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**THIRD REPORT SUBMITTED BY CROATIA
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 25, PARAGRAPH 2
OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR
THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

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OFFICE FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES
Government of the Republic of Croatia

**THIRD REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

JUNE 2009.

C O N T E N T S:

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	1
PART I	3
OVERVIEW OF THE IMPROVEMENT OF NATIONAL MINORITY RIGHTS	3
IN THE PAST FOUR-YEAR PERIOD	3
PART II	23
OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION	23
With reference to Articles 3 and 4 of the Framework Convention.....	23
With reference to Article 5 of the Framework Convention	27
With reference to Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the Framework Convention	31
With reference to Articles 7 and 8 of the Framework Convention.....	36
With reference to Article 9 of the Framework Convention	38
With reference to Articles 10 and 11 of the Framework Convention: the right to use minority languages.....	44
With reference to Articles 12, 13 and 14 of the Framework Convention.....	52
With reference to Article 15 of the Framework Convention	63
With reference to Articles 17 and 18 of the Framework Convention.....	74
PART III	79
MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION	79
CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES HELD IN VUKOVAR ON 15 OCTOBER 2007	115
CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION	117
OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION	117
FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES	117
HELD IN PEROJ ON 14-16 SEPTEMBER 2006	117
- From the reports of national minority associations on the implementation of the framework convention of national minority	
- Funds allocated by The office for national minorities through the commission for monitoring implementation of national programme for the Roma during the reporting period	
- Funds allocated by The office for national minorities through the working group for monitoring implementation of the action plan for the decade of Roma inclusion 2005-2015 during the reporting period	
- Allocation of funds for the preservation of Roma traditional culture	
- Projects for Roma	

- Conclusion of the seminar on implementation of the framework conversation for the protection of national minorities held in Vukovar on 15 October 2007
- Conclusion of the seminar on implementation of the framework conversation for the protection of national minorities held in Peruj 14-16 September 2006
- Conclusion of the seminar on implementation of the framework conversation for the protection of national minorities held in Split on 15 and 16 September 2005
- Conclusion of the seminar on implementation of the framework conversation for the protection of national minorities held in Cavtat on 20 and 21 September 2004
- Free legal aid act
- Anti-discrimination act
- Regulation On Changes and Amendments to the Regulation on the Office for National Minorities
- Law on the amendments to the criminal code, 2008
- Law on the amendments to the criminal code, 2006

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

All ministries and other government bodies tasked with the implementation of the various parts of the Framework Convention have participated in the drafting of this report. The compilation of the report has been coordinated by the Office for National Minorities. All national minorities have been asked to make contributions consisting of their positions and opinions on the implementation of the Framework Convention. All the received opinions and proposals have been incorporated into the integrated report that will be submitted to the Council of Europe by the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

With the aim of involving national minority representatives as much as possible in the drafting of the report, on 1 December 2008 the Office for National Minorities and the Council of Europe organized a seminar on the implementation of the Framework Convention. Around 50 people participated in the discussion: representatives of minority associations, national minority deputies in the Croatian Parliament, and representatives of the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia. The conclusion was reached that legislative and material preconditions for a full implementation of national minority rights have been met, especially as pertains to cultural autonomy. During the discussion on the effectiveness of participation of national minorities in the decision-making process, minority representatives requested that the report include the most recent legislative amendments and up-to-date information on representation of national minority members in state administration bodies. As for the part of the report that deals with exercising the religious rights of national minorities, it is important to include the data on the regular financial support that religious communities receive from the central state budget.

Regarding the information activities aimed at national minorities, a request was voiced to include in the report the data on national minority programmes that are financed by the Fund for Promotion of Diversity and Pluralism in the Electronic Media, which has at its disposal 3% of the mandatory licence fee for Croatian Radio and Television paid in the Republic of Croatia.

In practice, the greatest success has been achieved in the field of education in the languages and scripts of national minorities. The tendency is to involve children of majority ethnicity in the instruction of national minority pupils, which contributes to the cultural and linguistic diversity. In the future, efforts should be made to raise the quality of teaching, with the goal of stimulating interest in such schooling among minority members.

Representatives of national minorities requested that the report include more information on the results achieved in the implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

During the follow-up process of consultation with representatives of national minorities, various seminars for councils and representatives of national minorities were held: for the County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar and the County of Istria a seminar was held on 24 April 2009, and for the County of Sisak-Moslavina and the County of Karlovac a seminar was held on 18 May 2009. On these occasions, the results and difficulties encountered by councils and representatives of national

minorities were further discussed, which was useful for the drafting of the Third Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The report was amended in line with proposals made by representatives of national minorities. The appendix includes proposals by national minority associations and the opinion of the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia.

PART I

**OVERVIEW OF THE IMPROVEMENT OF NATIONAL MINORITY RIGHTS
IN THE PAST FOUR-YEAR PERIOD**

The Government of the Republic of Croatia submitted its second report on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in March 2004. In the four years since the last report was submitted, active involvement of government bodies and national minority representatives has resulted in further improvement of national minority rights. The legislative framework has been elaborated with the aim of enabling national minorities to fully exercise their rights, and measures have been adopted to stimulate better implementation of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and other legal regulations. In that respect, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has secured implementation capacities in the relevant government bodies, and year after year it has been increasing the funds allocated for exercising national minority rights. Progress has also been supported by funds approved by the European Commission for the improvement of living conditions among the most vulnerable national minority, the Roma, and by the funds of the Roma Education Fund of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (REF).

In the past period, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has dedicated particular attention to the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and each year it has organized round tables with national minority representatives in a different county with the goal of discussing all open issues that national minorities have faced, and encouraging the implementation of all articles of the Framework Convention. The first seminar was held in the County of Dubrovnik-Neretva, the second in the County of Split-Dalmatia, the third in the County of Istria, and last year a round-table discussion was held in the County of Vukovar-Srijem. All seminars were organized with the cooperation and participation of representatives of the Council of Europe. This practice has yielded progress, because national minority representatives in different parts of Croatia were given an opportunity to express their opinions and proposals, and to point out difficulties they were facing. At the same time, the questions they raised could be answered not only by representatives of national, regional and local authorities, but also by representatives of the Council of Europe, which was seen by national minority representatives as a sign of support and evidence that their opinion is heard and considered at a higher level. Taken overall, one can say that in the period since the first such seminar was organized, considerable progress has been noticed in the improvement of national minority rights, although there are still some difficulties in the implementation of the Framework Convention and national law in several local communities. In this way, a continuous improvement in national minority rights has been ensured, as well as a partnership-based dialogue with national minority representatives which is used to point out difficulties and thus stimulate their elimination.

A particular area in which progress has been achieved is the participation of national minorities in cultural and public life and in the decision-making process. This is confirmed by the number of 4,638

national minority members who participate in representative bodies at local and regional levels, or at the state level, or who have been elected as members of councils and representatives of national minorities. Besides the statistics on the number of national minority representatives involved in different ways in the decision-making process, one should also analyse how effective their involvement is. In order to do that, with the assistance of its Office for National Minorities and in cooperation with the Council for National Minorities, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has organized 23 seminars for councils and representatives of national minorities at local and regional levels, with representatives of local and regional governments taking part in the seminars. The goal of the seminars was to actively elaborate the method of participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the decision-making process and to insist on the creation of preconditions for their effective work. In addition, the Office for National Minorities and the Council for National Minorities have organized several round-table discussions, conferences and seminars dedicated to various international documents aimed at the protection of national minority rights, raising awareness of national legislation and Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Croatia and other currently relevant topics. Efforts were made to involve as many young members of national minorities as possible in the various events, in order to prepare them for active participation at all levels of decision making. Particular attention was paid to involving national minorities, especially the Roma national minority, in the decision-making process concerning all the issues of their interest, and all the issues that are of public interest. Equally, efforts were made to encourage dialogue between members of national minorities and local authorities. Such dialogue is exceptionally important because it is at the local level that persons belonging to national minorities can exercise their basic rights. In all of the processes mentioned, the role and activity of Members of Parliament who represent national minorities, and the work of the Council for National Minorities, have been particularly significant, and they have contributed to the promotion of the rights of national minorities and their active participation in public life. The election of a member of the Roma national minority to the Croatian Parliament was a powerful impetus for the popularization of that national minority, which had been marginalized and discriminated against for many years. The constant exchange of views and support for the involvement of national minorities have enabled implementation of international standards as regards the participation of national minorities in the decision-making process and public affairs, and a continuous dialogue with national minority representatives.

As regards the participation of national minorities in cultural life, it is worth mentioning that the Council for National Minorities – the body composed solely of persons belonging to national minorities – independently allocates funds for national minority associations and institutions and their programmes with which national minorities exercise their cultural autonomy in the Republic of Croatia. The number of programmes financed has been growing year after year, but so has the number of national minorities: in the previous period there were 16 national minorities, and now their number is 19, and the number of programmes financed has also grown. Equally, the number of minority associations has increased, and now there are more than 350 minority associations. It should be emphasized that the amount of funding available to the Council for National Minorities has also increased: in 2004, the Council could allocate HRK 22 million, whereas in 2008 the amount was 90% higher – HRK 42 million. In 2009 the available funds have been increased by an additional 5%. In addition to that, persons belonging to national minorities can apply for funding from other sources, particularly from the Ministry of Culture, which finances significant projects that are of national

interest, as well as projects aimed at preserving the cultural heritage of national minorities. The Ministry allocates significant amounts to support minority culture, and in the past four-year period the funding from this source amounted to more than HRK 51 million. In this way the culture of national minorities is incorporated into the overall national cultural policy, and intercultural dialogue is strongly encouraged, but at the same time national minorities can implement their special programmes, which are decided on by their own representatives sitting in the Council for National Minorities. The commitment of the Republic of Croatia to supporting the development of minority culture is further evidenced by the fact that the Office for National Minorities of the RoC and the European Training Foundation will organize, in 2009, an international conference on intercultural dialogue and education for more than 100 participants. National minority associations can also apply for funding available at the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, intended for projects aimed at improving the education of persons belonging to national minorities.

With the view of promoting minority identity and culture, efforts have been made to ensure the participation of national minority members in public and cultural life. In that respect, the traditional event "Cultural Activities of National Minorities" deserves special mention. The event takes place every year in early November, and in 2008 it was held for the 11th time. The show was broadcast live by Croatian Television, which gave an opportunity to numerous citizens of the Republic of Croatia to become acquainted with cultural activities of all national minorities living in our country, and contributed to further popularization of minority culture and activities.

Besides the prolific minority publishing activities that are financed from the central state budget, national minority members attach particular importance to exercising their right of access to the public media. On several occasions national minorities have pointed out the insufficient coverage of events and issues pertaining to their life and activities by the public media. With the goal of reaching a satisfactory level of public awareness of issues that are of interest to national minorities, Croatia established the Fund for Promotion of Diversity and Pluralism in the Electronic Media, which has at its disposal 3% of the funds collected from the mandatory licence fee for HRTV, and additional funds allocated by the Croatian Lottery. The Fund finances special broadcasts for national minorities, including those produced in the languages of national minorities, and applications for funding can be submitted by all private television and radio stations.

Persons belonging to national minorities are free to establish cooperation with their kin states and, indeed, cross-border cooperation makes up a very significant part of their activities. Particular praise should be given to the training and professional development of teachers who are members of national minorities in their kin states. The Government of the Republic of Croatia pays particular attention to the development of intercultural education and dialogue, and plans to organize a special conference dedicated to this topic. The conference will be organized in 2009 in cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF) with the participation of the countries of the region. Numerous events have been dedicated to the promotion of intercultural activities. In 2006, the Office for National Minorities and the Central European Initiative organized a seminar in Dubrovnik which focused on intercultural dialogue and the role of national minority associations. Representatives of a dozen European countries took part in the seminar, as well as representatives of government bodies and national minority members. As regards the Roma national minority, one should mention that in the past period particular attention has been dedicated to developing preconditions for the involvement of the Roma community in the economic, cultural and public life of the Republic of

Croatia. The 2003 National Programme for the Roma has been regularly implemented, and in 2005 the Croatian Government joined the "Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015" and adopted its Action Plan, which stipulates various measures in the field of education, employment, health and housing. The Government has set up bodies tasked with monitoring the implementation of the documents cited, headed by Deputy Prime Minister in charge of social activities. Thirteen representatives of the Roma national minority from different parts of Croatia participate in the work of this body. Representatives of the Roma national minority from Croatia also participate in the work of international bodies established to implement the Decade of Roma Inclusion. This stimulates their affirmation and strengthens links with Roma representatives of other countries. Thus far, some significant results have been achieved in the RoC, particularly in the area of education and housing. For example, in the school year 2006/2007, in comparison with the school year 2005/2006, the number of Roma children involved in pre-school education doubled, and the number of Roma children regularly attending schools quadrupled. In 2008, the number of Roma pupils in primary schools increased by a factor of four (from 1013 to 3940). Intensive measures have been implemented to improve the housing of members of the Roma community. In 12 out of 14 counties in which there are Roma settlements, the necessary physical plans were developed, and this was financed by the relevant Ministry. In the County of Međimurje, which has the largest number of Roma settlements, 9 out of 12 settlements have been legalized, whereas a 13th settlement, Donja Dubrava – which did not provide adequate living conditions due to frequent flooding – was abandoned, and the Roma who used to live there were accommodated in the surrounding settlements, in the houses of their choice. Their relocation was financed by the Government. The increased educational level of members of the Roma national minority will certainly increase the likelihood of their employment. Besides, various additional educational measures have also been implemented, including additional schooling of adults and vocational training, all with the goal of enabling their employment. The PHARE 2005 funds were used to co-finance the physical improvements in the largest Roma settlement in Međimurje, and the infrastructure of an additional three settlements will be improved in the upcoming period. The European Commission has already approved funding for that purpose, and the Government of the Republic of Croatia will contribute 25% of the overall costs. The IPA 2008 funds will be used to improve infrastructure in two more Roma settlements resulting in the infrastructure of the largest Roma settlements in the Republic of Croatia being completely upgraded in the next two years.

The legislative system of the Republic of Croatia guarantees the highest level of national minority rights, both those of the first generation (equality before the law and non-discrimination), the second generation (right to minority culture, language, tradition and religion) and the third generation (participation of national minorities in public life and the decision-making process).

In order to implement the rights regulated by the law as efficiently as possible, the appropriate institutional support has been developed. For example, with a view to implementing the new Anti-Discrimination Act, the role of the Ombudsman has been greatly strengthened. This will undoubtedly contribute to a more efficient fight against all forms of discrimination, including segregation. In the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, a new directorate has been set up dedicated to the education of national minorities, while in the Central State Office for Administration a new department for national minorities has begun to operate. The Office for National Minorities is currently undergoing a reorganization, and the plan is for the Office to have three departments: a department for legal affairs relating to the rights of national minorities, a department for the Roma,

and a department for national minority projects. The professional staff of the Council for National Minorities has also been strengthened.

The Republic of Croatia has also engaged in the training of the institutions tasked with the implementation of national legislation. The continuous professional development of civil servants is provided by the Central State Office for Administration. In 2007, the Academy of Local Democracy was established, focusing on permanent professional development of appointed and elected local officials and employees in units of local and regional government. The goal of this professional development is to step up the level of professionalism in local and regional government and reach standards that will enable the application of relevant national legislation, and any changes that might be necessary in the process of harmonization of the national legislation of the RoC with the EU *acquis communautaire*.

Article 22 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities ensures that national minorities are represented in state administration bodies and judicial bodies, in line with the share of national minorities in the population of the area in which the state administration body or judicial body has been established. The same right is guaranteed for persons belonging to national minorities in bodies of local and regional government. With the aim of encouraging the application of this article and securing proper representation of national minorities, some special measures have been introduced. For example, the number of national minority members in individual bodies is continuously monitored, and a special plan of employment of national minority members in state administration bodies has been developed. In the meantime, the implementing regulations have also been amended to ensure that persons belonging to national minorities can indeed realize this right.

When it comes to the representation of national minorities at the state level, one should mention that a representative of the Serbian national minority has been appointed deputy prime minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and that members of various national minorities are serving in the government as state secretaries, directors and heads of departments in various ministries and other government bodies.

Legislative improvements

Since 2004, the legislative framework has been continuously upgraded, in order to enable national minorities to exercise more fully their rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette, Nos. 56/90, 135/97, 8/98 – consolidated text, 113/00, 124/00 – consolidated text, 28/01 – Amendment of the Constitution), Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities (Official Gazette, No. 155/02) (hereinafter: the Constitutional Act). Since the Second Report of the Republic of Croatia on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was submitted, the largest improvements to the legislative framework have been made in the area of participation of minorities in public life, particularly with more precise stipulations of the provisions of Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities. Pursuant to that article, persons belonging to national minorities are to be represented in state administration bodies and judicial bodies in the manner stipulated by special legislation, with due consideration of the share of national minorities in the total population of the area for which the particular state administration body or judicial body was established.

In line with the above provision of the Constitutional Act, several pieces of legislation have been adopted that regulate employment in judicial bodies: the Courts Act, Act on Amendments to the State Attorney's Office Act, Act on Amendments to the State Judicial Council Act.

The Courts Act (Official Gazette No. 150/05 – Art. 74 (7) and (8)) regulates that when appointing judges, due attention should be paid to the number of judges who are members of national minorities, in line with the provisions of Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities. When applying for the vacant position of a judge, members of national minorities are entitled to invoke their right stemming from the provisions of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities.

The State Attorney's Office Act (Official Gazette No. 15/05) stipulates that when appointing deputy state attorneys, due care should be paid to the representation of national minorities in their ranks. When applying for the vacant position of a deputy state attorney, members of national minorities are entitled to invoke their rights.

The State Judicial Council Act (Official Gazette No. 150/05) also regulates that when appointing judges, due attention should be paid to the number of national minority members among the judges. Pursuant to the Act, when deciding on the appointment of judges, the Council shall take into consideration the provision of Article 74 (7) and (8) of the Courts Act. This provision stipulates that if any of the candidates for the vacant position of a judge has invoked the right guaranteed by Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, or Article 74 of the Courts Act, and declared their national affiliation, such candidate shall have priority over other candidates who meet the same conditions.

Since these regulations were adopted, a trend has been noticed of an increased number of national minority members employed in the judiciary, although the number of candidates for vacant positions of judges, deputy state attorneys or judicial trainees who decide to declare their national affiliation and thus acquire priority in appointment or employment, is still small. Given that any national minority member may freely choose whether they want to be treated as members of national minorities, the legislative framework described ensures that national minority members have all the preconditions allowing them to make that choice.

As regards the employment of persons belonging to minorities in state administration bodies, and the method used to ensure employment of national minority members in these bodies, in 2005 the Civil Servants Act was adopted (Official Gazette No. 92/05). This Act stipulates that the plan of employment of civil servants shall also include consideration of the number of positions within a state administration body filled by national minority members, and the plan of employment of a sufficient number of civil servants who are members of national minorities which would satisfy the necessary level of their representation, in line with the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the law governing the state administration system.

Judicial Reform 2004-2008

Pursuant to the Family Act, since 1 January 2006 family disputes have ceased to fall under the remit of social welfare centres and now come under the competence of courts.

In the area of legislative activity, the following new acts have been adopted: Act on Amendments of the Enforcement Act (Official Gazette No. 88/05), Obligations Act (Official Gazette No. 35/05) and Amendments to the Court Register Act (Official Gazette No. 54/05), Ordinance Amending the Ordinance on the Manner of Registration in the Court Register (Official Gazette No. 94/05) and Ordinance on Certified Court Interpreters (Official Gazette No. 132/05).

Within the framework of land registry reform, in 2005 the following regulations were adopted: Ordinance on Standards for the Workload of Land Registry Employees, Ordinance on Professional Examination and Appointment of Authorized Land Registry Clerks, Framework Standards for the Workload of Clerks, and Amendments to the Ordinance on Internal Organization, Keeping of Land Registers and Other Activities of the Land Registry Departments of Courts – Land Registry Rules of Procedure (Official Gazette No. 14/05).

Another piece of legislation adopted is the Act Ratifying the Council of Europe Convention No. 108 of 28 January 1981 for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data. This Convention and its additional protocol came into force in the Republic of Croatia on 1 October 2005.

Since 1 January 2006 the enforcement proceedings in which a decision can be made on the basis of a trustworthy document fall under the remit of notaries public.

The Obligations Act adopted on 17 March 2005 is fully aligned with EEC Directive 86/653 (on the coordination of the laws of member states relating to self-employed commercial agents) and EEC Directive 85/374 (on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the member states concerning liability for defective products). The Act was published in Official Gazette No. 35/05, and it came into force on 1 January 2006.

With the goal of ensuring the parties' right to trial within a reasonable period of time, the new Courts Act (Official Gazette No. 150/05) provides for the possibility of launching a procedure before a regular or specialized court for the breach of this right. Actually, since the regular and specialized courts decide on cases of infringement of the right to trial within a reasonable time, these courts bear the largest responsibility for exercising and protecting the said right.

Furthermore, deviating from the previous solution, the application for the protection of the right to trial within a reasonable time is submitted to the court immediately higher than the one against which the complaint is launched. The Constitutional Court of the RoC has maintained its competence concerning the right to trial within a reasonable time. However, the Constitutional Court of the RoC decides on the submitted applications only after the procedure for the protection of that right has been carried out by regular and specialized courts. Only if the complaint claiming a delayed procedure is launched against the Supreme Court of the RoC may the party submit such complaint directly to the Constitutional Court of the RoC.

With the goal of reducing the court network in the RoC, the Courts Act provides for the possibility of merging misdemeanour and municipal courts. In order to ensure the timely and adequate provision of information on the functioning of courts to the public, the position of court spokesperson has been introduced. In cases in which second-instance courts pass different decisions in the same factual and legal matter, and an extraordinary legal remedy is not foreseen, there is a possibility of

submitting a request to the Supreme Court of the RoC to analyse whether such decisions jeopardize the uniform application of law and equality among citizens.

