- manner and circumstances under which rights have been violated or might be violated,
- other possibilities of legal protection regarding the threatened right.

Ombudsman and the procedure for assessment of constitutionality and legality of a regulation

Article 26

(1) When the Ombudsman considers a complaint concerning violation of citizens' rights resulting from applying a regulation with respect to which a proceeding for the assessment of constitutionality and legality has been initiated before the Constitutional Court, the ombudsman shall suspend the procedure until the Constitutional Court has reached its decision.

(2) When the ombudsman considers a complaint concerning violation of citizens' rights resulting from the application of a general legal act with respect which a proceeding for the assessment of legality has been initiated before the High Administrative Court, the ombudsman shall suspend the procedure until the High Administrative Court has reached its decision.

(3) Ombudsman shall notify the complainant on the reasons referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, based on which he has suspended the procedure pertaining to the received complaint.

Ombudsman and the procedure based on a constitutional complaint

Article 27

(1) When the ombudsman considers a complaint concerning violation of human rights or fundamental freedoms as guaranteed by the Constitution, with respect to which violation the complainant has also submitted a constitutional complaint to the Constitutional Court, the ombudsman shall suspend the procedure until the Constitutional Court has reached its decision.

(2) Ombudsman shall notify the complainant on reasons referred to under paragraph 1 of this Article, based on which he has suspended the procedure pertaining to the received complaint.

Case report

Article 28

(1) Upon completion of the investigative procedure, the civil servant in charge of a given case shall prepare a final letter, which shall constitute a case report pursuant to the Ombudsman Act.

(2) Ombudsman shall deliver the final letter to the body against which the complaint has been filed, as well as to the complainant.

(3) If the final letter pertains to a case where no violation of rights of persons deprived of liberty or persons with limited freedom of movement has been established, the ombudsman shall deliver said letter only to the complainant.

Article 29

While working on a particular case, the civil servant in charge is obligated to take account of all the ombudsman's powers that arise not only from the Ombudsman Act but also from special laws, and to resolve cases in their entirety, at the same time acting efficiently, timely and to the best interest of the complainant.

Initiating adoption of and amendments to laws and other regulations

Article 30

(1) Ombudsman may inform the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia about the need of adopting or amending laws and other regulations for the purpose of protecting human rights and freedoms and ensuring the rule of law.

(2) Ombudsman shall decide autonomously whether he will participate in the process of preparing or amending a law, subordinate regulation or some other regulation, and, at his own discretion and in cooperation with the authority competent for preparing the legislation, the ombudsman may participate in the work of expert working groups.

(3) To ensure adequate protection standard for the rights that fall within the scope of the ombudsman's competence and to ensure the rule of law, the ombudsman may become involved in the procedure of adopting or amending a regulation during the public debate or in the procedure before the Croatian Parliament.

Monitoring the situation of human rights and freedoms that fall within the scope of the ombudsman's competence

Article 31

(1) Ombudsman shall monitor the situation of human rights and freedoms the protection of which falls within his competence on the basis of received complaints, reports, analyses and publications prepared by state bodies and civil society organizations, as well as on the basis of analyses and publications of international organizations and information published by the media.

(2) Based on the collected information, the ombudsman warns about the need of undertaking certain measures; he also plans and carries out promotional activities aimed at protecting rights and freedoms that fall within the scope of his competence and activities aimed at combating discrimination.

Research and analyses

Article 32

- (1) Ombudsman shall conduct and publish research and analyses related to human rights and freedoms the protection of which falls within the scope of his competence.
- (2) Research and analyses shall be prepared by applying different types of research methods, all this on the basis of citizens' complaints and other available information sources,
- (3) Based on information collected through research and analyses, the ombudsman shall decide whether other measures within his competence shall be undertaken.

Cooperation with civil society organizations

Article 33

- (1) To perform his work, the ombudsman shall cooperate with civil society organizations.
- (2) Cooperation with civil society organizations shall be carried out through joint organization of public debates, joint activities aimed at raising public awareness about the importance of certain human rights the protection of which falls under the competence of the ombudsman, through collaboration on special projects and with regard to specific cases of violation of human rights and freedoms that fall within the scope of the ombudsman's competence.

IV. MANNER OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Article 34

- (1) Ombudsman's activities shall be determined in the annual operational plan, which is adopted by the ombudsman.
- (2) Annual operational plan shall contain a general outline of tasks and activities, information on goals envisaged to be achieved that are related to general and particular goals contained in the three-year strategic plans, as well as information on the most significant risks that might affect the realization of the set goals.