In 2005, the Act on Amendments of the Act on the State Judicial Council (Official Gazette No. 150/05) was passed. This Act established two disciplinary bodies: the Council and the Disciplinary Council. The previous legislative solutions provided for procedures on the disciplinary responsibility of judges which were lengthy, and this caused dissatisfaction among the general public and professionals. The new legislative solution has speeded up such procedures. The Disciplinary Council collects the evidence and proposes a decision to the Council. If the proposal includes disciplinary measures, the Disciplinary Council also proposes the type of punishment. The statute of limitations for disciplinary prosecution of perpetrators of disciplinary breaches has been extended from two to three years.

In April 2005 the Act on Amendments to the Court Register Act (Official Gazette No. 54/05) was adopted. This Act simplified the procedure of registration of companies. In August 2005 the Ordinance Amending the Ordinance on the Manner of Registration in the Court Register (Official Gazette no 94/05) was also passed.

The amendments to the Penal Code (Official Gazette No. 71/06) which came into force on 1 October 2006 completed efforts to implement a systematic policy of combating and suppressing crime through criminal law, which began with the amendments to the Penal Code in July 2004. The amendments made certain penalties more severe; the ability of courts to pronounce lower sentences than those prescribed by law has been limited; the ability to pronounce a single sentence of imprisonment of 20 years (instead of the previous 15 years) for serious offences committed in concurrence has been introduced; the ability to pronounce a sentence of long-term imprisonment for a perpetrator who is over 18 has been introduced; the ability to pronounce a lower sentence on the grounds of diminished capacity and the ability to pronounce a conditional sentence for serious offences have been limited; the portion of the sentence that long-term prisoners must serve in order to apply for conditional release has been increased from one half to two-thirds.

In late 2004 a new Justice Administration Sector was set up in the Ministry of Justice. This Sector continuously monitors the operation of the justice administration in order to determine and eliminate any irregularities and illegal occurrences, especially those that might affect the effectiveness of court functioning.

The final goal of the land registry reform is the digitalization of all land registers and introduction of a unified land registry database.

The first result of the judicial reform initiated in 2004 was an increase of 26.47% in the efficiency of resolving land-registry cases. At the same time, the number of pending cases dropped by 20,762 in 2004. By 1 October 2005 a total of 463,098 cases were solved, and the total number of pending cases decreased by an additional 68,407 in 2005 (the total number of pending cases being 249,913). This was a result of appointment of 221 authorized land-registry clerks in the period between October 2004 and September 2005, accompanied by a range of organizational measures undertaken by the Ministry of Justice within the framework of the land registry reform.

In late 2004 the Ministry of Justice introduced permanent monitoring of the operation of land-registry departments, which further contributed to improved organization of work in land-registry departments.

On 11 May 2005 it was possible for the first time in the RoC to browse through a digitalized land registry on the web page of the Ministry of Justice.

On 4 February 2005 the Republic of Croatia ratified the UN Convention against Corruption, and in April 2005 the Additional Protocol to the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption.

The 2005 Act on Amendments of the Act on the Office for Combating Corruption and Organized Crime (USKOK) extended the competences of USKOK in relation to special investigative actions and thus strengthened its competences in the preinvestigative procedure. Within the USKOK organizational set-up, the jurisdiction of the Department for Combating Corruption and Public Relations changed, and a new Department for International Cooperation and Joint Investigations was established. The competences of USKOK were extended to encompass all corruption-related criminal offences.

In the field of personal data protection, the legal framework was established by the adoption of the Act on Personal Data Protection in 2003. In line with the Act, in 2004 the Regulation on the Manner of Keeping Records of Personal Data Filing and Pertinent Record Forms and the Regulation on Methods of Storing and Special Technical Protection Measures for Special Categories of Personal Data were also adopted.

In 2005, the Department for Administrative Control decided on applications regarding the infringements of rights during the collection and processing of personal data. Decisions were passed concerning the collection and processing of personal data for the purpose of conclusion of contracts on the use of credit cards, advertising of personal data in public places (in residential buildings) and application of biometrics in processing personal data. In addition, the Department for Administrative Control made decisions on requests regarding the application of the Regulation on the Manner of Keeping Records of Personal Data Filing and Pertinent Record Forms, master citizen number as a personal datum and the use of master citizen number in banking operations, in serving the tax authorities' decisions, in procedures to elect a workers' representative on a company's Supervisory Board, and when purchasing goods in a retail store. Along with these, decisions were made in cases concerning photocopies and scans of the personal identification card, making students' personal data publicly available (on the board in a students' dormitory) and on access to personal data kept by city authorities in relation to court cases.

On 3 October 2007 the Croatian Parliament adopted the Act on Amendments to the Penal Code (Official Gazette No. 110/07), with the aim of aligning it with the Convention on the Protection of Financial Interests of the European Communities of 26 July 1995 (the PIF Convention) and the *ne bis in idem* principle contained in the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement (CISA).

In October 2007 the new Misdemeanour Act was also passed (Official Gazette No. 107/07), in order to speed up misdemeanour proceedings and to release them from too many provisions of the criminal procedure which are not appropriate for the purpose and nature of misdemeanour proceedings. Additional goals were to relieve the proceedings of all the unnecessary actions and

costs, and to prevent any abuse of the rights that the parties and those participating in the proceedings are entitled to.

The Amendments to the State Attorney's Office Act of February 2007 (Official Gazette No. 16/07) introduced a new system of evaluation of deputy state attorneys and improved the system of internal control of the work of state attorneys. In line with the Freedom of Information Act, it was stipulated which data are confidential and which data could – if disclosed – cause damage to the effective proceedings. The liability for keeping the data confidential was also increased and, according to the amended Act, the confidential data are those relating to cases falling within the jurisdiction of the state attorney for minors, data concerning the preinvestigative procedure and data designated as confidential by the state attorney.

With the aim of completing the legislative framework for the protection of witnesses in preliminary procedures, in November 2007 the Ordinance on Internal Operations of the State Attorney's Office was adopted. The Ordinance specified the method of protection of confidential data during the procedures, and especially during the preliminary procedures.

In February 2007 the Act on Amendments to the Notaries Public Act (Official Gazette No. 16/07) came into force. This Act stipulated additional criteria for the determination of the number of notaries public, given that in the meantime the country had experienced economic growth and a consequent significant increase in legal activities.

The Act on Amendments to the Courts Act (Official Gazette No. 16/07) also came into effect in February 2007. The Act allows the president of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia to pass decisions on temporary re-allocation of judges to other courts of the same instance, within a 50km range of the court in which they work. The decision on re-allocation can be made without the judge's approval, and it can last for up to two years. This possibility contributes to a reduction in the backlog of pending cases in heavily burdened courts and to a decreased duration of court proceedings. The Act also stipulates that all judges in the Republic of Croatia are obliged to submit reports on the property owned by them, their spouses and minor children, and to report annually on any major changes in their property status. Such data can be used in cases of alleged corruption among the judiciary.

In February 2007 the Act on Amendments to the State Attorney's Office Act also came in force. This Act also introduced the obligation of all officials of the state attorney's office to report on their property.

In 2007 the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia introduced a programme to monitor criminal cases in which the statute of limitations might apply. The programme was to be implemented from 1 January 2007 to 30 March 2008, with the goal of determining the criminal cases in which the statute of limitations on criminal prosecution did or might come into effect. The aim was to prevent the statute of limitations on criminal prosecution from coming into effect and to penalize the unjustified statute of limitations on criminal prosecution, which is a result of the sloppy operation of courts or individual judges.

The Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia also decides in cases in which requests have been submitted for the protection of the right to trial within a reasonable time if the case in question was heard by a county court, High Commercial Court of the RoC, High Misdemeanour Court of the RoC or the Administrative Court of the RoC. During the period between 1 January and 30 September 2007, 66

requests were received for the protection of the right to trial within a reasonable time in criminal cases (7 of them were well-founded), and 3018 requests for the protection of the right to trial within a reasonable time in civil cases (1426 of them were well-founded).

Within the framework of the IT development project that was launched and implemented at the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, a module has been developed for monitoring all cases in which an application for the protection of the right to trial within a reasonable time was filed for county courts and the High Commercial Court of the RoC.

On 29 October 2007 a Day of Open Commercial Courts was held, as an entirely new method of direct communication between citizens and courts, which provided citizens with an opportunity to see the everyday activities of courts and thus ensure transparency of court functioning. The goal of the project was to inform the public about their rights and obligations as regards a possible exercise of their right to court protection. This, and future similar actions, will contribute to a better understanding of the position and role of courts in our society and positively influence the public perception of court functioning. The opportunity to visit the commercial courts of the RoC was taken by 1441 people.

In an effort to reach European standards of openness and transparency of court operations, in early 2007 the High Commercial Court of the RoC launched a web registry which allows all parties to monitor their cases from the moment of their reception by the court, all the way to the final decision on appeal, that is, to the moment when the case is dispatched to the first-instance court. Additionally, in cooperation with the Judicial Network, a special web site – the only such web site in the world – was developed. It is called the "web bankruptcy" and forms an integral part of the High Commercial Court's web page (www.vtsrh.hr). The site allows one to follow the sales of property in all bankruptcy cases tried before all the commercial courts in the RoC if their value is higher than HRK 50,000 and to access all other information on bankruptcy proceedings, bankruptcy judges, bankruptcy administrators, legal regulations on bankruptcy, case law pertaining to the bankruptcy law etc. At the High Commercial Court the cases are distributed to individual judges by a computer, thus eliminating the human factor and all possible complaints regarding an irregular distribution of cases.

Since September 2007 all commercial courts have had small information boards displayed on, or next to, the courtroom doors. The boards are used to announce the daily or weekly schedule of court hearings, with hours and parties' names or company names. In addition, in all commercial courts there are visibly positioned boxes, usually orange-coloured, in which parties can leave their suggestions and remarks. Since late October 2007 all parties and their representatives can find, in all commercial courts, a brochure entitled "On commercial courts". The brochure particularly targets those parties that have no legal background.

The first Croatian court in which mediation was introduced was the Zagreb Commercial Court. Eight municipal courts in the RoC have followed suit. Recently the mediation procedure was introduced for the first time in a second-instance court – the High Commercial Court of the RoC.

With the aim of promoting court settlements, in the period between 5 and 9 November 2007, Croatian courts held, for the first time, a Week of Court Settlements at commercial courts. All parties and their attorneys-at-law who are involved in cases before a commercial court or the High Commercial Court of the RoC were invited to make use of this opportunity to end their disputes in a peaceful manner – by reaching a court settlement.

In May 2007 the web registry projects were completed at the High Commercial Court of the Republic of Croatia and the Varaždin Commercial Court. Parties can now access information on case flow, with the exception of the name of the judge or panel of judges who will decide the case. An initiative was launched to amend the regulations so that the name of the judge or panel of judges is also accessible to the parties. In this way parties have been enabled to make sure that the rules on exclusion of second-instance judges are effectively applied.

The introduction of the e-case management system (ICMS) has begun. This system will enhance legal security and ensure full transparency of the case file for as long as the case is active. The ICMS project was launched in January 2007 at the Municipal Court in Pula, Commercial Court in Split, Commercial Court in Zagreb and Municipal Court in Zagreb.

In 2008, the Act on Amendments to the Civil Procedure Act (Official Gazette No. 84/08) was adopted. This Act introduced some novelties regarding the service of documents: the documents are served twice to the address registered as the seat of a legal entity or craft. If the documents cannot be served on these two occasions, this will be announced on the court information board and it will be considered that the documents have been served. The threshold for small-value cases was also amended from HRK 5,000 to HRK 10,000, and an obligatory preliminary procedure was introduced.

The amendments to the Civil Procedure Act relating to the second-instance procedure have given a wider jurisdiction to the second-instance courts deciding in appellate proceedings and introduced measures aimed at eliminating unnecessary reversal of court rulings (alteration of the first-instance decision depending on the entire case file, the possibility of holding a court hearing before the second-instance court during the appellate proceedings, the obligation of the second-instance courts to list actions that the first-instance court must undertake in the renewed proceedings if its decision is quashed). The scope of grounds for a revision has also been widened (besides the previous criterion of value and the decision in a labour dispute, a revision can also be requested against a second-instance decision under Article 373 (a) of the Act). An extraordinary revision can also be requested if the decision in a dispute depends on the resolution of some substantive legal issue or a procedural issue pertinent to securing unified application of law and constitutionally granted equality of citizens. The Amendments to the Civil Procedure Act have aligned the Croatian civil procedure law with the EU *acquis communautaire*.

The Amendments to the Enforcement Act (Official Gazette No. 67/08) have additionally speeded up the enforcement procedure and simplified the proceedings before enforcement courts (with the introduction of a simplified procedure of service of documents not only in court enforcement proceedings, but also in enforcement proceedings dealt with by notaries public; in addition, the range of government bodies obliged to provide information on the property of the distrainee has been widened; the possibility of abuse of a denouncing statement has been eliminated because the distraint officer is obliged to acquire information on the distrainee's property from relevant bodies – Croatian Pension Insurance Fund, Ministry of the Interior, FINA (the Financial Agency), the Cadastre – even before filing a motion for the submission of a denouncing list of property; the possibility of delaying the enforcement has been limited and the final deadline for such postponement has been restricted; the possibility has been introduced of entrusting seized movables to persons outside the seat of the enforcement court, and some unclear provisions regarding enforcement against motor vehicles in proceedings before a notary public have been removed.

The Act on Amendments to the Courts Act was adopted in September 2008 (Official Gazette No. 113/08). When drafting these amendments, the goal was to continue with the improvements to the procedure of appointing judges and to ensure that judges' councils operate in a uniform manner.

In October 2008, the Act on Amendments to the Legal Profession Act (Official Gazette No. 117/08) was adopted. The amendments allowed foreign attorneys-at-law to set up their branch offices, and act as attorneys, in the Republic of Croatia in the same way in which they can in the EU member states. The provisions of the Act pertaining to the status of foreign attorneys-at-law will become effective once Croatia becomes a member of the European Union.

On 9 July 2008 the Croatian Parliament passed the new Act on Territorial Jurisdictions and Seats of Courts (Official Gazette No. 85/08). This Act has reduced the number of municipal courts from 108 to 67 (with 42 municipal courts being discontinued). The reduction of the court network will be carried out in several phases, and the Act foresees that the entire process should be completed by 31 December 2019.

The free legal assistance system was completed in the Republic of Croatia with the adoption of the Free Legal Aid Act in May 2008 (Official Gazette No. 62/08). The Act became effective for Croatian citizens on 1 February 2009, whereas it will become effective for EU nationals on the day of accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union.

The Free Legal Aid Act stipulates the criteria that citizens of lower means need to meet in order to be eligible for free legal aid and the procedure for approval of free legal aid. Depending on the means of the citizens who meet the basic conditions for the approval of free legal aid, they can get between 50% and 100% of the legal aid costs. Free legal aid may be granted to assist a person in exercising his/her rights and obligations in procedures before administrative, judicial and international bodies relating to matters that are of vital importance to the person, such as: status-related issues, entitlements in the field of social welfare, entitlements in the fields of pension and disability insurance and other types of benefits, labour law issues, protection of children and young adults, and protection of victims of criminal offences, victims of trafficking in persons, and victims of family violence.

Furthermore, the Act foresees two basic types of free legal aid: primary legal aid and secondary legal aid. In line with the provisions of the Act, primary legal aid can be provided by attorneys-at-law, NGOs that will receive special authorization to provide free legal aid and law clinics, as well as trade unions. Secondary legal aid can only be provided by attorneys-at-law, with the exception of labour disputes, where – in line with provisions of the Labour Act and the Civil Procedure Act – it can also be provided by trade unions to their members.

The funding for free legal aid shall be earmarked in the central state budget and, once a budget is adopted, the Government of the RoC will pass a decision on the amount that will be appropriated for free legal aid projects implemented by NGOs and law clinics.

The Act also prescribes a monitoring system for the approval of free legal aid, and also for the quality and professionalism in providing free legal aid.

The Government Decision on the Internal Structure of the Ministry of Justice (Official Gazette No. 77/08) established a Free Legal Aid Department which acts as the second-instance body which decides on appeals and performs supervision. In addition, the Regulation Amending the Regulation on the Internal Structure of State Administration Offices in Counties (Official Gazette No. 70/08) created preconditions

for the employment of civil servants who will carry out first-instance procedures of approval of free legal aid.

Pursuant to the National Programme for the Roma, the Ministry of Justice developed a programme of free legal aid for the Roma concerning matters pertaining to their legal status. The programme was implemented by 1 February 2009.

The Ministry of Justice has developed a model for statistical monitoring of the employment structure in judicial bodies, which includes judicial officials, civil servants and government employees. The programme provides statistical data on the national affiliation of judges, state attorneys and their deputies, civil servants and government employees in judicial bodies. The data on national affiliation are collected from courts and state attorney's offices on quarterly, half-yearly and annual bases.

The State Administration Act (Official Gazette No. 79/07) prescribes that national minority members be entitled to be represented in central state administration bodies in proportion with their share in the total population of the Republic of Croatia, while their representation in the state administration offices operating in units of regional self-government should be proportional with their share in the total population of that unit of regional self-government. When applying for the vacant position of a civil servant, persons belonging to national minorities are entitled to invoke their rights.

In 2007 a new Act on Civil Servants and Employees in Local and Regional Self-government (Official Gazette No. 86/08) was adopted. This Act filled a legal lacuna, for prior to its adoption the issue of employment in units of local and regional self-government was not regulated by any piece of legislation. Article 9 of this Act stipulates that the Employment Plan shall establish the real number of persons employed in the local unit's administrative bodies, the necessary number of civil servants and employees who would be employed on the basis of an open-ended contract during the period covered by the Employment Plan, and the number of trainees with adequate qualifications and specializations.

The Employment Plan shall also establish the number of jobs in administrative bodies filled by national minority members, and the number of national minority members to be employed with the goal of achieving their proper representation.

In comparison with the previous reporting period, certain novelties have also been introduced in the field of participation of national minorities in local and regional self-government bodies. The structure of the self-government bodies has been changed.

The Amendments to the Local and Regional Self-Government Act (Official Gazette No. 109/07) abolished the institute of the county or municipal council, and the executive bodies of the units of local or regional self-government now are the mayor (of a municipality or town) and the county prefect. Pursuant to the Act on the Election of Municipal Mayors, Town Mayors, County Prefects and the Mayor of the City of Zagreb (Official Gazette Nos. 109/07 and 125/08), on 17 May 2009 they were elected directly for the first time.

Given that the Constitutional Act and the 2005 Act on Amendments to the Local and Regional Self-Government Act regulate the issue of representation of minority members in the executive bodies of local government units, with the aim of achieving a proper representation as stipulated by the Constitutional Act, the Amendments to the Local and Regional Self-Government Act have established

that in local government units, deputy mayors of municipalities and towns, and deputy county prefects, shall come from the ranks of national minority members, and that this shall be regulated by the charter of the local or regional unit.

If a deputy from the ranks of national minority members is not elected, additional by-elections shall be organized, and these shall be governed by the same Act on the Election of Municipal Mayors, Town Mayors, County Prefects and the Mayor of the City of Zagreb. The Act also stipulates that in those units in which by-elections are organized because the position of the deputy is not filled at regular elections, the municipal mayor, town mayor or county prefect shall have two or three deputies.

It results from the legislative framework described that, since the submission of its Second Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the Republic of Croatia has made some significant steps in improving the national minority right to participation in the public life of the Republic of Croatia.

Since the regular four-year mandate of the members of the councils and representatives of national minorities (elected in 2003) had expired, the Government of the Republic of Croatia announced regular elections for the councils and representatives of national minorities. The elections were held on 17 June 2007.

The Decision on Announcing Elections for Members of Councils of National Minorities in Units of Local and Regional Self-Government (Official Gazette Nos. 49/07 and 53/07) announced elections for a total of 308 councils of national minorities (73 at the county level and in the City of Zagreb, 128 at the level of towns and 107 at the level of municipalities). The Decision on Announcing Elections for Representatives of National Minorities in Units of Local and Regional Self-Government (Official Gazette No. 49/07) announced the election of 228 representatives of national minorities (86 at the county level and in the City of Zagreb, 78 at the level of towns and 64 at the level of municipalities).

The opportunity to nominate candidates for members of councils of national minorities was taken by 14 national minorities. These were (in alphabetical order): Albanians, Bosniaks, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Roma, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenians and Ukrainians.

The opportunity to nominate candidates for representatives of national minorities was taken by a total of 18 national minorities. These were (in alphabetical order): Albanians, Bosniaks, Bulgarians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Poles, Roma, Russians, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenians and Ukrainians. The Rumanian national minority was the only one that did not make use of this possibility.

Furthermore, by its Decision on Determination of the Amount of Reimbursable Costs of Election Promotion for the Election of Members of Councils of National Minorities and Representatives of National Minorities in Units of Local and Regional Self-Government (Official Gazette No. 58/07), the Government of the Republic of Croatia established that the elected councils and representatives of national minorities in units of local and regional self-government are entitled to the reimbursement of their election promotion costs, and it determined the amount that can be reimbursed.

According to said Decision, the council of a national minority at the county level, or in the City of Zagreb, is entitled to the reimbursement of costs in the amount of HRK 1,500 for each of its members, while the

council of a national minority at the level of a town or a municipality is entitled to the reimbursement of costs in the amount of HRK 1,000 for each of its members. The representative of a national minority in a local or regional self-government unit is entitled to the reimbursement of costs in the amount of HRK 1,000.