V. BUSINESS HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS WITH CITIZENS

Business hours of the Office of the Ombudsman

Article 35

- (1) Business hours of the Office of the Ombudsman as well as office hours for appointments with citizens are governed by the Ordinance on the Internal Order of the Office of the Ombudsman.
- (2) Office hours for appointments with citizens shall be posted at a visible place at the entrance to the Office of the Ombudsman, as well as on the ombudsman's website.

Article 36

Citizens shall be received by the ombudsman, his deputies and advisers.

VI. OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Article 37

(1) Office management in the Office of the Ombudsman implies a set of rules and measures related to handling of documents, their receipt and issuance, keeping relevant records, assigning documents to competent officials, processing of documents, their usage, dispatch, preservation, elimination or transfer to the competent archives or some other competent authority.

(2) Ombudsman's case register is kept for each calendar year based on the system of ordinal numbers. The following information is entered: ordinal number, date and information on the manner in which the submission was received (directly, by telephone, in writing or by e-mail), complainant's name and surname, address and telephone number, designation of the official or deputy to whom the case was assigned, short description of the subject-matter of the document, the manner in which the case was resolved and concluded; in addition, it can also contain other information important for monitoring of general phenomena that are of interest for the ombudsman.

(3) Office management in the Office of the Ombudsman, application form for ombudsman's case register and fundamental classification categories and subcategories of cases based on specific areas and activities of specific areas and based on the confidentiality level, shall be regulated in greater detail by the Ombudsman through a special Decision.

VII. OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT AND SPECIAL REPORTS

Article 38

(1) Pursuant to the obligations arising from the Ombudsman Act and special acts governing the ombudsman's powers, the ombudsman shall submit a complete regular annual report to the Croatian Parliament.

(2) The regular annual report shall be prepared by the ombudsman, his deputies, civil servants and other employees in the Office of the Ombudsman.

(3) The manner of drafting and content of the complete regular annual report shall be established by the ombudsman's collegiate body no later than 15 December of the current year.

(4)

Article 39

Ombudsman's regular annual report to the Croatian Parliament must contain the information laid down in Article 16, paragraph 1 of the Ombudsman Act, information on the performance of activities under the National Preventive Mechanism and a report on instances of discrimination.

Article 40

- (1) Ombudsman shall submit special reports to the Croatian Parliament when he deems that citizens' constitutional or legal rights have been threatened or that a discrimination instance of higher level or greater significance has occurred. Ombudsman shall decide independently and autonomously whether special reports will be prepared and no one may give instructions to the ombudsman regarding the topic, method of writing or time limits for the preparation of the special report.
- (2) Special reports shall be prepared by the ombudsman, deputy ombudsmen and officials of the Office appointed by the ombudsman, depending on their area of activity.
- (3) Details on the manner of drafting and content of every special report shall be established by the ombudsman's collegiate body.

VIII. HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Organization

Article 41

- (1) Human Rights Council of the ombudsman shall have eight members:
 - 2 representatives of civil society organizations,
 - 2 representatives of national minorities,
 - 2 representatives of the academic community and
 - 2 representatives of the media.
- (2) Deputy ombudsmen shall also participate in the work of the Human Rights Council.

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- (3) As needed, the ombudsman may invite to the Council session those persons who he deems are likely to contribute to the promotion of certain human rights and freedoms.

Appointment of Council members

Article 42

- (1) Members of the Human Rights Council shall be appointed by the ombudsman.
- (2) Ombudsman shall publish an invitation to submit proposals for candidate members for the Council, on the Office website and in the media.
- (3) Candidates may be proposed only for their respective fields of activity and one person may propose only one candidate member for the Council.

Article 43

Council members are obligated to attend Council sessions regularly, and every absence must be justified in advance.

Powers of the Council

Article 44

Human Rights Council participates in the ombudsman's work by providing advice and proposing strategic guidelines for the purpose of:

- promoting human rights and freedoms,
- ensuring continuous cooperation regarding human rights and freedoms between the ombudsman and the civil society, academic community and the media,
- considering other issues that are important for the promotion of human rights.

Council sessions

Article 45

- (1) Sessions of the Human Rights Council shall be convened by the ombudsman.
- (2) Ordinary sessions of the Council shall be held at least twice a year, normally in the second and fourth quarter.
- (3) In case it is necessary, the ombudsman may convene a Council session at any time.

Article 46

Member of the Human Rights Council may make public appearances in connection with the topics that fall within the scope of competence of the Council and in the capacity of a Council member only upon prior agreement with the ombudsman.

IX. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 47

On the date of entry into force of these Rules of Procedure, the Rules of Procedure of the Ombudsman (Official Gazette 71/97) shall cease to have effect.

Article 48

After being confirmed by the Croatian Parliament, these Rules of Procedure shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall enter into force on the day of their publication.

Number: P.P.R.-06-06-205/13

Zagreb, 14 June 2013

Ombudswoman

Lora Vidović, m. p.