In 2006 the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Ordinance on Reimbursement of Costs and Remuneration for Members of Councils and Representatives of National Minorities. The Ordinance stipulates that members of councils of national minorities and representatives of national minorities in local and regional self-government units are entitled to the reimbursement of costs and remuneration for their work.

One of the most important pieces of legislation adopted in the past period is the Anti-Discrimination Act (Official Gazette No. 85/08). This Act ensures the protection and promotion of equality as one of the highest values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia, and it creates preconditions necessary for the achievement of equal opportunities. It also regulates protection from any discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic affiliation, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other conviction, national or social origin, property, trade union membership, education, social status, marital or family status, age, health status, handicap, genetic origin, gender identity, expression or sexual orientation.

The Act prohibits all forms of discrimination and segregation, and determines which bodies are competent for the decision-making in this field. In this respect, a special role is given to the Ombudsman. The Act also stipulates sanctions for natural and legal persons that violate the provisions contained in the Act. With the adoption of this Act, racial and other forms of discrimination have become punishable not only within the previously existing legislative framework, but also pursuant to special law. Besides this, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has adopted the National Anti-Discrimination Action Plan, which contains measures aimed at improving the current situation in society and combating discrimination (for more details, see On Article 5 of the Framework Convention).

The Ombudsman's Office has been given new competences and the newly recruited personnel have enabled it to exercise its role as stipulated in the Act.

The Act on Primary and Secondary School Education (Official Gazette No. 87/08), in its Article 4 stipulates, *inter alia*, that pupils and students be educated in accordance with general cultural and civilizational values, human rights and rights of children, and that they be prepared for *life in a multicultural world, respectful of differences and tolerance, as well as for active and responsible participation in the democratic development of the society*.

The Act regulates that primary and secondary school education shall be based on equal educational opportunities for all pupils and students, in accordance with their capacities, and on decentralization, which means increased powers and responsibility at local and regional levels, and a partnership of all educational factors at local, regional and national levels.

The same Act also stipulates that instruction in languages and scripts of national minorities for primary and secondary education of children who are members of national minorities shall be organized in line

with the provisions of the Act of Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities, provisions of that Act and other regulations (Article 7).

The Act on the Education and Teacher Training Agency (Official Gazette No. 85/06). The Agency was established for the purpose of carrying out professional and advisory tasks in the field of education.

Programmes for the Roma

National Programme for the Roma

Ever since the National Programme for the Roma was adopted in 2003, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has been actively involved – through its ministries and other government bodies in charge of individual measures – in its implementation, either directly, or by creating preconditions for a systematic implementation of the National Programme.

The cooperation with representatives of Roma associations, councils and representatives has been intensified with the goal of establishing a partnership. Roma representatives are members of the Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and all five of the Commission's working groups.

There are 17 councils and 9 representatives of the Roma national minority in the Republic of Croatia, and this allows the Roma national minority to participate in the decision-making process in local self-government units. During the period under review, activities have been intensified aimed at training young Roma, especially women, in order to facilitate their involvement in public and social life, in the decision-making process, and in the implementation of the National Programme for the Roma. For this purpose, seminars were organized to provide Roma representatives with the necessary knowledge on management, establishing and managing NGOs, systematic linkage of Roma associations and representatives of areas in which the Roma live. Furthermore, the goal was also to educate Roma women and youth to improve the position of women, to inform them about the rights stemming from the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international standards. Training sessions have also been organized for representatives of the majority population on how to accept the Roma population and work with them, and various informative and promotional publications have been printed to enhance communication with the Roma and among the Roma. Such publications have been used to discuss the course and method of implementation of various measures of the National Programme for the Roma at the local and regional level and the manner of systematic and effective involvement of the Roma in its application.

Measures have been undertaken to resolve status-related issues. In connection with status-related issues, the Roma have been entitled to free legal aid provided by attorneys-at-law. In 2005, free legal aid was provided to Roma people in 142 instances, of which 22 were applications for citizenship, 73 were applications for registration of permanent or temporary residence, 1 was an application for a work permit and 47 cases regarded other status-related issues.

In 2006, the project of free legal aid for the Roma in status-related issues was extended to the territory of the Counties of Sisak-Moslavina, Osijek-Baranja and Zagreb, so that attorneys provided free legal aid to Roma people in five counties and in the territory of the City of Zagreb. According to the available data,

the Roma addressed attorneys with a total of 314 requests for assistance. 38 requests regarded citizenship, 139 regarded permanent or temporary residence registration, and 137 were in connection with other status-related issues.

With the Free Legal Aid Act now in effect, free legal aid can also be provided for other matters. Also, in line with this Act, free legal aid can be provided by NGOs.

Mobile teams have been set up, consisting of representatives of the relevant ministries, state administration offices, social welfare centres, Roma NGOs and Roma representatives. These teams consider individual cases in areas inhabited by the Roma and instruct the Roma on how to resolve their status-related issues – especially how to register their residence or acquire Croatian citizenship.

In the field of culture, the appropriations of the Office for National Minorities are used every year to finance traditional Roma culture, activities of choreographers and teachers, acquisition of musical instruments and folk costumes, and other programmes. In the period between 2004 and 2009 a total of HRK 891,800 was allocated to 79 Roma associations. Two Romani-Croatian dictionaries have been published with the support of the central state budget. Budgetary funds and City of Zagreb funds were also used to finance the Roma World Congress (IRU) that was held in Zagreb in 2008.

In line with a measure of the National Programme for the Roma, the Office for National Minorities has, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and representatives of umbrella Roma associations, developed and printed two booklets entitled "My Rights", one in Romani and one in the Croatian language. These publications provide information on opportunities and methods of exercising the rights of the Roma national minority in three important segments: status-related issues, health insurance and social welfare.

The booklet "My Rights" was printed in 800 copies in Croatian and 800 copies in the Romani language and it was distributed to all Roma NGOs registered in the Republic of Croatia free of charge. The amount used for this purpose totalled HRK 33,687.

Significant amounts have been used to create preconditions for cultural autonomy of the Roma national minority and to preserve the traditional Roma culture. In 2004 a total of HRK 210,000 was allocated for the preservation of the Roma traditional culture, in 2005 HRK 155,000, in 2006 HRK 128,000, in 2007 HRK 180,000, and in 2008 HRK 218,000.

Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015

Education

In the field of education, the number of Roma children of both sexes included in the educational system has grown. According to the data collected from all state administration offices at the level of counties and the City of Zagreb on the number of children attending pre-school education and programmes of preparation for school at the end of the school year 2007/2008 and at the beginning of the school year 2008/2009, the number of Roma children included in pre-school education has also increased.

Roma children are enrolled in primary schools under conditions equal to those of all other children, and their number has quadrupled. Training has been provided to Roma teaching assistants. Currently, 23 Roma teaching assistants (11 women and 12 men) are employed in primary schools.

Scholarships have been provided to all secondary-school students and students of an institute of higher education who have applied to receive them. Accommodation in students' dormitories has also been secured, and assistance in exercising one's right to financial support. Students of the final year of secondary schools who wish to continue their schooling can attend lectures and receive professional assistance that should help them prepare for university entrance exams and facilitate their further education.

Educational policy measures encompassing free textbooks, free transport and accommodation in students' dormitories – and also scholarships for the Roma students – are preconditions that are necessary to increase the number of Roma students who will successfully complete their secondary education.

Various measures have also been undertaken that involve parents and the provision of professional assistance, all with the goal of including Roma children in the regular educational system.

Health care

In the field of health care, systematic efforts have been made to improve the health status of Roma babies and children, by reaching the same level of vaccination of Roma children as of other children in Croatia. Nowadays nearly 100% of Roma children have been vaccinated. A programme of health education has been implemented in the territory of the Counties of Osijek-Baranja and Međimurje, with efforts also being made to increase the level of hygiene in the houses. Various measures have been aimed at raising the health awareness of Roma parents and both preventive and curative health protection measures have been carried out. Roma assistants and Roma families have been informed and trained by field teams that have visited them.

Employment

In the area of employment, people of the Roma nationality have been informed about opportunities for employment, services provided by the Croatian Employment Service and possible co-financing of their training and employment. They have also been provided with assistance in defining their job profile and developing an individual plan of job-seeking. Last year, the Croatian Employment Service co-financed the employment of 223 people belonging to the Roma national minority, and it co-financed the employment of 29 people for a period of 24 months. 203 people belonging to the Roma national minority are engaged in public works.

Housing

As regards housing, 12 counties have developed their spatial plans for the areas inhabited by the Roma, and in the remaining two counties the development of plans is about to be completed. With the support of an EU grant within the framework of the PHARE 2005 project, the entire infrastructure of the largest Roma settlement, Parag in the County of Međimurje, has been constructed. The process of legalization of individual houses and connecting them to the water supply and electricity network is in its final stages.

Improvement works in an additional three settlements in the County of Međimurje (Pribislavec, Lončarevo and Piškorovec) have been initiated. They will be financed by a PHARE 2006 project.

PART II**OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF THE
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION****With reference to Articles 3 and 4 of the Framework Convention**

The principle of equality and the right of every person belonging to a national minority to choose of his or her free will to be treated as such are incorporated in the legislative system of the Republic of Croatia and implemented in practice. As described above, special regulations have been adopted to achieve full and effective equality for persons belonging to national minorities.

From the Report of the Ministry of Justice**Equality and the right to declare one's national identity****Representation of national minorities in judicial bodies**

The Courts Act of 2005, which became effective in 2006, provides that – when announcing vacancies for the appointment of judges – candidates must be informed of the possibility to be given priority under equal conditions pursuant to Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act. An appropriate provision has also been incorporated in the Act on the Amendments to the State Judicial Council Act of 2005. The Act on the Amendments to the State Attorney's Office Act also provides for the application of Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act in the appointment of state attorneys and deputy state attorneys. The application of these provisions has been evident ever since the first vacancy announcement procedures following their effectiveness, although not to the expected extent. Specifically, by the third quarter of 2007, 873 candidates applied for a vacancy announcement for 101 judicial posts. Out of this total, only 3 candidates referred to the application of Article 22(2) of the Constitutional Act (two members of the Serbian national minority and one member of the Hungarian national minority). In addition to these candidates, another two persons belonging to national minorities were appointed judges (i.e. a member of the Montenegrin national minority and a member of the Bosniak national minority) even though they failed to claim priority under Article 22 (2).

In order to raise the awareness of the opportunity offered to persons belonging to national minorities under Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act and to encourage them to exercise that option, a series of round tables was held in 2007 in collaboration with the OSCE Mission, notably in those communities where members of national minorities have significant shares in total population, such as Knin, Gospić, Sisak and Benkovac. These events were organized as an effort to encourage members of national minorities to exercise their guaranteed rights and to make the local public aware of the Government's positive attitudes with regard to the employment of members of national minorities in judicial bodies.

Regarding the representation of national minorities in judicial bodies, it should be noted that the employment levels of persons belonging to national minorities has shown an upward trend in 2009.

Out of a total of 858 judges at municipal courts throughout the Republic of Croatia, 95.6% are Croats, 2.6% are Serbs, 0.2% are Italians, 0.1% are Montenegrins, 0.2% are Muslims, 0.1% are Jews, and 1.2% are ethnically uncommitted. Out of a total of 382 judges at county courts, 94% are Croats, 2.9% are Serbs, 0.3% are Montenegrins, 0.5% are Muslims, 2% are ethnically uncommitted, and 0.3% are Germans. At commercial courts, all 114 judges are Croats, as well as all of the 27 judges at the High Commercial Court. Out of a total of 384 judges at misdemeanour courts, there are 370 Croats, 8 Serbs and one Hungarian, Muslim, ethnically uncommitted person, Macedonian, Slovene and Czech. Out of a total of 42 judges at the High Misdemeanour Court, 41 are Croats and one is a Muslim. At the Supreme Court there is a total of 41 judges, of whom 37 are Croats, two are ethnically uncommitted, and one is a Ruthenian. At the Administrative Court, all of the 30 judges are Croats.

In state attorney's offices at the municipal level there is a total of 386 municipal state attorneys, including 378 Croats, 4 Serbs, and one Italian, Montenegrin, Ruthenian and Czech. In state attorney's offices at the county level there is a total of 157 county state attorneys, including 147 Croats, 7 Serbs, and one Hungarian, Montenegrin and Slovak. In the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia, there is a total of 24 state attorneys, including 22 Croats and 2 Serbs.

Employment of persons belonging to national minorities – as well as employment of all candidates who apply for a position within the civil service – depends on their meeting the employment criteria as laid down by the Civil Servants Act, provisions of the Regulation on Classification of Jobs in the Civil Service and provisions of the Regulation on Vacancy Announcement and Recruitment through Public Vacancy Advertisements and Internal Notices in the Civil Service. In addition, employment of members of national minorities in the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia is subject to provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities.

Currently, 14 individuals belonging to national minorities, or unwilling to state their national affiliation, are employed by the Ministry: 7 Serbs, 1 Czech, 1 Slovene, 1 Bosniak and 4 non-affiliated.

National Anti-Discrimination Plan 2008-2013

In August 2008 the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the National Anti-Discrimination Plan for the period 2008-2013. and an Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan 2008-2013 for the period 2008-09. Chapter 5 of the National Plan is dedicated to national minorities and contains a range of measures that should be implemented by 2013. The time limit for implementation of some other measures contained in the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan for the year 2008-09 is the year 2008-09, and the implementation of such measures is currently under way. These measures are: 5.1. Resolving problems of refugees belonging to the Serbian national minority; 5.2. measures targeting the Roma population: 1. Training of civil servants in the rights of national minorities and prohibition of discrimination; 2. Training of civil servants in local and regional self-government units; 3. Monitoring of representation of members of national minorities in line with the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities in the RoC, State Administration System Act and Local and Regional Self-Government Act; 4. Monitoring of the adoption and implementation of plans for employment of persons who, under special regulations, are entitled to priority in employment, including members of national minorities; 5. Training of Roma representatives, especially of Roma women and youth, to enable them to participate in the decision-making process and exercise their rights and increase their

involvement in the life of the society; 6. Organization of seminars on combating stereotypes and prejudices against national minorities; 7. Research on employment of members of the Roma national minority in the Republic of Croatia with particular emphasis on the employment of Roma women.

Free legal aid for Roma people

The adoption of the 2003 National Programme for the Roma was a significant step forward in the effort to solve many of the complex issues that the Roma community is faced with.

The Ministry of Justice has made special efforts to sanction discrimination and provide legal aid in addressing some of the key issues related to the Roma national minority in order to create conditions for the exercise of all of their rights, in particular, those pertaining to their status.

Sanctions against discrimination are regulated by the Criminal Procedure Act. However, discriminatory treatment may also be circumstantial to the commitment of other criminal offences, which especially goes for violent behaviour against Roma community members. In order to ensure adequate sanctions for such forms of criminal offences, the Act on the Amendments to the Criminal Code was adopted in 2006, qualifying the commitment of a crime motivated by hatred as an aggravating circumstance.

This amendment of the Criminal Code allows the prosecution of crimes that are primarily motivated by hatred against a particular group.

Articles 106 and 174 of the Criminal Code provide for the sanctioning of discrimination on any grounds whatsoever. However, the wording of these legal provisions is such that it is not possible to keep records of the committed crimes by specific type of discrimination, which also frustrates efforts to take other measures aimed at preventing the commitment of criminal offences. Therefore, the Ministry of Justice has – within the Court Administration Reform Project, in particular, as a part of its component dealing with court statistics – envisaged a system for keeping track of crimes committed under Articles 106 and 174, including their breakdown by type of sanctioned discrimination (sexual, racial, national, etc.). The Project has entered its final stages, and it will be incorporated into the functioning of selected courts in the course of 2009. By the end of 2010, it will be implemented throughout the judicial system.

To eliminate from the society any discrimination which may particularly affect the Roma national minority, special importance will be attached to the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act, as a part of which the Ministry of Justice will also start to keep special track of all incidences of discrimination even before the completion of the New Court Statistics Project, that is, from 1 January 2009.

Another important activity aimed at ensuring equality among all citizens in the exercise of their rights is the provision of appropriate legal aid. Enabling people to use legal aid regardless of their means is a major prerequisite for the exercise of human rights by all citizens, and is of outmost importance to vulnerable groups that are exposed to multiple discrimination.

The Ministry of Justice has, as a part of the National Programme for the Roma, implemented the initiative for providing the Roma people with free legal assistance in status-related issues.

Resolving status issues related to citizenship, residence, working permits, birth, marriage and death registrations, etc. is a precondition for the exercise of any other right, such as the right to education, health care, employment, etc.

To provide persons belonging to the Roma national minority with adequate legal assistance, the Ministry of Justice has, on the basis of a public invitation, concluded contracts with 35 attorneys from the City of Zagreb and the counties of Zagreb, Međimurje, Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Sisak-Moslavina, Brod-Posavina and Osijek-Baranja for the provision of legal assistance to the Roma people in status-related matters. All Roma associations active in the territories of the aforementioned counties, Roma national minority councils and representatives at the municipal, city and county levels, as well as the general administrative and registry offices in said counties have received a notification of concluded contracts, together with a list of attorneys. In addition, a brief written instruction has been prepared and delivered to all of the Roma national minority organizations in the aforementioned areas, containing clear information for Roma minority members as to how they can use this form of legal aid. The same information was also aired in *Prizma*, a special television programme for national minorities.

Since the commencement of this initiative in 2005, the attorneys have offered legal assistance in the following cases:

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008
Citizenship	22	38	23	65
Residence (permanent/temporary)	73	139	46	29
Work permits	1	-	2	-
Other	47	137	32	121
TOTAL	143	314	103	215

The budget of the Ministry of Justice regularly allocates sufficient funding for these purposes.

The amount spent for that purpose in 2007 totalled HRK 542,409.54, with HRK 314,074.51 being expended over the first six months of 2008.

The provision of legal assistance in status-related matters has been planned as a temporary solution to be implemented until the adoption of the Free Legal Aid Act. Since this Act entered into force on 7 June 2008 and inured to the benefit of citizens as from 1 February 2009, the implementation of this initiative under the National Programme for the Roma will be ensured as an additional effort pending its final effectiveness.

Since 1 February 2009, members of the Roma national minority as well as any other citizen have been able to exercise their right to free legal aid on the basis of this Act throughout the Republic of Croatia.

It should be noted the Free Legal Aid Act envisages the provision of free legal assistance not only in status-related matters that are resolved in administrative proceedings, but also in those subject to proceedings conducted before legal entities vested with public authority in the fields of health and pension insurance and social welfare as well as lawsuits pertaining to family law, labour law, the protection of title to residential property used for family housing and any such other issues as may be of existential importance to any citizen.

The Free Legal Aid Act excludes the provision of free legal assistance in criminal matters with regard to perpetrators of criminal offences. Specifically, in addition to cases requiring mandatory defence, the Criminal Procedure Act provides for cases where the court may appoint a mandatory defence counsel for any person against whom charges have been brought if it holds that the accused is not able to defend himself or herself, and his or her means are such that he or she is not capable of hiring a defence counsel. However, it is important to note that the Free Legal Aid Act envisages the provision of free legal assistance for victims of criminal acts, which means that victims may receive legal assistance in criminal and misdemeanour proceedings as well as proceedings for damages suffered as a result of committed crimes.

With the Free Legal Aid Act taking full effect, the Ministry of Justice has completed the initiative for free legal assistance for Roma people, whereas the effectiveness of the Anti-Discrimination Act will imply the completion of yet another initiative implemented by the Ministry of Justice under the National Programme for the Roma, namely, keeping statistics of crimes and misdemeanours committed for discriminatory reasons.

With reference to Article 5 of the Framework Convention

From the Report of the Ministry of Justice

As mentioned in the introductory remarks, the Republic of Croatia has adopted the Anti-Discrimination Act as a basic law to combat any form of discrimination in the society.

In addition, a definition of segregation has been introduced, describing the term as forced and systematic separation of persons on any of a series of listed grounds.

The Act applies to actions taken by government bodies, local and regional self-government bodies, legal entities vested with public authority, and legal and natural persons in the following fields:

1. labour and working environment; self-employment and employment opportunities, including selection criteria and conditions for employment and career advancement; access to all kinds of professional guidance, training, development, and re-training;
2. education, science and sports;
3. social security, including the areas of social welfare, pension and health insurance and unemployment insurance;
4. health care;
5. justice and administration;

6. housing;
7. public information and the media;
8. access to goods and services and the provision thereof;
9. membership and active participation in trade unions, civil society organizations, political parties and any such other organizations;
10. participation in cultural and artistic creation.

Pursuant to the Act, the Ombudsman's Office is designated as a principal agency for combating discrimination in the society and is also obliged to prepare annual reports on the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act, wherein it is recommended to consult the Council for National Minorities as a supreme advisory body which has been established, *inter alia*, to include national minorities in public life.

In addition, in September 2008 the Croatian Government adopted the National Anti-Discrimination Plan and the Action Plan on the Implementation of the National Plan for 2008 and 2009, which also contains measures to eliminate prejudices and stereotypes against national minorities, especially against the Roma national minority.

In line with the provisions of the Anti-Discrimination Act, the Ministry of Justice developed a form for statistical monitoring of court cases relating to discrimination and the grounds for discrimination cited in the charges (Official Gazette No. 10/09). For the purpose of this statistical monitoring, the misdemeanour, municipal and county courts are obliged to submit quarterly reports to the ministry.

From the Report of the Ministry of Culture

According to the Constitutional Act, members of national minorities may, in order to preserve, develop, promote and express their national and cultural identity, establish organizations, trusts and foundations as well as institutions for the performance of public information, cultural, publishing, museum, archival, library and scientific activities.

The operation of such institutions is financed by the Republic of Croatia and local and regional self-government units, within the limits of their capacity.

Through their organizations and institutions, persons belonging to national minorities have developed numerous activities in the fields of culture, publishing and information in order to preserve their national and cultural identity as much as they can.

In the period from 2004 to 2008, the Ministry of Culture appropriated a total of HRK 51.56 million for 536 programmes to meet community requirements of national minorities in the field of culture.

Cultural assets-immovable	HRK 28,783,218
Cultural assets-movable	HRK 2,545,767
Archival activities	HRK 170,000
Museum and gallery activities	HRK 40,000
Library activities	HRK 6,861,770

Newspaper publishing	HRK 8,370,000
Support for magazine publishing	HRK 264,000
Support for book publishing	HRK 445,000
Purchase of books for libraries	HRK 694,350
Literary events	HRK 62,000
Drama arts	HRK 60,000
Music and music-and-stage arts	HRK 47,000
Amateur cultural and artistic production	HRK 120,550
Fine arts	HRK 385,000
New media cultures	HRK 65,000
Support for investment	HRK 1,957,000
Development of IT infrastructure for culture	HRK 173,224
International co-operation	HRK 514,515
Total	HRK 51,558,394

From the Report of the Council for National Minorities

Programmes to achieve cultural autonomy in the Republic of Croatia for the period from 2004 to 2008

The right to cultural autonomy for persons belonging to national minorities has been laid down in Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities. Persons belonging to national minorities may, in order to preserve, develop, promote and express their national and cultural identity, establish organizations, trusts and foundations as well as institutions for the performance of public information, cultural, publishing, museum, archival, library and scientific activities. The organizations of members of national minorities are free to maintain contacts across frontiers with people with whom they share the same linguistic, cultural and religious identity, as well as with legal entities having their registered offices within the countries of such people and performing educational, scientific, cultural, publishing and humanitarian activities.

Through their non-governmental organizations and institutions, members of national minorities have developed numerous activities in the fields of culture, publishing and information, thus preserving and promoting their national, cultural and linguistic identity and contributing their efforts to the multiculturalism of our society. By funding programmes in the field of cultural autonomy, the Croatian Government has been continuously supporting numerous forms of activities by national minority organizations and institutions.

The Council for National Minorities, subject to its authorities laid down in Article 35 (4) of the Constitutional Act, allocates the funds appropriated in Croatia's central budget to meet the requirements of national minorities. The recipients of any such funding allocated by the Council for National Minorities submit quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports on the implementation of their programmes and the use of such funds to the Council for National Minorities. Once each year, the Council for National Minorities reports to the Croatian Government and the Croatian Parliament on the use of any funds appropriated in the central budget to meet the needs of national minorities and allocated by the Council for National Minorities.

With regard to the right of national minorities to cultural autonomy, the implementation of programmes undertaken by national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions in the fields of information, publishing and amateur cultural production over the period from 2004 and 2008 suggests that major progress was made in the achievement of the aforementioned right during the period under review. A detailed analysis of reports submitted by national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions concerning the implementation of their programmes and the use of their funds in the period from 2004 to 2008 confirms the importance of efforts to co-finance these programmes from Croatia's central budget and through the Council for National Minorities. This primarily pertains to accountability for and control over the use of budget appropriations as well as the identification of actual needs of national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions through the Council for National Minorities. The reports submitted by national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions regarding the implementation of their programmes and the use of their budget appropriations in the period from 2004 to 2008 show further progress in the level of financial discipline and a downward trend in the number of national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions with problems in the implementation of their programmes and the submission of their reports on the use of their grants.

Based on the analysed reports submitted by national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions regarding the implementation of their programmes, the Council for National Minorities is of the opinion that the position of national minorities with regard to the achievement of cultural autonomy has obviously and significantly improved over the period from 2004 to 2008, which is testified by a considerable increase in the number of the reported programmes in the fields of information, publishing and amateur cultural production as well as a major increase in the number of newly emerged national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions. This achievement is due to the application of minority legislation as well as a political environment where national minorities and their organizations and institutions have assumed a great deal of responsibility for their position.

The Council for National Minorities has identified a regional gap in the level of achievement of national minority rights when it comes to the areas under special government care, because the national minorities that best exercise their rights are those national minorities that enjoyed these rights and were organized before the Republic of Croatia gained independence. This fact suggests that there is still an increased need to support national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions, primarily for those national minorities that are still in the stage of creating and building their institutional capacity. Considering the overall political and social environment in the Republic of Croatia and recognising the existing challenges that are still faced by national minorities, major progress has been made in the achievement of minority rights as well as the overall position of

national minorities. Positive changes were mostly driven by the strong political will of the Croatian Government to promote diversity, tolerance and co-existence and to include members of national minorities in the country's public and political life as relevant partners. This clear progress is best reflected in concrete measures taken by the Government, in particular, through increasing budget appropriations for programmes to promote the cultural autonomy of national minorities. In 2005, the funding for the implementation of cultural autonomy programmes undertaken by national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions increased by 11.36% compared to 2004. A considerable funding surge was also reported for 2006, when appropriations for the implementation of cultural autonomy programmes grew by 21.22% over 2005. In 2007 and 2008, budget appropriations for national minority non-governmental organizations and institutions increased by 17.85% and 18.60% respectively in year-on-year terms. Total increase in budget appropriations for the implementation of cultural autonomy programmes for national minorities in the Republic of Croatia over the period from 2004 to 2008 reached 88.69%, which is a great and significant step forward as well as a clear sign of increased effectiveness in the implementation of efforts to integrate national minorities in the Croatian society, while preserving their full identity.

These efforts have created an enabling environment for promoting cultural diversity, mutual tolerance and trust and conditions for quality co-existence.

Note: The appendix contains an overview of appropriations allocated to national minority organizations and institutions.

With reference to Articles 5, 6 and 9 of the Framework Convention

From the Report of the Office for National Minorities

The Government of the Republic of Croatia has improved the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.

In the period under review, efforts have been continued to fund programmes undertaken by national minority organizations and institutions active in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, which have, however, broadened the scope of their activities to a considerable extent. In accordance with the financial assistance eligibility criteria, funding has been allocated for programmes in the fields of information, publishing, amateur cultural production and cultural events aimed at preserving the culture, language and customs of national minorities. In addition to these initiatives, funding has also been provided for programmes ensuing from bilateral agreements, a civic trust-building programme and programmes to create conditions for the achievement of cultural autonomy for the Roma people, including efforts to assist the Roma national minority in ensuring conditions for its own cultural development.

In accordance with the Decision of the Council for National Minorities, a total of **HRK 152,711,500** was allocated from Croatia's central budget for funding of the aforementioned programmes in the period from 2004 to 2008.

It should be noted that central budget appropriations for programmes implemented by national minority organizations and institutions have been showing a significant upward trend despite

budgetary constraints. Specifically, they amounted to HRK 22,000,000 in 2004, HRK 24,500,000 in 2005, HRK 29,700,000 in 2006, HRK 35,000,000 in 2007 and HRK 41,511,500 in 2008.

The funding secured in Croatia's central budget for the implementation of programmes in the field of amateur cultural production and cultural events over the period from 2004 to 2008 totalled **HRK 54,395,647**.

Italians

As noted in the previous Report, the Italian Union in Rijeka is the central association of the Italian national minority, which brings together 50 Italian communities carrying out cultural programs aimed at preserving and developing their national and cultural identity. A total of HRK 3,198,860 was allocated for programmes related to amateur cultural production and cultural events during the period under review.

During this period, organizations of the Italian national minority were also provided with financial assistance for a programme ensuing from a bilateral agreement with the Republic of Italy, which received total funding of HRK 1,573,760. The aforementioned programmes are of particular importance to members of the Italian national minority because they contribute to the promotion of co-operation and unity among the members of that minority.

Czechs

As the umbrella organization of the Czech national minority, the Czech Alliance in the Republic of Croatia, with its headquarters in Daruvar, pools the efforts of 26 Czech cultural societies (known as *Beseda*) which, during the period under review, continued with the implementation of their programmes in the fields of amateur cultural production and cultural events through the work of drama, folklore, choral and musical groups. In the past period, the Union expanded the scope of its activity as a result of the establishment of new *Beseda* societies. A total of HRK 4,937,000 was allocated for their programmes in the fields of amateur cultural production and cultural events during the period under review.

Slovaks

In the past period, the Union of Slovaks in Našice has expanded its cultural activity through the establishment of another two regional community centres (*matica*). The Union of Slovaks presently pools the efforts of four cultural clubs and 16 Slovak community centres. A total of HRK 4,400,550 was allocated for their programmes in the fields of amateur cultural production and cultural events during the period under review.

Hungarians

For members of the Hungarian national minority, programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events are implemented by the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Croatia, which has its seat in Osijek and pools the efforts of 20 cultural organizations and clubs, and the Union of Hungarian Associations, which has its seat in Zagreb and brings together 24 cultural clubs and organizations. In the preceding period, the aforementioned organizations also received HRK 975,350 by way of financial assistance for a programme under a bilateral agreement with the Republic of Hungary. For

programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the two Hungarian umbrella organizations were granted a total of HRK 7,995,900 during the period under review.

Ruthenians and Ukrainians

During the period under review, the Union of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in the Republic of Croatia, which is headquartered in Vukovar and implements a programme of amateur cultural production and cultural events through the efforts of folklore, music and choral groups, and the Ukrainian Cultural Society of Zagreb were joined by the new Ukrainian Community in the Republic of Croatia, established to promote, preserve and enrich the identity and culture of the Ukrainian national minority. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Ruthenian and Ukrainian national minorities were granted a total of HRK 3,384,900 during the period under review.

Serbs

During the period under review, the Serbian Cultural Society Prosvjeta ('Enlightenment'), with its headquarters in Zagreb, intensified its efforts in the field of amateur cultural production and cultural events, which are vital to the preservation of the culture, traditions and language of the Serbian national minority. In the past period, Zagreb's Prosvjeta established six new sub-committees, namely, in Gračac, Biskupija, Kneževi Vinogradi, Virovitica, Vrhovine and Vojnić. As a result, it presently pools the efforts of 50 sub-committees.

The organizations established to represent the interests of the Serbian national minority include the Serbian Cultural Society Prosvjeta (Zagreb), the Serbian Democratic Forum (Zagreb), the Serbian National Council (Zagreb) and the Joint Council of Municipalities (Vukovar). The Serbian National Council in Zagreb is an umbrella organization for members of the Serbian national minority, which implements programmes aimed at building civic trust and culture and regularly publishes a weekly news magazine called *Novosti*.

For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the cultural societies and organizations of the Serbian national minorities were granted a total of HRK 13,444,000 during the period under review.

Germans and Austrians

Members of the German and Austrian national minorities are organized around 6 non-governmental organizations including the Community of Germans in Croatia (Zagreb), the German People's Union (Osijek), the Association of Austrians in Croatia (Zagreb), the Union of Germans and Austrians (Osijek), the National Union of Germans (Zagreb) and the new Association of Germans and Austrians (Vukovar). These organizations implement programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, promoting the culture, customs and language of the German and Austrian national minorities. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the German and Austrian national minorities were granted a total of HRK 999,137 during the period under review.

Jews

For members of the Jewish national minority, cultural activities are carried out through the Jewish Community in Zagreb, in particular, through the Miroslav Šalom Freiburger Cultural Centre, the Lira Choir and the Bejihad Jewish Cultural Scene, which are all based in Zagreb and work under the auspices of the Community. In addition, a new organization has also been established, namely, the Jewish Religious Community Bet Israel in Croatia. In addition to exhibitions, anniversaries and events such as "Culture Week" and "Bejihad," the programme of amateur cultural production is also carried out through the efforts of dance, music and choral groups. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Jewish national minority were granted a total of HRK 1,328,000 during the period under review.

Slovenes

For members of the Slovenian national minority, cultural activities are implemented through the Union of Slovenian Associations, which is headquartered in Zagreb and pools the efforts of the earlier established "Slovenian Home" Culture Society (Zagreb), the Bazovica Educational and Cultural Society (Rijeka), the Triglav Slovenian Cultural Society (Split) and the France Prešern Cultural Association (Šibenik) as well as 5 new organizations including the Lipa Slovenian Cultural Society in Zadar, the Istria Slovenian Cultural Society in Pula, the Snežnik Slovenian Cultural Society in Lovran, the Stanko Vraz Slovenian Cultural Society in Osijek and the Lipa Slovenian Cultural Society in Dubrovnik. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Slovenian national minority were granted a total of HRK 2,144,300 during the period under review.

Albanians

For members of the Albanian national minority, the financing of cultural activities has been continued through the Union of Albanian Communities in the Republic of Croatia as their umbrella organization and the Shekendija Albanian Cultural Society in Zagreb. In the past period, the programme of amateur cultural production was carried out through Albanian communities organized at the county level, namely, those in the Counties of Zagreb, Istria, Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Zadar and Šibenik as well as the newly established organizations in the Counties of Split-Dalmatia and Osijek-Baranja. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Albanian national minority were granted a total of HRK 1,984,600 during the period under review.

Bosniaks

For members of the Bosniak national minority, cultural activities are carried out within the previously established Preporod Cultural Society of Bosniaks in Croatia (Zagreb), which pools the efforts of the Bulbuli Drama and Choral Group and the Bosniak National Community of Croatia (Zagreb) as well as 9 newly formed organizations including the Bosniak National Community of the Sisak-Moslavina County, the Bosniak National Community of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, the Bosnia Cultural Club of the Istrian County, the Nur Bosniak Cultural Club in Sisak, the Behar Bosniak Cultural Club in Gunja, the Selam Cultural Club in Dubrovnik, the Sevdah Cultural Club in Zagreb, the Bosniak National Community of Istria in Pula and the Union of Bosniak Organizations in Zagreb. All culture societies organize exhibitions and mark holidays that are vital to the preservation and development of the Bosniak cultural identity. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the

organizations of the Bosniak national minority were granted a total of HRK 2,396,300 during the period under review.

Roma

During the period under review, the programme of amateur cultural production and cultural events for members of the Roma national minority was carried out through the Network of Roma Associations as their umbrella organization and 30 independent organizations operating in the territory of several counties, including the City of Zagreb and the Counties of Međimurje, Zagreb, Bjelovar-Bilogora, Osijek-Baranja, Sisak-Moslavina, Vukovar-Srijem, Virovitica-Podravina, Istria and Primorje-Gorski Kotar. The most important traditional event is World Roma Day, which was marked jointly by all Roma organizations. In the preceding period, in addition to the Roma Culture Days, the 7th World Roma Congress was held in Zagreb, involving participation by representatives all Roma organizations. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Roma national minority were granted a total of HRK 4,256,700 during the period under review.

Montenegrins

For members of the Montenegrin national minority, cultural activities have been continued under the auspices of the National Community of Montenegrins in Croatia, which is headquartered in Zagreb and pools the efforts of 9 organizations. In addition to exhibitions, the National Community of Montenegrins in Croatia organizes annual events to mark traditional holidays, including the St. Peter's Day Assembly, dedicated to St. Peter of Cetinje, and the St. Luke's Day Encounters. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Montenegrin national minority were granted a total of HRK 1,404,800 during the period under review.

Macedonians

During the period under review, the programme of cultural amateur production and cultural events for members of the Macedonian national minority was implemented through the Community of Macedonians in the Republic of Croatia (Zagreb), which carries out the said programme through the efforts of the Macedonian cultural societies including Ilinden (Rijeka); Braća Miladinovci (Osijek); Krste Misirkov (Zagreb); Kočo Racin (Pula); Makedonija (Split); Biljana (Zadar); and the newly created Ohridski Biseri Macedonian Cultural Society in Zagreb. In addition to exhibitions and events organized to mark Ilinden (translator's note: the Feast Day of St. Elias, also the anniversary of the 1903 uprising) and other important anniversaries in Macedonian history, all cultural societies organize Macedonian Culture Days.

For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Macedonian national minority were granted a total of HRK 2,058,600 during the period under review.

Bulgarians

The National Community of Bulgarians in the Republic of Croatia has been established in Zagreb with the mission of preserving and promoting the cultural, linguistic and national identity of the Bulgarian national minority. With a view to establishing ever better relations between the Croats and

Bulgarians and their respective countries, it initiated the publication of a bilingual periodical in the Croatian and Bulgarian languages.

For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events of the Bulgarian national minority, a total of HRK 47,000 was allocated during the period under review.

Russians

During the period under review, the programme of amateur cultural production and cultural events was implemented under the National Community of Russians in Croatia, in particular, through the activities of the Ryabinushka Choir as well as events and exhibitions organized to promote the language, culture and traditions of the Russian national minority. For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events of the National Community of Russians was granted a total of HRK 206,000 during the period under review.

Poles

For members of the Polish national minority, the programme of amateur cultural production and cultural events has been implemented within two organizations, namely, the Mikolaj Kopernik Polish Cultural Association in Zagreb and the Fryderyk Chopin Polish Cultural Association in Rijeka, which bring together members of the Polish national minority with a view to promoting Polish national and cultural traditions, fostering the Polish language and culture and organizing commemorations, events on the occasion of Poland's Independence Day, exhibitions and lectures.

For programmes of amateur cultural production and cultural events, the organizations of the Polish national minority were granted a total of HRK 249,000 during the period under review.

Joint cultural programmes of national minorities

In order to promote creative cultural production by national minorities and their joint activities, and to win recognition for minority cultures, the Council for National Minorities has, in cooperation with national minority organizations, organized the eleventh event known as "Cultural Creativity of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia" with a view to encourage creative amateur production by national minorities and preserve their cultures, languages and traditions. The organization of this event is of great importance and interest to members of national minorities because it fosters intercultural co-operation and tolerance in the Croatian society and promotes and wins recognition for minority cultures.

With reference to Articles 7 and 8 of the Framework Convention

From the Report of the Central State Office for Public Administration

The right of members of national minorities to manifest their religion or belief and to establish religious institutions, organizations and associations, the religious identity of every person belonging to a national minority as well as the freedom to form religious associations, profess one's religion, and establish schools, institutions and other organizations are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the Act on the Legal Status of Religious Communities (Official Gazette, No. 83/02).

Pursuant to Article 2 of the said Act, religious communities freely and autonomously define their internal organizations; governing bodies and their hierarchy and responsibilities; bodies and persons representing religious communities and their organizational formations; the substance and method of professing religion; maintaining relations with their parent institutions and other religious communities; and other issues related to their activities in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia.

Religious communities and their organizational formations for which they request so are entered in the Register of Religious Communities in the Republic of Croatia (hereinafter, the Register) in compliance with the Ordinance on Forms and Methods for Keeping the Register of Religious Communities in the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette, Nos. 9/03 and 24/04).

The Register is maintained electronically, with all details of registered legal entities being available to the public and accessible online.

As at 24 September 2008, a total of 50 religious communities and 339 of their organizational formations were entered in the Register. In this context, it should be noted that the Serbian Orthodox Church has 425 organizational formations in the Republic of Croatia.

In accordance with Article 15 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, members of national minorities may, in order to preserve, develop, promote and express their national and cultural identity, establish organizations, trusts and foundations.

The establishment and operation of associations is governed by the Associations Act (Official Gazette Nos. 88/01 and 11/02) and the Ordinance on Forms and Methods for Keeping the Register of Associations in the Republic of Croatia and the Register of Foreign Associations in the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette No. 11/02), whereas the establishment and operation of trusts and foundations is regulated by the Act on Trusts and Foundations (Official Gazette Nos. 4/96 and 103/01) and the Ordinance on Registration in the Foundations Register (Official Gazette Nos. 4/96 and 103/01). Associations active in the Republic of Croatia are, subject to the place of their registered office, entered in the Register of Associations maintained by the state administrative offices at regional self-government units and the General Administrative Office of the City of Zagreb.

Pursuant to Article 12(3) of the Associations Act, an association whose mission is to protect and promote the interests of members of a national minority may, along with its name in the Croatian language and Latin script, have its name in the language and script of that national minority.

The register of associations is maintained electronically, as a central data base for all associations in the Republic of Croatia. It is publicly available, with details of all registered associations being accessible online.

Similarly, the public has access to the Foundations Register where all trusts and foundations active in the Republic of Croatia are entered and all of their details are made available online as well.

From the Report of the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities

To ensure that the Republic of Croatia also creates adequate conditions for the expression, preservation and development of this identity, its Government has concluded Agreements on Issues of Common Interest with five national churches of national minorities, in particular:

1. the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia;
2. the Islamic Community in Croatia;
3. the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Croatia; and
4. the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Croatia;
5. the Jewish religious community "Bet Israel",

whereas the agreement with the coordination of Jewish communities in the Republic of Croatia is in the signing process.

Thus, the rights of national minorities under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities are not only ensured by the Constitution and the relevant legislation, but also elaborated in the aforementioned agreements.

By these agreements, the religious communities of national minorities are guaranteed the freedoms of assembly, association, expression of thought and profession of religion, the establishment of institutions, organizations and associations, as well as spiritual guidance in hospitals, social welfare institutions, prisons and other correctional facilities, the armed forces and police. It should be noted that they have also been granted:

1. regular financial support from the central budget;
2. the right to organize preschool education and religious teaching in primary and secondary schools;
3. religious wedding having the effects of civil marriage.

The amounts of the regular financial support from the central budget in the period 2004-2008:

	<i>in 2004</i>	<i>in 2005</i>	<i>in 2006</i>	<i>in 2007</i>	<i>in 2008</i>
1. Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia	8,263,793	8,263,793	8,593,549	9,109,158	9,655,708
2. Islamic Community in Croatia	2,224,867	2,224,867	2,618,986	2,776,125	2,942,692
3. Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Croatia	105,946	136,847	140,953	149,410	158,375
4. Macedonian Orthodox Church in Croatia	150,090	587,118	604,732	641,015	679,476
5. Jewish Religious Community Bet Israel in Croatia	----	----	----	327,737	408,708

With reference to Article 9 of the Framework Convention

THE MEDIA

Croatian Radio-Television

During the period under review, Croatian Radio-Television continued to broadcast *Prizma*, a weekly multinational magazine, which is produced by its News Department.

REPORT ON CROATIAN RADIO PROGRAMMES FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Introduction

In line with the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the Act on Croatian Radio-Television, Croatian Radio – as a public broadcasting service – pays particular attention to the promotion of tolerance, a multiethnic society and intercultural contacts. Any and all discrimination on the grounds of nationality or religion, and hate speech, are prohibited in the Croatian Radio programmes. In terms of numbers, all Croatian Radio channels taken together air a total of 1100 minutes of special programmes a week. However, issues pertinent to national minorities are not dealt with only by such special programmes, so one should add to this duration all that is aired during the regular news programmes, and in daily broadcasts (U mreži Prvoga – In the Channel One Network) and weekly broadcasts (Građanski glas – The Citizen's Voice – programme on civil society). The programmes of the Religious Department are also worth mentioning – they implement fully the Agreement on Representation of Non-Catholic Religious Communities on Croatian Radio. Besides the regular air-slots and programmes for national minorities, it is much more important that the attitude of the majority population towards minorities in Croatia is correctly articulated in the daily broadcasts.

I. Current-affairs programme – FM – internet – short wave

Current-affairs broadcasts – long talk shows – systematic reporting on daily events in the activities of national minorities, following the work of the Council for National Minorities, following the work of the Croatian Parliament's Committee on Human Rights and National Minority Rights.

"Multikultura" – a programme for national minorities – 55 minutes, every Saturday between 16.05 and 17.00 – a magazine programme on the life and activities of national minorities (reports, interviews).

"Agora" – 55 minutes, twice a month on Tuesday between 9.05 and 10.00 – a magazine programme (interviews, reports on the activities of national minorities).

News programmes produced by the regional centres: Radio Sljeme, Radio Dubrovnik, Radio Split, Radio Zadar, Radio Rijeka, Radio Pula, Radio Knin, Radio Osijek – systematic reporting on activities of national minorities in a given region.

II. Croatian Radio's International programme "Voice of Croatia" – satellites – internet – medium wave – short wave

"Multikultura" – a programme for national minorities – 55 minutes, rebroadcast on Sundays between 13.05 and 14.00.

Giornale Radio – daily programme for the Italian national minority, 10-15 minutes, link to Radio Rijeka at 16.00.

A programme for Hungarians – 10-15 minutes every day, link to Radio Osijek.

III. Radio Osijek – FM – internet

A programme for Hungarians, every day between 18.30 and 19.00.

A programme for Slovaks – on Sundays between 19.15 and 19.45.

IV. Radio Rijeka – FM – internet

News bulletins in Italian every day except Sunday at 10.00, 12.00 and 14.00 (duration up to five minutes).

Long news programme for the Italian national minority, "Giornale Radio" at 16.00 every day except Sunday (duration up to 15 minutes).

V. Radio Pula – FM

News bulletins for the Italian national minority every day at 11.00 and 14.00.

Long news programme for the Italian national minority, "Mezz'ora italiana", 16.30-17.00 every day.

"Duga" (The Rainbow) – programme for national minorities – Wednesdays between 20.10 and 20.40.

"Pola più" – programme financed by the Italian Government – every day at 17.05 (duration half an hour).

VI. Radio Knin – FM

A religious programme for believers of the orthodox confession – Wednesdays between 18.10 and 18.40.

VII. Radio Dubrovnik

"Divan" – programme for the Bosniak national minority – on the last Tuesday of the month between 19.30 and 20.00.

For members of the Czech national minority, the private radio station "Radio Daruvar" airs a daily news programme in Czech with a duration of half an hour.

For members of the Serbian national minority in the County of Vukovar-Srijem, "Radio Danube" airs a daily round-the-clock programme of news bulletins and entertainment shows. In addition, a half-hour programme, "Chronicle of Slavonia, Baranya and West Sirmia", intended for members of the Serbian national minority, is aired every second Monday in the month.

For members of the Ruthenian and Ukrainian national minorities, in 2007 Croatian Radio Vukovar began to air a weekly 10-minute programme on the life and activities of Ruthenians and Ukrainians.

Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in the Electronic Media

The Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in the Electronic Media has been established pursuant to Article 56 of the Electronic Media Act. Through its appropriations, the Fund encourages electronic media at the local and regional levels to produce and broadcast programmes of public interest which are of particular importance to the exercise of the right of citizens to public information, national minorities in the Republic of Croatia, the promotion of special programmes in the regions under special government care, and the promotion of cultural creativity.

The first tender for funds allocated by the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in the Electronic Media was announced on 10 May 2005, and a total of HRK 5,208,820 was distributed in the following way:

- Radio Mrežnica – for the programmes "Manjinski dnevnik" (Minority Journal) and "Otvoreno za manjine" (Open for Minorities) – HRK 253,870
- Radio Banovina – for the planned programme "Tu je moj dom" (My Home is Here) – HRK 253,870

- Croatian Radio Karlovac – for the programmes "Etnos" and "Manjinski forum" (Minority Forum) – HRK 253,870
- Radio Istria – for the programme "Microfono aperto" (Open Microphone) – HRK 253,870
- Radio Stella Maris – for the programme "News Bulletin in Italian" – HRK 103,870
- Radio Daruvar – for all the broadcasts for national minorities, as included in the bid – HRK 103,870
- Radio Đakovo – for programmes for national minorities living in the region under special government care – HRK 103,870
- Radio Brod – for the programme "Etnoss" – HRK 103,870
- Radio Borovo – for the programmes "Razgovor s povodom" (Interview for a Reason), "Dnevnik" (News Bulletin) and "ARS skala" – HRK 103,870
- BBR Radio – for the programme "Županijska kronika" (The County Chronicle) – HRK 103,870
- Slavonian Radio – for the programme "D-funk" – HRK 103,870
- Radio Našice – for programmes for national minorities living in the region under special government care – HRK 53,870
- Radio Nova Gradiška – for programme contents for national minorities – HRK 53,870,
- Radio Ogulin – for programmes for national minorities – HRK 53,870
- Radio Sisak – for programmes on national minorities living in the region under special government care covered by the shows "Etnos" and "Fokus" – HRK 53,870
- Slavonija Radio – for the programme "Moj dom" (My Home) – HRK 53,870
- Media-Mix-Radio 105 – for the programme "Kako žive Hrvati u slovenskom Prekmurju" (On the Life of Croats in the Slovenian Prekmurje) – HRK 33,870
- Radio Grubišno Polje – for programmes on national minorities – HRK 18,870
- Radio Danube – for a programme on national minorities – HRK 8,870
- TV Nova – for the programmes "Neobavezni smjer" and "Comunita" – HRK 897,058
- Kanal RI – for the programmes "Vijesti" (News Bulletin), "Tribine" (Forums), "Povećalo" (Magnifying Glass), "Planet RI" and "Mozaik" – HRK 897,058
- Vinkovci Television – for the programmes "Dijalog" (Dialogue), "Pressica" (Press Conference), "Suživot" (Coexistence) – HRK 547,058
- TV Moslavina – for the programme "Manjine u medijima" (Minorities in the Media) – HRK 547,058
- KA Vision – for the programme "Iver" (Chip) – HRK 247.058.

Public tender no. 01/06 for allocations from the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in the Electronic Media was announced on 1 February 2006, and the decision on the allocation of funds was made on 12 May 2006. A total of HRK 1,461,774 for the production of programme contents for national minorities was distributed in the following way:

- Radio Garešnica – for the programme "Konac" (Thread) – HRK 25,000
- Radio Bljesak – for the programme "I mi smo tu" (We are also here) – HRK 50,000
- Radio Brod – for the programme "Ej Romale" – HRK 93,520
- Radio Daruvar – for programmes for the Czech national minority – HRK 93,250

- Radio Danube – for the programme "Iskon" (The Origin) – HRK 25,000
- Radio Labin – for the programme "Settimanale albanese" (The Labin Weekly) – HRK 50,000
- Radio Mrežnica – for the programme "Manjinski dnevnik" (Minority Journal) – HRK 191,744
- Radio Našice – for a programme in Slovakian – HRK 50,000
- Radio Pitomača – for the programme "Etničke skupine i mi" (Ethnic Groups and Us) – HRK 93,520
- Radio Station Drniš – for the programme "Kod kuće" (At Home) – HRK 50,000
- Radio Station Nova Gradiška – for the programme "Mostovi povjerenja" (Bridges of Trust) – HRK 25,000
- Radio Rovinj – for the programme "Rovigno Canta" (Rovinj Sings) – HRK 93,520
- Radio Eurostar – for the programme "Senza Confini" (Without Borders) – HRK 93,520
- Radio Stella Maris – for the programme "News Bulletin in Italian" – HRK 50,000
- Radio Zona Buzet – for the programme "Domaće u 3" (The Home-Made at 3) – HRK 25,000
- TV Nova – for the programmes "Neobavezni smjer" (Optional Direction) and "Comunità" – HRK 452,700.

In 2007, the tender for allocations from the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in the Electronic Media was announced on 18 January 2007, and the decision on the allocation of funds was made on 14 February 2007. A total of HRK 7,428,817 for the production of programme contents for national minorities was distributed in the following way:

- Arting d.o.o. – Radio Rovinj – for the programme "Zajedno" (Together) – HRK 201,015
- CIK dr. Božo Milanović – Radio Istria – for the programme "Microfono aperto" (Open Microphone) – HRK 201,015
- Difuzija d.o.o. – Radio Danube – for the programmes "Etnos" and "Iskon" – HRK 70,988
- DTR d.o.o. – Radio Zona Buzet – for the programme "Domaće u 3" (The Home-Made at 3) – HRK 120,371
- Hilaris d.o.o. – Radio Imotski – for the programme "Zajedno" (Together) – HRK 120,371
- Croatian Radio Gospić – for the programme "Povratak i obnova" (Return and Reconstruction) – HRK 120,371
- Croatian Radio Karlovac – for the programme "Manjinski forum" (Minority Forum) – HRK 201,015
- Croatian Radio Otočac – for the programme "Sastanak s razlogom" (Encounter for a Reason) – HRK 120,371
- Croatian Radio Valpovština – for the programme "Različitosti – most povezivanja" (Differences – a Connecting Bridge) – HRK 120,371
- Croatian Radio Vukovar – for the programmes "Domovina u srcu" (Homeland at Heart) and "Povratnički radio" (The Return Radio) – HRK 201,015
- Infantinfo d.o.o. – Radio Maestral – for the programme "U manjini" (In the Minority) – HRK 70,988
- Jadranka d.d. – Radio Mali Lošinj – for the programme of the Italian community – HRK 70,988
- Radio Garešnica – for the programme "Konac" (Thread) – HRK 50,314

- New Radio Đakovo – for the programme "Most" (Bridge) – HRK 120,371
- Petrinja Radio – for the programme "Zajedno" (Together) – HRK 70,988
- Radio 052 – for the programme "Vlak iz Pazina" (The Pazin Train) – HRK 50,314
- Radio Banovina – for the programme "Tu je moj dom" (My Home is Here) – HRK 120,371
- Radio Baranja – for a programme for national minorities in Hungarian – HRK 70,988
- Radio Daruvar – for programmes in the Czech language – HRK 120,371
- Radio Grubišno Polje – for the programme "Češka reč" (The Czech Word) – HRK 34,755
- Radio Labin – for the programme "Settimenale albonese" (The Labin Weekly) – HRK 120,371
- Radio Mrežnica – for the programmes "RM Report", "Manjinski dnevnik" (Minority Journal) and "Otvoreno o manjinama" (Openly on Minorities) – HRK 201,015
- Radio Pitomača – for the programme "Etničke skupine i mi" (Ethnic Groups and Us) – HRK 70,988
- Radio Station Drniš – for the programme "Kod kuće" (At Home) – HRK 120,371
- Radio Station Nova Gradiška – for the programme "Mostovi povjerenja" (Bridges of Trust) – HRK 34,755
- Radio Station Novska – for the programme "Otvoreni studio" (Open Studio) – HRK 70,988
- Radio Sisak – for the programme "Manjinski parlamentarac" (Minority Parliamentarian) – HRK 201,015
- Radio Star TV d.o.o. – Radio Eurostar – for the programme "Senza confini" (Without Borders) – HRK 201,015
- Slavonska posavina d.o.o. – Radio Slavonia – for the programmes "Moj dom" (My Home) and "Općinarnica" (Municipal House) – HRK 201,015
- Studio Minsk d.o.o. – Radio Stella Maris – for the programme "Svojezične obavijesti" (Information in all Languages) – HRK 70,988
- Ultravox d.o.o. – Municipal Radio Čakovec – for the programme "Kako žele živjeti Romi" (How the Roma Would Like to Live) – HRK 120,371
- VFM radio – for the programme "Okolo nas" (Around Us) – HRK 50,314
- Kanal RI – for the programme "Mozaik" – HRK 899,945
- KA-Vision d.o.o. – TV 4 Rivers – for the programme "Iver" (Chip) – HRK 358,118
- Independent Television Kutina – for the programme "Zbivalica" – HRK 650,307
- TV Nova Pula – for the programme "Comunità" – HRK 899,945
- Vinkovci Television – for the programme "Suživot" (Coexistence) – HRK 899,945.

On 17 June 2008 a decision on the allocation of funds from the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in the Electronic Media was made, in line with the results of a public tender. A total of HRK 8,597,896.89 for the production of programme contents for national minorities was distributed in the following way:

- CIK dr. Božo Milanović – Radio Istria – for the programme "Microfono aperto" (Open Microphone) – HRK 170,810.19
- Difuzija d.o.o. – Radio Danube – for the programme "Spektar" – HRK 103,162.59

- Croatian Radio – Radio Gospić – for the programme "Povratak i obnova" (Return and Reconstruction) – HRK 169,119
- Croatian Radio Valpovština – for the programme "Različitosti – most povezivanja" (Differences – a Connecting Bridge) – HRK 133,604.01
- Croatian Radio Vukovar – for a programme in Ruthenian and Ukrainian – HRK 189,413.28
- Ilok ton d.o.o. – Radio Ilok – for a programme in Slovakian – HRK 103,162.59
- Media-mix radio 105 – for a programme for the Roma – HRK 103,162.59
- New Radio Đakovo – for the Programme "Most" (The Bridge) – HRK 123,456.87
- New Radio Zadar – for the programme "Machiato na Kalelargi" (Coffee with Milk on the Kalelarga) – HRK 179,266.14
- Radio Banovina – for the programme "Tu je moj dom" (My Home is Here) – HRK 147,133.53
- Radio Baranja – for a programme in Hungarian – HRK 130,221.63
- Radio Bljesak – for the programme "I mi smo tu" (We are also here) – HRK 148,824.72
- Radio Daruvar – for the programme "Češki jezik" (The Czech Language) – HRK 142,059.96
- Radio Drava – for the programme "Glas manjina" (Voice of Minorities) – HRK 121,765.68
- Radio Labin – for the programme "Settimanale albonese" (The Labin Weekly) – HRK 130,221
- Radio Pitomača – for the programme "Manjinska potpora" (Minority Support) – HRK 116,692.11
- Radio Sisak – for the programme "Manjinski parlamentarac" (Minority Parliamentarian) – HRK 138,677.58
- Rapsodija d.o.o. – Radio Borovo – for the programme "Baština" (Heritage) – HRK 77,794.74
- S-Tel d.o.o. – Radio Quirinus – for the programme "Bakina škrinjica" (Granny's Chest) – HRK 126,839.25
- KA-Vision d.o.o. – Television 4 Rivers – for the programme "Iver" (Chip) – HRK 755,313.60
- Independent Istrian Television – for the programme "Panorama regionale" (Regional Panorama) – HRK 783,637.86
- Television of Primorje and Gorski Kotar – for the programme "Barufe pod urun" – HRK 925,259.16
- Television of Slavonia and Baranya – for the programme "Dravotaj" – HRK 859,169.22
- TV Nova – for the programme "Communita" – HRK 651,457.98
- Varaždin Television – for the programme "Svijet Roma" (The Roma World) – HRK 1,265,150.28
- Vinkovci Television – for the programme "Suživot" (Coexistence) – HRK 802,520.70

We would like to mention that the appropriated funds are not intended solely for the listed programmes, but rather for all programme contents included in the bid by individual broadcasters.

With reference to Articles 10 and 11 of the Framework Convention: the right to use minority languages

From the Reports of the Central State Office for Public Administration and the Ministry of Justice

Equality in the official use of languages and scripts of national minorities

Equality in the official use of languages and scripts or national minorities is stipulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (in particular, by Articles 12 and 15 thereof), the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette No. 51/00).

According to Article 12 of the Croatian Constitution, the Croatian language and the Latin script are in official use in the Republic of Croatia, but another language and the Cyrillic or any such other script may be introduced into official use in certain local units along with the Croatian language and the Latin script, subject to conditions specified by law. Pursuant to Article 15 (4), persons belonging to any national minority are guaranteed the freedom to express their national identity, the freedom to use their language and script, and cultural autonomy.

In the context of the official use of minority languages, the right to use one's minority language is, just like the right to declare oneself a member of a national minority and to use one's name and surname in one's native tongue, yet another among the rights guaranteed by the Republic of Croatia to members of national minorities.

Article 12 of the Constitutional Act provides for equality in the official use of languages and scripts used by persons belonging to national minorities in the territory of any local self-government unit where persons belonging to a national minority make at least one third of the population of such unit. Equality in the official use of languages and scripts used by persons belonging to national minorities is also ensured when it is provided for by international treaties which, according to the Croatian Constitution, form part of Croatia's national legislation or when it is stipulated by the charter of a local or regional self-government unit, in compliance with the provisions of a special law governing the use of the languages and scripts of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia and in line with the acquired rights.

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 12 (3) of the Constitutional Act, other conditions and modalities of the official use of languages and scripts used by persons belonging to minorities in representative and executive bodies, in procedures before state administration bodies of first instance, in proceedings before courts of first instance, in procedures conducted by the State Attorney's Office, notaries public and legal entities vested with public authority are regulated by a special law governing the use of languages and scripts of national minorities, that is, the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia. In this context, it should be noted that the Act on the use of minority languages and scripts does not modify or revoke the rights acquired by members of national minorities on the basis of international agreements signed by the Republic of Croatia or pursuant to any regulation applied before that Act came into effect.

The situation regarding the use of minority languages before judicial bodies does not show any significant progress as compared to the previous reporting period. This may be ascribed to some objective reasons lying in the specific requirements of legal proceedings where parties are, as a rule, represented by their counsel, but the Government of the Republic of Croatia nevertheless undertakes various measures to promote the use of minority languages before judicial bodies.

The Ministry of Justice has provided information to the public in the form of special brochures and other promotional materials that are available in first-instance state administration and judicial bodies obliged to implement the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC. Such materials contain information on how parties can exercise the right to use minority

languages in proceedings conducted before such bodies. A brochure and other promotional materials are also being developed by first-instance state administration and judicial bodies obliged to implement the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC.

To ensure regular monitoring of the use of minority languages before judicial bodies, the new Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) will also contain data on the use of minority languages whenever they are employed in any legal proceedings. The construction of the new system is under way, and its roll-out is planned by the end of 2010. To monitor the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC pending the introduction of that system, inspections were carried out in late 2008 at the County Court in Pula and the Municipality Courts in Rovinj and Buje as the jurisdictions with the highest proportion of persons belonging to the Italian national minority, with further inspections conducted in the jurisdictions of the County Courts in Osijek, Bjelovar and Šibenik. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice will ask eight courts included in the pilot implementation of the ICMS project (the Municipal Court in Pula, the Commercial Court in Split, the Commercial Court in Zagreb, the Municipal Court in Zagreb, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, the County Court in Pula, the County Court in Zagreb and the High Commercial Court of the Republic of Croatia), as well as the Municipal Court in Rovinj, the Municipal Court in Buje, the County Court in Osijek, the County Court in Vukovar and the Municipal Court in Beli Manastir, to deliver quarterly reports and data on the number of cases in which they have ensured the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC, i.e. the official use of languages and scripts of national minorities.

The Act on the Use of Minority Languages and Scripts (Articles 12 – 19) regulates:

a) the rights of persons belonging to national minorities to equality in the use of their language and script in procedures before state administration bodies of first instance having their offices and branches in municipalities, cities and counties where the language and script of such national minority are in official use along with the Croatian language and the Latin script, stipulating furthermore that:

b) state administration bodies of first instance having their offices and branches in municipalities, cities and counties where the language and script of any national minority is in official use along with the Croatian language and the Latin script must, at the request of any citizen, adopt a bilingual or multilingual approach when:

1. issuing public documents; and/or
2. printing forms used for official purposes; and that

c) state administration bodies of first instance having their offices and branches in municipalities, cities and counties where the language and script of any national minority is in official use along with the Croatian language and the Latin script must adopt a bilingual or multilingual approach and use lettering of the same size for:

1. inscriptions on seals and stamps;
2. inscriptions on signboards;
3. the headings of official documents.

The provisions of Articles 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Act lay down the requirements to:

- use the Croatian language and the Latin script and languages and scripts of national minorities which are in official use under equal terms in the work of municipal and city councils and governments as well as the work of county assemblies and governments;
- use bilingual or multilingual inscriptions with lettering of the same size on seals, stamps and signboards of representative, executive and administrative bodies of municipalities, cities and counties and legal entities vested with public authority, as well as bilingual or multilingual headings of official documents, with lettering of the same size;
- deliver bilingual or multilingual materials for sessions to councillors and local and regional government members; prepare bilingual or multilingual minutes and publish bilingual or multilingual conclusions; and announce bilingual or multilingual official notifications and summons to members of representative, executive and administrative bodies of local and regional units;
- issue citizens with bilingual or multilingual public documents and print bilingual or multilingual forms used for official purposes;
- use bilingual or multilingual inscriptions with lettering of the same size for road signs and other written traffic signage, as well as street and square names, village and town names and geographic site names; and
- ensure the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use languages and scripts that are in official use under equal terms in first-instance procedures before administrative bodies of municipalities, cities and counties.

It should be noted that the Republic of Croatia has also undertaken the commitment to recognize, respect, promote and protect regional or minority languages as a party to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Official Gazette - International Treaties, No. 18/1997). The Central State Office for Public Administration regularly monitors and analyses the situation regarding the official and public use of languages and scripts of national minorities. According to the latest data – namely, for May 2008 – minority languages and scripts were in official use under equal terms in a total of 55 local units, including 27 units where members of national minorities made up at least one third of their total population and 28 units where equality in the official use of such minority languages and scripts had been laid down by their charters.

The list of municipalities and towns where members of national minorities make up at least one third of their population:

County of Sisak-Moslavina

Municipality of Dvor	Serbs – 60.87%
Municipality of Gvozd	Serbs – 53.03%

County of Karlovac

Municipality of Krnjak	Serbs – 61.55%
Municipality of Plaški	Serbs – 45.99%
Municipality of Vojnić	Serbs – 49.99%

County of Bjelovar-Bilogora

Municipality of Končanica	Czechs – 46.67%
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County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar

Town of Vrbovsko	Serbs – 36.23%
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County of Lika-Senj

Municipality of Donji Lapac	Serbs – 73.56%
Municipality of Udbina	Serbs – 43.36%
Municipality of Vrhovine	Serbs – 53.03%

County of Zadar

Municipality of Gračac	Serbs – 38.82%
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County of Osijek-Baranja

Municipality of Bilje	Hungarians – 35.05%
Municipality of Erdut	Serbs – 53.91%
Municipality of Jagodnjak	Serbs – 64.72%
Municipality of Kneževi Vinogradi	Hungarians – 40.90%
Municipality of Punitovci	Slovaks – 35.57%
Municipality of Šodolovci	Serbs – 84.55%

County of Šibenik-Knin

Municipality of Biskupija	Serbs – 77.29%
Municipality of Cviljane	Serbs – 68.61%
Municipality of Ervenik	Serbs – 94.94%
Municipality of Kistanje	Serbs – 57.14%

County of Vukovar-Srijem

Municipality of Borovo	Serbs – 86.57%
Municipality of Markušica	Serbs – 90.76%
Municipality of Negoslavci	Serbs – 97.20%
Municipality of Trpinja	Serbs – 89.30%

County of Istria

Municipality of Brtonigla	Italians – 37.37%
Municipality of Grožnjan	Italians – 51.21%

In the above municipalities and towns, equality in official use is guaranteed for the language and script of that national minority which makes at least one third of their population.

The list of local and regional self-government units where equality in the official use of languages and scripts of national minorities is stipulated by their charters:

County of Bjelovar-Bilogora

Town of Daruvar – the Czech language is in official use within certain town districts

County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar

City of Rijeka – the Italian language has been introduced for official use by its Charter

Town of Cres – the Italian language has been introduced for official use by its Charter

County of Osijek-Baranja

Town of Našice – the Slovak language is in official use within one district

Municipality of Ernestinovo – the Hungarian language and script have been introduced for official use within one district

County of Vukovar-Srijem

Municipality of Bilje – the Hungarian language and script are in official use within certain districts with a significant share of Hungarians in their population

Municipality of Darda – the use of the Serbian and Hungarian languages has been introduced by its Charter

Municipality of Kneževi Vinogradi – the use of the Serbian and Hungarian languages has been introduced by its Charter

Municipality of Petlovac – the use of the Hungarian language has been introduced by its Charter for certain districts with a significant share of persons belonging to that minority in their population

Municipality of Bogdanovci – the use of the Ruthenian language has been introduced by its Charter for certain districts with a significant share of persons belonging to that minority in their population

Municipality of Tompojevci – the Ruthenian and Hungarian languages have been introduced by its Charter for certain districts with significant shares of persons belonging to those minorities in their population

Municipality of Tordinci – the Hungarian language has been introduced by its Charter for certain districts with a significant share of persons belonging to that minority in their population

Municipality of Nijemci – the Serbian language has been introduced by its Charter for certain districts with a significant share of persons belonging to that minority in their population

County of Šibenik-Knin

Municipality of Vrlika - the Serbian language has been introduced by its Charter for certain districts with a significant share of persons belonging to that minority in their population

County of Istria

In the County of Istria, the following local and regional self-government units have, pursuant to their Charters, introduced the Italian language for official use within their territories:

County of Istria

Town of Poreč

City of Pula

Town of Buje

Town of Rovinj
 Town of Umag
 Town of Vodnjan
 Municipality of Bale
 Municipality of Brtonigla
 Municipality of Funtana
 Municipality of Grožnjan
 Municipality of Fažana
 Municipality of Kaštelir-Labinci
 Municipality of Ližnjan – for the territory of one district
 Municipality of Motovun
 Municipality of Opatalj
 Municipality of Tar Vabriga
 Municipality of Višnjan – for the territories of several districts
 Municipality of Vrsar

The annual reports delivered by local units for the period from 2005 to 2008 clearly show that progress has been made as compared to the previous reporting period, especially in those units with significant shares of members of national minorities in their population or where members of national minorities are traditionally well-organized.

A good example of sound practice is offered by members of the Italian national minority exercising their right to equality in the official use of the Italian language and script in the territory of the Istrian County (in units which have provided for that right in their Charters).

In the territories of those units, bilingualism is put into practice in the work of their representative and executive bodies, in procedures before state administration bodies of first instance and legal entities vested with public authority, which allow the use of and recognize private legal documents made in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, including those composed in the Italian language.

Bilingualism and the use of lettering of the same size are also ensured for inscriptions on seals and stamps, inscriptions on the signboards of representative, executive and administrative bodies and legal entities vested with public authority, the headings of official documents, the announcement of official notifications and summons to members of representative, executive and administrative bodies and the preparation of materials for sessions of representative and executive bodies.

Equality in the official use of the Italian language in the operations of administrative bodies also applies to forms, summons, certificates, decisions and other individual documents delivered by administrative bodies to citizens, which – along with their text in the Croatian language – must also contain a text in the Italian language. Similarly, public announcements, invitations and other communications must, when posted, contain a text in the Italian language along with that in the Croatian language and, when published in the local media, they must be delivered thereto in both the Croatian and Italian languages. By the same vein, inscriptions and signs in offices must be in the Croatian and Italian languages, wedding ceremonies are conducted in the language or languages enjoying equality in official use, the Croatian and Italian languages, and lettering of the same size are used for written road signs and other written traffic signage, street and square names, village and

town names and geographic site names, as well as the names of legal and natural persons performing public services.

The need to exercise the right to use minority languages and scripts is not equal in all counties within the Republic of Croatia because, in the territory of certain counties, persons belonging to national minorities do not have significant shares in their total population or fail to show any interest in the use of their languages and scripts even though that right is set forth in the Charters and other by-laws of such local and regional self-government units.

In some local units, the right to use minority languages for official purposes is not exercised to the full, that is, it is exercised by a small number of persons belonging to national minorities and its application is sometimes frustrated by uncertainty because persons belonging to national minorities and local officers are not sufficiently informed of the right to use minority languages.

In such units, appropriate measures will be taken in the forthcoming period to motivate and encourage persons belonging to national minorities to use their languages and scripts, and to intensify supervision over the implementation of regulations governing this issue.

In addition, in the second half of 2009, the Academy of Local Democracy will launch a training programme for newly elected officials and local officers regarding the official and public use of national minority languages and scripts at the level of local units in order to ensure full exercise of that right in practice. Activities are under way, aimed at collecting data on future training participants, developing training programmes and materials and planning the training dynamics.

Preserving traditional names and designations and using insignia and symbols of national minorities

Article 13 of the Constitutional Act provides that the law governing the use of languages and scripts of national minorities and/or the charters of local units must lay down measures to facilitate, in areas inhabited by members of national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, the preservation of traditional names and designations and the naming of places, streets and squares after persons and events important for the history and culture of such national minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

The Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia (Article 10) provides that any municipality, town or city where the language and script of a national minority have equal status in official use should lay down in its Charter whether and where to use traditional names of places and sites.

In compliance with the Constitutional Act, persons belonging to national minorities are free to use their insignia and symbols and to mark their holidays, with local units being obliged to provide in their Charters for the official use of the flags and symbols of national minorities and the modalities thereof.

Most of the local units inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers have, in addition to other rights, provided for the official use of the insignia and symbols of national minorities and the modalities thereof as well as the right of persons belonging to

such national minorities to preserve their traditional names and designations and to name places, streets and squares after persons and events important for the history and culture of such national minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

In these units, persons belonging to national minorities, in addition to the symbols and insignia of the Republic of Croatia used on the occasion of marking national holidays or holding cultural and other events, regularly display their national emblems in compliance with the Charters of such units.

Use of minority languages before judicial bodies

The situation regarding the use of minority languages before judicial bodies does not show any significant progress as compared to the previous reporting period. This may be ascribed to some objective reasons lying in the specific requirements of legal proceedings where parties are, as a rule, represented by their counsel, but the Government of the Republic of Croatia nevertheless undertakes different measures to promote the use of minority languages before judicial bodies.

The Ministry of Justice will, together with other government bodies, prepare special brochures and other promotional materials and make them available in first-instance state administration and judicial bodies obliged to implement the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC in order to inform the public of how parties can exercise the right to use minority languages in proceedings conducted before such bodies. A taskforce is currently being formed to prepare a brochure and other materials to be made available in first-instance state administration and judicial bodies obliged to implement the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC.

To ensure regular monitoring of the use of minority languages before judicial bodies, the new Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) will also contain data on the use of minority languages whenever they are employed in any legal proceedings. The construction of the new system is underway and its roll-out is planned by the end of 2010. To monitor the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC pending the introduction of that system, inspections were carried out in late 2008 at the County Court in Pula and the Municipality Courts in Rovinj and Buje as jurisdictions with the highest proportion of members of the Italian national minority, with further inspections conducted in the jurisdictions of the County Courts in Osijek, Bjelovar and Šibenik. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice will ask eight courts included in the pilot implementation of the ICMS project (the Municipal Court in Pula, the Commercial Court in Split, the Commercial Court in Zagreb, the Municipal Court in Zagreb, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, the County Court in Pula, the County Court in Zagreb and the High Commercial Court of the Republic of Croatia) as well as the Municipal Court in Rovinj, the Municipal Court in Buje, the County Court in Osijek, the County Court in Vukovar and the Municipal Court in Beli Manastir to deliver quarterly reports and data on the number of cases in which they have ensured the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the RoC, i.e. the official use of languages and scripts of national minorities.

With reference to Articles 12, 13 and 14 of the Framework Convention

From the Report of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has prepared a strategic document entitled the Education System Development Plan 2005-2010, which was adopted by Croatia's Government on 9 June 2005. Its objective is to implement changes in the education system on the basis of specific guidelines. Relying on the principles of the Croatian National Educational Standard (HNOS), a new approach to primary school teaching has been introduced and a new Primary School Curriculum and Programme of Instruction has been adopted (Official Gazette No. 102/06). Furthermore, external evaluation has been introduced for student achievements at the compulsory education levels, and the National Pedagogical Standard for Preschool Education, the National Pedagogical Standard for the Primary Education System and the National Pedagogical Standard for the Secondary Education System (Official Gazette No. 63/08) have been adopted, as well as the Primary and Secondary School Education Act (Official Gazette No. 87/08). Since education in languages and scripts of national minorities constitutes an integral part of the overall education system, the basic education policy documents are also applicable to that segment of the education sector.

The right of persons belonging to national minorities to receive education in their language and script is guaranteed, in the first place, by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act and, in particular, the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities (Official Gazette Nos. 51/00 and 56/00). The Ordinance on Taking the National School-Leaving Examination (Official Gazette No. 97/08) provides for the possibility of taking this exam in languages and scripts of national minorities, that is, in any language and script in which persons belonging to a national minority have received their education. The Anti-Discrimination Act (Official Gazette 85/08) of 2008 also applies to the education sector.

Minority languages and their representation in the education of national minority members

The education of persons belonging to national minorities is carried out at institutions of preschool, primary, secondary and higher education where teaching is provided in languages and scripts of national minorities subject to the conditions and as laid down in the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National minorities and other regulations pertaining to education.

Languages used in teaching may be classified into two categories under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, i.e., the Decision on the Ratification thereof: territorial (regional) or minority languages and non-territorial minority languages.

Regional or minority languages used in teaching include Italian, Serbian, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak and Ruthenian and Ukrainian.

The regions in which these languages are used in different forms of education include:

- County of Istria: Italian
- County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar: Italian and Serbian
- County of Bjelovar-Bilogora: Czech and Slovak
- County of Osijek-Baranja: Serbian, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian
- County of Vukovar-Srijem: Serbian, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Slovak
- County of Lika-Senj: Serbian.

Non-territorial minority languages used in any one of the regular or special forms of education include German, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Bosniak, Romany, Hebrew and Albanian.

Models and forms of education in languages and scripts of national minorities

The education of persons belonging to national minorities is carried out under special education programmes and models, which are – in compliance with the said Act – determined and approved by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports for each form of education and in consultation with representatives of national minorities.

In the Croatian education system, teaching in languages of national minorities is organized and carried out under three models, and these are the following:

a) **Model A** – All teaching is done in the language and script of a national minority, meaning that all education is provided in the language of that national minority, subject to the requirement that the number of periods allocated to the study of the Croatian language be equal to that allocated to the study of the minority language. This teaching model is applied in special schools where all teaching is done in the language of persons belonging to a national minority or in special classes within institutions where teaching is otherwise done in the Croatian language.

b) **Model B** – Teaching is bilingual in such a way that science and mathematics subjects are taught in the Croatian language, whereas arts and humanities subjects are taught in the language of persons belonging to a national minority. This model is implemented in special classes within educational institutions where teaching is otherwise done in the Croatian language.

c) **Model C** – This involves the study (fostering) of a minority language and culture in such a way that, in addition to regular education in the Croatian language, the national minority language and culture classes are held in the respective minority language and allocated two to five periods per week, including the study of the language and literature of that national minority, as well as geography, history, music and fine arts.

Special forms of education (summer and winter schools, correspondence tutorials, distance learning, etc.) are organized primarily for those students for whom it is impossible to organize regular education under Models A, B or C. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports co-finances the organization and implementation of special forms of education. Another option is to learn the language of a national minority as a community language.

The curriculum and programme of instruction for regular education under Models A, B and C is adopted by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports subject to prior consultation with minority organizations in compliance with Article 6 of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities.

Members of national minorities propose and select models and programmes themselves, in accordance with the existing legislation, students' interests and the available staff capacity.

Application of models and forms of education in languages of national minorities

Under Model A, education is provided for the Italian, Serbian and Hungarian national minorities in primary and secondary schools, and the Czech national minority in primary schools.

Under Model B, education is provided for the Hungarian national minority in primary schools, and the Czech national minority in secondary schools.

Under Model C, education is provided for the Hungarian, Czech, Serbian, Slovak, Macedonian, German/Austrian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian national minorities in primary schools, and the Hungarian national minority in secondary schools.

Special programmes for inclusion in the education system have been developed for members of the Roma national minority.

The form of education where the minority language is learned as a community language is available to the Italian national minority.

With support from the competent Ministry, special forms of education (summer/winter schools, correspondence tutorials, etc.) have been provided for members of the Serbian, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Bosniak, Montenegrin, Macedonian, Roma, Albanian, Jewish and Slovenian national minorities.

Overview of participation by children and students belonging to national minorities in the educational system of the Republic of Croatia

In 2007 (i.e. the academic year 2006/07), a total of 10,146 students/participants were included in all levels of education in languages and scripts of national minorities (from preschool to higher education institutions).

In the said period, Model A covered 4,425 pupils at the primary education level, who attended 43 primary schools where 758 teachers belonging to national minorities worked in a total of 311 classes. At the secondary education level, Model A covered 1,707 students attending 13 secondary schools where 404 teachers worked in a total of 140 classes.

Model B covered a total of 66 students in one primary school (for the Hungarian national minority) and one secondary school (for the Czech national minority), where they received instruction from 13 teachers in a total of 5 classes.

At the primary education level, Model C covered 2,289 pupils in 71 primary schools where they received instruction from 84 teachers in 250 groups. At the secondary education level, Model C covered 7 students in one secondary school, where they received instruction from one teacher (for the Hungarian national minority).

In 2007, there were a total of 3,628 participants belonging to the Roma national minority at all levels of the education system (from preschool to higher education institutions).

Italian national minority

- 839 children in preschool education, including 18 kindergartens with 38 groups and 85 teachers (Model A);
- 1,505 pupils in 17 primary schools, distributed in 101 classes and taught by 282 teachers (Model A);
- 717 students in 4 secondary schools, distributed in 64 classes and taught by 165 teachers (Model A);
- Total: 3,061 participants.

The Juraj Dobrila University in Pula has established three departments that are using the Italian language in their work (for the studies in lower primary teaching, the Italian language and preschool education). In the academic year 2006/07, a total of 30 students attended the programmes: 16 students studied lower primary teaching and 14 students studied preschool education. The study of the Italian language and literature, with courses delivered in Italian, was attended by 199 students (100 as single-honour and 99 as joint-honour students).

To meet the requirements of this minority, the publishing house Edit prints newspapers, magazines and other publications in the Italian language, including textbooks and bilingual school documentation.

Czech national minority

- 141 children in preschool education institutions, including 2 kindergartens with 5 groups and 12 teachers;
- 314 pupils distributed in 3 primary schools and taught by 36 teachers (Model A), and 452 pupils distributed in 52 groups within 19 primary schools who are taught by 17 teachers (Model C), i.e. a total of 766 pupils in primary schools under Models A and C;
- 52 students in a secondary school in Daruvar, distributed in 4 classes and taught by 10 teachers;
- Total: 959 participants.

The publishing house Jednota is engaged to meet the requirements of the Czech national minority. The Zagreb University Faculty of Philosophy includes a department of the Czech language and literature. Further training for teachers is organized in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Croatia.

Slovak national minority

- 510 pupils in 10 primary schools, distributed in 39 groups, taught by 6 teachers (Model C).

Professional training of teachers is organized in the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Croatia.

Hungarian national minority

- 168 children (148 under Model A and 20 under Model C) in preschool education institutions, including 8 kindergartens with 12 teachers;
- 256 pupils in 5 primary schools, distributed in 32 classes, receiving instruction from 71 teachers (Model A); 14 pupils distributed in 2 classes within a primary school in Zagreb, receiving instruction from 3 teachers (Model B); and 729 pupils distributed in 87 groups

within 15 primary schools, receiving instruction from 11 teachers (Model C); i.e. a total of 999 pupils in primary schools under Models A, B and C;

- 67 students in a secondary school, distributed in 10 classes and taught by 36 teachers (Model A); 7 students in a secondary school, gathered in one group and taught by one teacher (Model C); i.e. a total of 74 students in secondary schools under Models A and C;
- Total: 1,241 participants.

The Zagreb University Faculty of Philosophy and the Osijek University Faculty of Teacher Education include departments of the Hungarian language and culture.

Serbian national minority

- 391 children in preschool education institutions, including 4 kindergartens, 16 groups and 27 teachers;
- 2,350 pupils in 18 primary schools, distributed in 160 classes and taught by 369 teachers (Model A); 430 pupils in 22 primary schools, distributed in 57 groups and taught by 38 teachers (Model C); i.e. a total of 2,780 pupils in primary schools under Models A and C;
- 923 students in 8 secondary schools, distributed in 66 classes and taught by 203 teachers (model A);
- Total: 4.094 participants.

Until the academic year 2005/2006, the Zagreb University Faculty of Teacher Education offered a programme that included additional teaching of in the Serbian language. However, due to a lack of interest on the part of students, the programme was later abandoned. The requirements of the Serbian national minority are met through the efforts of the Serbian Culture Society Prosvjeta.

German and Austrian national minorities

- 67 pupils in a primary school, distributed in 5 groups and taught by 7 teachers (Model C).

Ukrainian national minority

- 28 pupils in a primary school, distributed in 2 groups and taught by 1 teacher.

Ruthenian national minority

- 48 pupils in a primary school, distributed in 6 groups and taught by 2 teachers.

Macedonian national minority

- 25 pupils in 2 primary schools, distributed in 2 groups and taught by 2 teachers.

Roma national minority

In accordance with the National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, the Ministry has implemented the measures laid down in these documents.

There were a total of 3,628 participants belonging to the Roma national minority included in 2007 at all levels of the education system (from preschool to higher education institutions).

In 2007 (i.e. the academic year 2006/07), 518 children belonging to the Roma national minority were included in preschool education programmes and primary school preparation courses.

In the same year, 3,010 pupils belonging to the Roma national minority were included in the primary education system.

Because of poor knowledge of the Croatian language among children belonging to the Roma national minority who attend the first grade of the primary school in the County of Međimurje, the Ministry enabled primary schools in that County to employ a number of teaching assistants from among the Roma minority members proficient in their community language. Accordingly, 23 Roma teaching assistants were hired in 2007 (i.e. the academic year 2006/07). In 2007, the status of the hired Roma teaching assistance was improved by allowing them to work throughout the academic year and by raising their salary from HRK 2,500 to HRK 3,500. They were also entitled to receive all allowances normally paid to other teaching staff.

In 2007 (i.e. the academic year 2006/07), 101 students of Roma nationality took part in the secondary education system and they were awarded scholarships as regular secondary school students who declared themselves as Roma (of which 57 were male and 44 were female). In the academic year 2006/07, there were 44 first formers, 25 second formers, 27 third formers and 3 fourth formers in secondary schools.

According to data supplied by county offices for 2006, secondary schools were attended by only 14 students who declared themselves as Roma, whereas figures possessed by the Ministry on the awarded scholarships suggest that there were 48 students, including 42 students in 3-year schools and 6 students in 4-year schools.

In 2007 (i.e. the academic year 2006/07), 10 Roma students (o/w 3 m. and 7 f.) were included in the higher education, each being awarded an annual scholarship of HRK 10,000 by the Ministry of Finance. 10 Roma students (o/w 2m. and 8 f.) were also included in the system and supported by the Ministry's scholarships in 2006 (i.e. in the academic year 2005/06).

In 2007, 315 members of the Roma national minority were included in adult education, namely, in the project called Decade of Literacy in Croatia – for Croatian Literacy 2003-2012, with tuition fees being specifically paid for 25 participants in education programmes enabling adults to acquire qualifications.

In order to encourage successful studying and increase the number of regularly enrolled students, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has been providing financial support for students belonging to the Roma national minority (i.e. an annual government scholarship of HRK 10,000 for both full-time and part-time students, as well as subsidies for accommodation in student dormitories, meals in student restaurants and public transportation for students).

Project of More Accessible and Better-Quality Education for the Roma in the Republic of Croatia (REF)

More Accessible and Better-Quality Education for the Roma in the Republic of Croatia is a project by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and the Roma Education Fund (REF), which was launched in July 2006 and is scheduled for completion by October 2008. In 2007, the Ministry withdrew HRK 1,306,188.47 from the REF project to co-finance a high-quality integrated preschool

education system, primary school preparation programmes (at 13 locations) and extended day programmes (in 7 primary schools) for children belonging to the Roma national minority. The funding has been allocated to preschool and primary school institutions following an invitation to tender for co-financing the enhancement of education for children belonging to the Roma national minority in the academic year 2006/07.

PHARE 2005 project – Education Component

The Project "Improving Access to Education and Employment Opportunities for the Roma National Minority in the Republic of Croatia" is intended primarily for members of the Roma minority.

The Project includes support for a training programme for Roma teaching assistants, workshops for parents belonging to the Roma national minority, and training for representatives from institutions responsible for management in the schooling system and government and local authorities responsible for education.

Summer schools and other special forms of education in languages of national minorities

With support from the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, national minority communities organize summer schools and other group activities for pupils belonging to national minorities every year. In 2008, summer schools and other pupil encounters were organized as follows:

- the Macedonian national minority – a summer school for 50 students;
- the Ukrainian national minority – a summer school for 45 students;
- the Ruthenian and Ukrainian national minorities – a joint summer school for 145 students;
- the Slovak national minorities – literary encounters "Lidrano" for 150 students and an outdoor classroom programme in Slovakia for 53 students;
- the Czech national minority – a summer school for 47 students;
- the Hungarian national minority – a summer school for 30 participants;
- the Serbian national minority – a summer schools in Peroj for 80 students and a summer school in Drežnica for 166 students; correspondence tutorials for 153 students;
- the Roma national minority – 2 summer schools for 100 students.

Textbooks

In 2007 (i.e. the academic year 2007/08), the Ministry ensured free textbooks for all primary school pupils and secondary school first grades in compliance with the Amendments to the Act on Primary and Secondary School Textbooks.

Pursuant to Article 15 of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities (Official Gazette No. 51/00), schools providing instruction in languages and scripts of any national minority were using textbooks imported from the respective kin states, primarily for mother tongue learning (the Czech, Hungarian Slovak, Serbian and Italian languages), subject to approval of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

From among several approved textbooks for education in the Croatian language, minority members selected those to be translated into their national minority languages. The Ministry secured the

required funding for the preparation of such translated textbooks. The funding was allocated for the translation, language-editing, proof-reading and printing of textbooks (96 titles) intended for primary school education in languages and scripts of national minorities.

In 2007, the Ministry spent HRK 4,502,625.72 for that purpose, while the Education and Teacher Training Agency expended HRK 5,127,464.82 for the purchase of the required number of textbooks and their distribution to schools, according to the following breakdown:

- Italian national minority – HRK 451,528.40 from the Ministry and HRK 151,164.30 from the Agency;
- Serbian national minority – HRK 1,710,685.12 from the Ministry and HRK 4,970,300.52 from the Agency;
- Hungarian national minority – HRK 1,153,703.10 from the Ministry;
- Czech national minority – HRK 700,000.00 from the Ministry;
- Slovak national minority – HRK 486,709.00 from the Ministry.

For the purposes of education in languages and scripts of national minorities in secondary schools, textbooks were neither translated nor were any original textbooks printed due to very small print runs. Instead, schools use the same textbooks that are used for education in the Croatian language or those imported from the respective kin states, subject to the Ministry's approval.

History textbooks

Concerning the study of the most recent history at schools in the Croatian Danube region, a meeting was held on 25 August 2005 between the Government of the RoC, represented by the minister of science, education and sports, and the highest-level representatives of the Serbian community. It was agreed that all children in the RoC, regardless of their national identity, would learn the same historical content from the approved history textbooks. The Ministry has made all arrangements to ensure that teaching history in multiethnic environments relies on the selection, translation and use of the approved textbooks which meet the highest professional standards. It was also agreed that, when teaching the most recent history, all history teachers and professors may use additional materials as handbooks supplementary to textbooks. The expert group of history teachers delivering their subject in the Serbian language and the Cyrillic script has accepted the agreement reached at the aforementioned meeting. The schoolbooks translated for history classes in the academic year 2005/2006 included the history textbook and workbook for 8th form primary school pupils, written by Snježana Koren and published by Profil International of Zagreb.

In the academic year 2007/2008, new textbooks were prepared and printed in accordance with the new primary school curriculum and plan of instruction. All of the new textbooks were translated into the Serbian language.

Curricula and programmes of instruction

In 2007, the Expert Commissions for the Preparation of Curricula for Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities intensified their efforts by developing programmes of instruction in minority languages and scripts (Model A) for education in the Czech, Hungarian, Serbian and Italian languages, and aligning the curricula and programmes of instructions with the Croatian National

Educational Standard (HNOS). In 2007, Expert Commissions were also appointed for the preparation of programmes of instruction for education under Models B and C.

The programmes were prepared by 5 Commissions involving participation by 137 teachers belonging to national minorities, in particular, for the preparation of:

- the Hungarian programme – 29 teachers/professors;
- the Italian programme – 32 teachers/professors;
- the Czech programme – 24 teachers/professors;
- the Serbian programme – 20 teachers/professors; and
- for the finalization of all programmes – 32 teachers/professors.

For the purposes of developing new programmes of instruction in languages and scripts of national minorities, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and the Education and Teacher Training Agency organized 2 training workshops for approximately 200 teachers carrying out instruction in languages and scripts of national minorities.

Teacher training

Training programmes for teachers working in preschool, primary and secondary education institutions are implemented by the Education and Teacher Training Agency. In 2007, the Agency organized 25 seminars, including 11 seminars on education in the Serbian language, 4 on education in the Hungarian language, 4 on education on the Italian language, 5 on education in the Czech language and 1 for education in the Slovak language. A total of 15 seminars were organized in 2006, including 3 seminars on education in the Czech language, 2 on education in the Hungarian language, 1 on education in the Slovak language, 3 on education in the Serbian language and 6 on education in the Italian language.

The Ministry also provides co-financing to enable teachers engaged in education in languages and scripts of national minorities (in particular, the Czech and Slovak languages) to visit their kin states for additional training.

Teachers working in educational institutions providing instruction in languages and scripts of national minorities are organized into County/Inter-County Expert Councils.

Pursuant to Article 13 of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities, arrangements have been made to ensure the work of 7 advisors/supervisors appointed from among the members of particular minorities to monitor systematically and propose measures for improving the quality of education. Out of this total, 2 full-time advisors come from the Italian national minority, 2 (working full and a half time) from the Serbian minority and one (working half time) from the Czech, Hungarian and Slovak minorities each. Advisors/supervisors for the Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities have not been appointed due to a limited choice (i.e. a small number of teachers who possess knowledge of these languages and, at the same, meet other requirements for work in schools).

Funding

In 2007, the Ministry secured the funding for education programmes and instruction in languages and scripts of national minorities (Chapter 07, Activities 577131 – national minority education incentives; A 577137 – special national minority education programmes; and A 767003 – Implementation of National Programme for the Roma).

ANNUAL REPORT	2006	2007
Central budget funding by activity	Amount in HRK	Amount in HRK
A 577131 – National minority education incentives	2,965,712.14	5,996,221.00
A 577137 – Special education programmes to implement national minority programmes	1,005,090.59	1,054,769.94
A 767003 – Implementation of National Programme for Roma	976,057.11	1,785,348.08
TOTAL	4,946,859.84	8,836,339.02

The funding intended for national minorities in accordance with the aforementioned activities has been allocated and spent for: the translation, language-editing, proof-reading and printing of textbooks, handbooks and other books; summer/winter school programmes, correspondence tutorial and distance learning programmes, special programmes for the Roma, scholarships for secondary school and higher education students, tuition fees, seminars and training programmes for teachers, and preschool education and primary school preparation programmes.

The appropriations made in 2007 for the implementation of programmes for education in languages and scripts of national minorities in 2007 were spent for programmes of the following national minorities: Albanian (HRK 100,000), Bulgarian (HRK 43,0000), Bosniak (HRK 150,000), Montenegrin (HRK 37,000), Czech (HRK 876,266.20), Hungarian (HRK 1,190,505.81), Macedonian (HRK 40,000), Ruthenian and Ukrainian (HRK 147,000), Roma (HRK 1,855,348.08), Slovak (HRK 503,862.20), Serbian (HRK 2,332,699.72) and Italian (HRK 451,528.50).

For the activities of preschool institutions providing for children belonging to national minorities, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in compliance with Article 50 of the Preschool Education Act, allocated a total of HRK 1,500,000, equalling the amount spent in 2006.

Pursuant to Article 10 of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities, classes in educational institutions are primarily delivered by teachers belonging to national minorities as well as other teachers fully proficient in the relevant minority languages.

According to requests from schools, the Ministry approves the employment of teachers and other professional staff in order to ensure education in languages and scripts of national minorities (under Models A, B or C) and secures salaries for their work.

In 2007, the Central Budget provided for a total of HRK 17,546,466.93 for salaries paid to teachers, compared to HRK 17,278,466.93 appropriated in 2006. The funding was increased by HRK 268,000 as a result of further approvals granted primarily to enable members of national minorities to learn their mother tongue and culture (under Model C).

External evaluation of education in languages and scripts of national minorities

The external evaluation of education is carried out by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (NCVVO). Students receiving instruction in languages and scripts of national minorities were included both in external evaluation and national examinations as well as preparations for the National School-Leaving Examination. Catalogues and examination questions were prepared for the Czech, Hungarian, Serbian and Italian languages at the secondary school level, as well as examination questions for the Serbian and Italian languages at the primary school level. Examination questions were translated into languages and scripts of national minorities (specifically, Czech, Hungarian, Italian Serbian and Slovak), as well as a guide for primary schools.

To ensure the preparation of examination catalogues for the National School-Leaving Exam and a pilot examination, the work of taskforces for national examinations, the translation of examination questions into languages and scripts of national minorities and the translation of examinations for secondary schools, including a guide and instructions (into Czech, Hungarian, Italian, Serbian and Slovak), a total of HRK 1,200,000 was paid from the central budget in 2007, with HRK 737,000 being spent for the same purpose in 2006. The increase in funding came as a result of conducting national examinations in 4th and 8th forms of primary schools, i.e. because of increased costs of preparing examination catalogues and questions, translation and assessment programmes for the Italian and Serbian languages.

By way of conclusion, it can be said that, in the implementation of regulations pertaining to education, there are no outstanding issues for which the solution is not being sought.

The number of students receiving education in languages of national minorities is subject to changes and its downward trend has been slowed down. Indeed, figures for some minorities show a slight increase in the number of participants. There is a clear decrease in the number of students under Model A, whereas their participation in Model C has somewhat increased.

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports makes on-going efforts to improve the conditions for and quality of education in languages and scripts of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

With reference to Article 15 of the Framework Convention

From the Report of the Office for National Minorities

Particular attention has been paid to the participation of members of national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and public affairs. Year after year, cultural activities financed from the central state budget – both through the Council for National Minorities and through the Ministry of Culture, if the projects are of universal interest to the entire country – have grown in number and intensified. This has contributed to the popularization of minority culture and of the Republic of Croatia as a multicultural society. With regard to the implementation of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, special attention has been dedicated to the implementation of article 22, which regulates the representation of members of national minorities in the representative bodies of local and regional self-government units. The representation of members of national minorities in state administration bodies and judicial bodies is also ensured, in line with their share in the total population. A series of measures have been taken to foster the implementation of these provisions, with the aim of ensuring appropriate representation of members of national minorities.

In the mandate of the Government of the RoC which began on 12 January 2008, one deputy Prime Minister comes from the ranks of the Serbian national minority, and in several ministries and other government bodies a number of state secretaries, directors and department heads in this mandate, as well as in the last one, were members of national minorities.

Organization of seminars on the implementation of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities

Regarding the implementation of the Constitutional Act in the part pertaining to councils and representatives of national minorities, the Croatian Government's Office for National Minorities has thus far organized, in co-operation with Croatia's Council for National Minorities, 23 seminars dedicated to councils and representatives of national minorities as well as local and regional self-government representatives with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the inclusion of councils and representatives of national minorities in the decision-making processes. All of these seminars have also involved participation by national minority representatives to the Croatian Parliament. The seminars and workshops were attended by a total of 1200 participants and financially supported by the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Croatia.

The seminars were held on 7 November 2005 in Rijeka, for the area of the Counties of Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Lika-Senj and Istria; on 30 November 2005 in Osijek, for the area of the Counties of Osijek-Baranja, Virovitica-Podravina, Bjelovar-Bilogora and Požega-Slavonia; and on 7 December 2005 in Split, for the area of the Counties of Split-Dalmatia, Dubrovnik-Neretva, Šibenik-Knin and Zadar. The fourth regional seminar was organized on 14 March 2006 in Zagreb, as a collaborative effort of the Government Office for National Minorities and the Council for National Minorities. Its topic was enhancing the work of councils and representatives of national minorities in the area of the City of Zagreb and the Counties of Zagreb, Karlovac, Sisak-Moslavina, Krapina-Zagorje, Koprivnica-Križevci, Varaždin and Međimurje. Financial support for this seminar was also provided by the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Croatia.

As an example of good practice, the seminar participants suggested the introduction of a wider debate on the implementation of the Constitutional Act and the use of funds prior to submitting reports for regular procedure. In this context, they commended the initiative of the Government Office for National Minorities to make reports submitted by Croatia's Government to the Croatian Parliament more vivid so as to reflect the actual picture of achieving the rights of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia in a better and more realistic way.

The final seminar held on 17 and 18 March 2006 in Zagreb was attended by council representatives from the whole territory of the Republic of Croatia. As a part of the seminar, three workshops were held to discuss the role of councils and representatives of national minorities in the decision-making process at the local and regional levels, ensuring the material conditions for the work of councils and representatives of national minorities, financial plans and work programmes, as well as elections for councils and representatives of national minorities.

Based on a comprehensive analysis and discussions held at all seminars, the seminar participants concluded that the system of national minority councils had generally started to function. They also shared a series of examples of good practice, where conditions had been ensured for the work of national minority councils and their efficient operation, for instance, in the areas of the Osijek-

Baranja and Vukovar-Srijem Counties, the City of Zagreb and elsewhere in the Republic of Croatia. However, there are still cases where some basic conditions for the work of national minority councils have not been ensured, including minimum spatial and material prerequisites for their operation. Some objections could also be heard as to the method of electing of councils and representatives of national minorities as well as the fact that no funding had been ensured for election campaigns, and that the election campaign period had been too short, and that the elections for councils and representatives of national minorities had been held separately from the local elections (leading to a limited number of electoral bodies and low turnout).

The national minority representatives stressed that the media still covered minority issues with a great deal of sensationalism, which could not contribute to the creation of a positive image and the solution of the existing problems.

The seminar participants representing national minorities agreed that national minority members had to intensify their own efforts to co-operate with each other in achieving their common rights and looking for additional funding sources to meet the needs of national minorities through different programmes, which also implies capacity-building for participation in projects financed under the European Union pre-accession funds.

The participants representing national minorities commended the training initiatives that had so far been organized by the Government Office for National Minorities and Croatia's Council for National Minorities to educate councils and representatives of national minorities and local and regional self-governments, suggesting that such training efforts should be continued in the forthcoming period too, with a view to more effective participation of national minorities in public life.

Finally, the seminar participants expressed their satisfaction with the commitment shown by Croatia's Government over the past period regarding the resolution of minority issues in the Republic of Croatia as well as the initiative of the seminar organizers to give national minority members an opportunity to gain the required knowledge and share their experiences by way of such seminars and workshops.

Funding civic trust-building initiatives in the regions under special government care

Joint Council of Municipalities, Vukovar

The Joint Council of Municipalities, with its headquarters in Vukovar, is an association which has been active since 1997 and whose mission is to protect the interests and civil and ethnic rights of the Serbian national minority in Eastern Slavonia, Baranya and West Sarmia, specifically, in areas constituting parts of the County of Osijek-Baranja and Vukovar-Srijem.

Pursuant to the 1998 agreement, Vukovar's Joint Council of Municipalities receives funding for the Programme of Expert Assistance in the Process of Building Civic Trust, aimed at improving mutual trust. Over the period from 2004 to 2008, the funds appropriated by the central state budget for this programme amounted to HRK 2,452,578.

It is worth mentioning that the Joint Council of Municipalities has also received appropriation from the central state budget totalling HRK 500,000 to purchase the building of the former Vukovar Technical School, which will resolve the issue of business premises for the Council.

In addition to the foregoing activities, the Vukovar Joint Council of Municipalities has been involved for the past three years in providing public information in the form of the magazine "Izvor" (Source). In addition, the association organizes numerous cultural activities and events. During the period under review, for all these activities, the Council received the amount of HRK 1,520,000 from the central state budget of the Republic of Croatia.

One of the tasks of the Joint Council of Municipalities is to nominate candidates for two deputy county prefects in the county assembly, candidates for the positions of assistant ministers in the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, and a high-ranking position in the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management.

From the Report of the Central State Office for Public Administration

Representation of members of national minorities in the Croatian Parliament

The representation of members of national minorities in the Croatian Parliament is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act and the Act on the Election of Deputies to the Croatian Parliament (Official Gazette Nos. 69/03 (consolidated version) and 19/07).

In compliance with the aforementioned legislation, eight deputies belonging to national minorities were elected at the latest elections for deputies to the Croatian Parliament, which were held on 25 November 2007. All of the elected deputies (including those belonging to national minorities) have been elected for a term lasting until 2011.

Representation of members of national minorities in representative bodies of local and regional self-government units

Pursuant to the provisions of article 20 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, members of national minorities are guaranteed the right to representation in representative bodies of local and regional self-government units, i.e. municipalities, towns/cities and counties.

The regular elections and by-elections held in 2005 ensured the required representation of members of national minorities in the representative bodies of local units in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, with all of the elected members (including those belonging to national minorities) being elected to these bodies for a term that ended on the day the Government of the Republic of Croatia decided to announce elections for members of representative bodies of local and regional self-government units. The elections were held on 17 May 2009.

According to the data on members of representative bodies of local and regional self-government units elected in the 2005 elections, there were 369 representatives of national minorities, namely: 227 Serbs, 73 Italians, 26 Hungarians, 20 Czechs, 10 Slovaks, 6 Bosniaks, 3 Roma, 3 Ruthenians and one Ukrainian.

Representation of members of national minorities in executive and administrative bodies of local and regional self-government units

As already mentioned, Article 22 (1) of the Constitutional Act provides that representation in the executive body of any local or regional self-government unit must be ensured for persons belonging to national minorities if they have achieved a proportional representation in the representative body of such local or regional self-government unit, whereas Article 22 (3) stipulates that the representation of persons belonging to national minorities in administrative bodies of local and regional self-government units is ensured in compliance with special legislation regulating local and regional self-government and in accordance with the acquired rights. When filling vacancies in administrative bodies of local units, members of national minorities are given priority over other candidates meeting the same conditions.

Representation in executive bodies

In accordance with the Constitutional Act, members of national minorities residing in municipalities and towns/cities where their share in total population exceeds 15% as well as those residing in counties where their share in the total population exceeds 5% (the required conditions for the right to representation in representative bodies of local units) have the right to representation in the executive bodies of such units.

Since the adoption of the Constitutional Act, members of national minorities have, subject to the required conditions, achieved representation in councils of local units as their executive bodies.

As mentioned in more detail in the first part of the Draft Third Report of the Republic of Croatia on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities – Overview of the Improvement of National Minority Rights in the Past Four-Year Period, in the part of the text entitled "Legislative Improvements" – in line with the Amendments to the Local and Regional Self-Government Act, local and regional unit councils have been abolished, and the executive bodies of the units of local or regional self-government now are the mayor (of a municipality or town) and the county prefect.

With the goal of ensuring adequate representation of members of national minorities in the executive power of local units as foreseen by the Constitutional Act, the Amendments to the Local and Regional Self-Government Act stipulate that in local units, subject to the prescribed conditions, a deputy mayor and a deputy county prefect must be elected from the ranks of national minorities and this must be regulated by the unit's charter.

Representation in administrative bodies

The 2005 Amendments to the Local and Regional Self-Government Act provide that persons belonging to national minorities who, according to the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, have the right to proportional representation in the representative bodies of local and regional self-government units also have the right to representation in the executive and administrative bodies of such units.

In their employment plans, the governments of local units are obliged to establish the number of jobs filled in by and provide for the employment of the required number of persons belonging to

national minorities in order to achieve their appropriate representation in the administrative bodies of such units.

When applying for vacancies in civil service, members of national minorities are entitled to invoke their rights laid down by the provisions of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities.

Pursuant to the Act on Civil Servants and Employees in Local and Regional Self-government, the employment plan of the local self-government units should establish the number of persons belonging to national minorities employed in administrative bodies and provide for the employment of the necessary number of national minority members whereby their appropriate representation would be achieved, in compliance with the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and law governing the system of local and regional self-government.

When announcing vacancies, local units which have failed to ensure the required representation of members of national minorities in their administrative bodies in accordance with the Constitutional Act are obliged to indicate so in the text of their vacancy announcements, stating that candidates are obliged to refer to their rights, if any, in their applications and that candidates belonging to national minorities will be given priority over other candidates only if they meet the same requirements.

It should be stressed that, pursuant to the Constitutional Act and the Local and Regional Self-Government Act, the obligation to adopt employment plans, i.e. to employ members of national minorities in administrative bodies of local units applies solely to those municipalities and towns/cities where national minority members account for more than 15% of their population and those counties where they account for more than 5% of their population, as well as those units which are obliged to ensure a proportional representation of minority members in their representative bodies.

Units where members of national minorities have a substantial share in their total population, but account for less than 15% (for municipalities and towns/cities) or 5% (for counties) thereof are not subject to the aforementioned legal requirement, but may (which is, indeed, desirable in the spirit of promoting and protecting the status of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia) to provide in their by-laws for the obligation to employ minority members in their administrative bodies. (According to the available data, minority members are employed in the administrative bodies of a considerable number of units which are not subject to this obligation).

The effective employment of persons belonging to national minorities is, in addition to the adoption of employment plans by local units, also conditional upon their applications for vacancy announcements, their invocation of the right of priority in employment and the fulfilment of all requirements for the post to be filled.

Situation analyses for the period from 2005 to 2008 show an upward trend in the number of minority members employed in administrative bodies. According to the latest analysis made in February 2008, a total of 522 persons belonging to national minorities was employed in 102 local units, meaning that the number of employed national minority members increased by 111 compared to the situation in April 2007 (when there were 411 employed national minority members).

Note: The Appendix to this Report contains an overview of the representation of national minority members in administrative bodies of local units.

A certain number of local units have failed to ensure the required employment of persons belonging to national minorities. The local units which have failed to meet this requirement (mostly those with limited financial capacity) have reported that the employment of minority members in their administrative bodies is hindered because all posts are already filled or due to a lack of funding for any further employment. In the event any vacancy, these units are obliged to take into account that members of national minorities have priority in employment.

Representation of members of national minorities in bodies of state administration

Members of national minorities are guaranteed representation in state administration bodies and judicial bodies, in compliance with the provisions of a special law and in proportion to the share of national minority members in the total population of the territory for which the state administrative body or judicial body has been established and their acquired rights (Article 22 (2) of the Constitutional Act). In paragraph 4 of the same Article it is stipulated that persons belonging to national minorities will be given priority over other candidates in filling in any vacant positions in such bodies, if they meet the same requirements.

These provisions have also been incorporated into special laws governing the civil service employment procedure.

The Civil Service Employment Plan is a document adopted by the state secretary of the Central State Office for Public Administration for each calendar year (a short-term plan), in compliance with the power given to him/her by Article 43 of the Civil Servants Act. The Plan establishes the total number of civil servants to be employed on the basis of fixed-term contracts and open-ended contracts, the number of trainees and the number of national minority members who should be employed.

In line with its powers, the Central State Office for Public Administration engages in the preparation, adoption, monitoring and analysis of the implementation of the civil service employment plans prepared for ministries, state administrative organizations, central state offices, state administration offices at the county level, staff services and offices of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and it provides guidelines for the state administration bodies pertaining to the planning of the required number of members of national minorities when developing their employment plans.

Furthermore, this Office appoints its representatives to vacancy commissions to ensure the implementation of the Act on the Rights of National Minorities, in particular, its provisions giving national minority members priority over other candidates meeting the same requirements.

State administration bodies are obliged to comply with the legal requirement to fill in the vacancies in accordance with their internal organization rules, in line with the adopted civil service employment plan and within the limits of the available resources.

The 2008 Civil Service Employment Plan for State Administration Bodies, Professional Staff Services and Offices of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette Nos. 36/08 and 75/08) established that 2014 members of national minorities had already been employed and that another 204 national minority members were to be employed in 2008.

According to data supplied by government bodies to the Central Office, the situation as at 31 July 2008 was the following:

- Central state administration bodies employed a total of 1935 persons belonging to national minorities, including 1787 civil servants and 148 governmental employees;
- State administration offices at the county level employed 223 persons belonging to national minorities, including 202 civil servants and 21 governmental employees;
- Other government bodies (i.e. those which are not state administration bodies and are not obliged to implement the Constitutional Act) employed 48 persons belonging to national minorities, which suggests that those bodies also pay attention to maintaining an appropriate share of national minority members in their staffing levels.

	Number employed	Number of members of nat. minorities	% of nat. minorities
Central state administration bodies	47,357	1,939	4.09%
State administration offices at the county level	3,748	225	6.00%
Offices of the Government and other government bodies	1,272	52	4.08%
TOTAL	52,377	2,216	

* Note: The number of the employed in other government bodies includes civil servants and employees working in the Professional Staff Services of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, Office of the President of the Republic of Croatia, Office of the Ombudsman, Office of the Ombudsman for Children, Office of the Ombudsman for Gender Equality, Office of the Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities, State Audit Office, State Electoral Commission. The data do not include employees of judicial bodies, since such data are collected and processed by the Ministry of Justice.

Since the exercise of the right to priority in employment depends on making reference thereto in applications for the announced vacancies, appropriate measures were taken to encourage persons belonging to national minorities to invoke that right. To this effect, the Central State Office for Public Administration offers information on its website and each vacancy announcements also includes an instruction on the said right.

Members of national minorities have priority over other candidates solely under equal conditions, which means that they have to meet all formal requirements set forth in the vacancy announcement and achieve equal results as the other candidates who have applied for the announced vacancies (including tests, interviews and psychological testing, if required).

In the employment procedure, candidates may lodge appeals against decisions on admission to civil service to the Civil Service Board as an independent body responsible for settling appeals pursuant to the provisions of the Civil Servants Act. As grounds for their appeals, members of national minorities

may cite the infringement of their right to priority if they have referred to that right in their applications for the announced vacancies and if they deem themselves deprived of that right.

Personal files of civil servants and governmental employees

Pursuant to the provision of Article 141 (2) of the Civil Servants Act, the Croatian Government has passed the Regulation on the Content and Methods of Keeping Personal Files and the Central Register of Civil Servants and Governmental Employees (Official Gazette No. 113/06). The personal file of each civil servant and governmental employee will contain data on his/her national identity as declared in accordance with special legislation. Personal files will be maintained by government administration bodies, whereas the Central State Office for Public Administration will keep the Central Register of Civil Servants and Governmental Employees. Accordingly, the available data will also include those on members of national minorities who have declared themselves as such. Furthermore, the Croatian Government has passed the Decision of the Establishment and Maintenance of a Centralized Payroll and Human Resources Management System for All Government Administration Bodies (COP i HRM TDU) (Official Gazette No. 90/06). The project is implemented by the Ministry of Finance. Personal files and the Central Register will constitute integral parts of the Centralized Payroll and Human Resources Management System.

Training of civil servants employed at the central and local level

Since 2007, the Centre for Professional Training and Development of Civil Servants has been providing training programmes aimed at educating civil servants about the rights of national minorities. The programmes are held either separately (eg. Constitutional protection of human rights and civic liberties, Legal protection of national minorities) or they make an integral part of the curriculum of other training programmes (eg. programmes for trainees: Introduction in the civil service; programmes for persons who, when recruited in the civil service, already had some working experience: Basics of the civil service; programmes for civil servants engaged in the employment procedure: Employment in the civil service). In 2007 the aforementioned training programmes were attended by 635 civil servants.

In 2008 (by 15 July 2008) the previously mentioned programmes were attended by a total of 544 civil servants, and approximately the same number of participants was expected by the end of 2008.

The training of local civil servants is provided by the Academy of Local Democracy, which is also authorized to organize professional development activities for appointed and elected local officials and employees in units of local and regional self-government. The goal of such activities is to improve the level of professionalism in local and regional government and reach standards that will enable the application of relevant national legislation, and any changes that might be necessary in the process of harmonization of the national legislation of the RoC with the EU *acquis communautaire*.

The plan is to launch new programmes of training of newly elected local civil servants in the second half of 2009, focusing on the official and public use of languages and scripts of national minorities at the level of local self-government units, the right of priority in employment under the same conditions for persons belonging to national minorities, and functioning and powers of councils and representatives of national minorities. Activities are under way aimed at collecting data on future

training participants, developing training programmes and materials, and planning the training dynamics.

The provision of Article 23 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities stipulates that, with the aim of improving, preserving and protecting the position of national minorities in the society, persons belonging to national minorities elect their representatives, under the conditions and in the manner prescribed by the Constitutional Act, to participate in public life and management of local affairs through councils and representatives of national minorities in units of local and regional self-government.

The Constitutional Act establishes the criterion for the election of councils of national minorities in those self-government units in which members of national minorities make up at least 1.5% of the total population of the self-government unit, in units of local self-government inhabited by more than 200 members of national minorities and in units of regional self-government inhabited by more than 500 members of national minorities.

If none of the aforementioned conditions for the election of a council of a national minority are met, and not fewer than 100 members of national minorities live in the territory of the self-government unit, they can elect a representative.

The regular four-year term of office of the members of the councils and representatives of national minorities elected in 2003 had expired, and the Government of the Republic of Croatia announced regular elections for the councils and representatives of national minorities that were held on 17 June 2007.

The Decision on Announcing Elections for Members of Councils of National Minorities in Units of Local and Regional Self-Government (Official Gazette Nos. 49/07 and 53/07) announced elections for a total of 308 councils of national minorities (73 at the county level and in the City of Zagreb, 128 at the level of towns and 107 at the level of municipalities). The Decision on Announcing Elections for Representatives of National Minorities in Units of Local and Regional Self-Government (Official Gazette No. 49/07) announced the election of 228 representatives of national minorities (86 at the county level and in the City of Zagreb, 78 at the level of towns and 64 at the level of municipalities).

The opportunity to nominate candidates for members of councils of national minorities was taken by 14 national minorities. These were (in alphabetical order): Albanians, Bosniaks, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Roma, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenians and Ukrainians.

The opportunity to nominate candidates for representatives of national minorities was taken by a total of 18 national minorities. These were (in alphabetical order): Albanians, Bosniaks, Bulgarians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Poles, Roma, Russians, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenians and Ukrainians. The Rumanian national minority was the only one that did not make use of this possibility.

Furthermore, by its Decision on Determination of the Amount of Reimbursable Costs of Election Promotion for the Election of Members of Councils of National Minorities and Representatives of National Minorities in Units of Local and Regional Self-Government (Official Gazette No. 58/07), the Government of the Republic of Croatia established that the elected councils and representatives of national minorities in units of local and regional self-government are entitled to the reimbursement of their election promotion costs, and it determined the amount that can be reimbursed.

Specifically, according to items III and IV of said Decision, the council of a national minority at the county level, or in the City of Zagreb, is entitled to the reimbursement of costs in the amount of HRK 1,500 for each of its members, while the council of a national minority at the level of a town or a municipality is entitled to the reimbursement of costs in the amount of HRK 1,000 for each of its

members. The representative of a national minority in a local or regional self-government unit is entitled to the reimbursement of costs in the amount of HRK 1,000.

According to the official data provided by the State Electoral Commission, out of the total number of announced elections for members of councils of national minorities, 258 elections have been held, whereas 50 announced elections have not been held because there were no voters or no candidates. At 52 elections, the number of elected candidates was smaller than necessary. More precisely, at 47 elections more than a half of the council members were elected, and on 5 occasions fewer than half of the council members were elected.

Out of the total number of announced elections for representative of national minorities, 155 such elections have been held.

Upon the election, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on Authorizing the Convening of Founding Sessions of the Councils of National Minorities (Official Gazette No. 73/07), whereby it authorized the county prefects, the mayor of the City of Zagreb, town mayors and municipal mayors to convene, within the period of 30 days, founding sessions of 206 councils of national minorities that were elected in full, in line with the provision of Article 60 (1) of the Act on the Election of Members of Representative Bodies of Local and Regional Self-Government Units.

Equally, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on Authorizing the Convening of Founding Sessions of the Councils of National Minorities for which more than half of the members were elected (Official Gazette No. 82/07), whereby it authorized the county prefects, the mayor of the City of Zagreb, town mayors and municipal mayors to convene, within the period of 30 days after the date of the Decision, founding sessions of 47 councils of national minorities for which more than half of the members were elected, in line with the provision of Article 60 (1) of the Act on the Election of Members of Representative Bodies of Local and Regional Self-Government Units.

The councils of national minorities are non-profit legal entities. In order to be recognized as legal entities, they need to register in the Registry of Councils of National Minorities kept by the Central State Office for Public Administration. As of 20 April 2008, 216 councils were established and registered, and 155 elected representatives of national minorities were certified by the Central State Office for Public Administration.

On the basis of the continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Constitutional Act, in connection with the functioning of councils and representatives of national minorities in units of local and regional self-government in the period 2005-2008, the conclusion can be drawn that regardless of the progress achieved, there are still difficulties caused by financial constraints in local units in which councils and representatives operate. These difficulties are reflected in inadequate spatial and material conditions for the work of national minority councils and representatives. In certain local units, councils and representatives of national minorities have not been fully included in public life and affairs, so that the Government decided to provide support in 2009 to national minority councils and representatives in municipalities and towns with insufficient means.

With the goal of raising the level of effectiveness of councils and representatives of national minorities in the territory of local and regional self-government units, in the forthcoming period civil servants working in local self-government units will be trained in the functions and authorities of

national minority councils and representatives. The training initiated in late 2008 and early 2009, and it is provided by the Academy of Local Democracy.

The forms and methods of participation in public and social life of members of the Roma national minority as stipulated by the Constitutional Act, and the systematic implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 ensure improvement, preservation and protection of the position of members of the Roma national community in society, and an efficient way to resolve the difficulties faced by them.

The collection of data on the implementation of the Civil Service Employment Plan is under way. Data on the employment of members of national minorities in administrative bodies of local and regional self-government units for 2008 are also being collected.

In the framework of the implementation of the measure aimed at enhancing the system for monitoring and analysing the employment of members of national minorities, data are collected in line with a new methodology which will allow for their more comprehensive processing and analysis, and for improving the existing database.

Once the situation is analysed, a comprehensive report shall be drawn up on the implementation of the employment plans for 2008.

After the adoption of the Act on Civil Servants and Government Employees in Local and Regional Self-Government (passed in July 2008), the Academy of Local Democracy began preparations for the training of newly elected executive officers and local civil servants working in human-resources departments, concerning the right to priority in employment under equal conditions enjoyed by members of national minorities.

Activities are under way aimed at collecting data on future training participants, developing training programmes and materials, and planning the training dynamics. The plan is to organize training sessions in the second half of 2009.

With reference to Articles 17 and 18 of the Framework Convention

From the Report of the Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture has supported all activities contributing to the improvement of cultural cooperation with national minorities' kin states and in this way it indirectly but continuously fosters the cultural autonomy of persons belonging to national minorities in the Republic of Croatia. A provision on the protection of cultural autonomy was incorporated in the following programmes of bilateral cooperation, bilateral treaties and agreements on cooperation:

- Programme of cooperation in the fields of culture and education for the period 2006–2009, in compliance with Article 13 (1) of the Treaty on cooperation in the fields of culture and education of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Republic of Austria, signed in Zagreb on 11 October 2006,
- Programme of cultural cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic for the period 2006-2008, signed in Prague on 25 April 2006,

- Protocol on the cooperation in the fields of culture and education between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Republic of Italy for the period 2003–2007, signed in Zagreb on 26 February 2003,
- Programme of cultural cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Hungary for 2006, 2007 and 2008, signed in Dubrovnik on 9 July 2005,
- Programme of cultural cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovakia for the period 2007–2010, signed in Dubrovnik on 10 July 2007,
- Programme of cultural cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Culture and Religious Issues of Rumania for the period 2008–2012 (in preparation)
- Programme of cultural cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Macedonia for 2005, 2006 and 2007 (prepared for signing),
- Treaty on cooperation in the field of culture and education between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of Montenegro, signed in Podgorica on 24 September 2008,
- Agreement on cooperation in the fields of culture, education and science between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Czech Republic, signed in Zagreb on 6 June 2001,
- Treaty on cooperation in the fields of culture and education between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, signed in Belgrade on 23 April 2002,
- Treaty on cooperation in the fields of education, culture and science between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of Rumania, signed in Zagreb on 19 May 1993,
- Treaty on cooperation in the fields of culture, education and science between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Republic of Hungary, signed in Zagreb on 16 March 1994,
- Treaty on cooperation in the fields of culture, education, science and sports between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of the Republic of Slovakia, signed in Bratislava on 5 May 1995,

- Agreement on cooperation in the fields of culture, education, science and technology between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of Ukraine, signed in Zagreb on 5 June 1997.

In the period from 2004 to 2008, the Ministry of Culture appropriated a total of HRK 51.56 million for 538 programmes to meet community requirements of national minorities in the field of culture.

Cultural assets – immovable	HRK 28,783,218
Cultural assets – movable	HRK 2,545,767
Archival activities	HRK 170,000
Museum and gallery activities	HRK 40,000
Library activities	HRK 6,861,770
Newspaper publishing	HRK 8,370,000
Support for magazine publishing	HRK 264,000
Support for book publishing	HRK 445,000
Purchase of books for libraries	HRK 694,350
Literary events	HRK 62,000
Drama arts	HRK 60,000
Music and music-and-stage arts	HRK 47,000
Amateur cultural and artistic production	HRK 120,550
Fine arts	HRK 385,000
New media cultures	HRK 65,000
Support for investment	HRK 1,957,000
Development of IT infrastructure for culture	HRK 173,224
International co-operation	HRK 514,515
Total	HRK 51,558,394

From the Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration there is the Independent Service for Croats Abroad and Culture, which is tasked with fostering the recognition of the status of Croatian

autochthonous minorities in various European countries and the exercise of their rights. In this vein, the Directorate for Croatian Minorities, Emigration and Immigration participates in the initiation, development and implementation of bilateral treaties on the protection of the rights of Croatian national minorities:

1. The Republic of Croatia has signed bilateral agreements on the protection of the rights of the Croatian minority with Italy, Hungary, Macedonia, Serbia and with Montenegro, which recognized the legal continuity of the agreement signed with Serbia and Montenegro in Belgrade in 2004.

The Croatian national minority in the Republic of Austria (the Burgenland Croats) exercise their minority rights pursuant to Article 7 of the 1955 State Treaty.

With Montenegro gaining independence, the preconditions for signing an agreement on the protection of the rights of the Croatian national minority in Montenegro and the Montenegrin national minority in the Republic of Croatia had been met, so the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration sent a draft agreement to the Montenegrin side on 7 May 2008.

2. Intergovernmental mixed committees have been established with Hungary, Serbia and Macedonia, with the goal of monitoring the implementation of concluded treaties and making recommendations to the governments of the signatory states.

In cooperation with the Council for National Minorities, the Office for National Minorities organized an international conference on transborder cooperation of national minorities that was held on 19-21 June 2008 on the Brijuni Islands. In friendly, open and constructive discussion, representatives of government bodies and national minorities from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Hungary, Rumania, Slovenia and Croatia, as well as representatives of the international community, considered opportunities for promoting cooperation in the field of culture and education, the media, and through bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Regardless of the differing stages of integration into the European Union of the various countries that have participated in this international conference, the assessment was that transborder cooperation of national minorities can significantly contribute to an acceleration and completion of the process of accession to the European Union and the unification of Europe. In that respect, this seminar has also been an important contribution to the realization of that common goal.

From the Report of the Ministry of the Interior

Taking into consideration the remark made by the Advisory Committee that criteria stipulated by the Croatian Citizenship Act and their application continue to pose a problem for members of national minorities, it is important to emphasize that citizenship is a special legal relation, of a permanent nature, between the state and an individual, and that it forms the basis for certain rights and obligations, both on the side of the state and on the side of the individual. The notion of citizenship should be distinguished from the notion of nationality, the latter being the affiliation of an individual with a nation. Each state prescribes the rules whereby it regulates the citizenship issue, that is, the criteria that an individual must meet to be able to acquire the citizenship of a given state, and the conditions under which the citizenship may be terminated.

The 1997 European Convention on Nationality, in its article 3, stipulates that each state will determine under its own law who are its citizens. The legal regulations pertaining to the acquisition of Croatian citizenship, that is the application of provisions of the Croatian Citizenship Act, do not jeopardize the implementation of the Framework Convention on the Rights of National Minorities,

nor the guaranteed equality before law, and equal legal protection, of persons belonging to members of national minorities. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, all persons are equal before law, and equal treatment is guaranteed to all national minorities. The only criterion for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship is meeting the conditions stipulated by the Croatian Citizenship Act, regardless of the applicant's national affiliation.

The Croatian Citizenship Act came into force on 8 October 1991, and since then it has not been significantly amended. The Act stipulates that one of the regular ways to acquire Croatian citizenship is the naturalization of adults who are proficient in the Croatian language and Latin script, who have had a registered place of residence in the territory of the Republic of Croatia for a period of not less than five years continuously, who can submit proof of revocation of their foreign citizenship, and who respect the legal system and customs persisting in the Republic of Croatia and accept Croatian culture (article 8). The Croatian Citizenship Act also regulates the acquisition of Croatian citizenship under more favourable conditions (privileged acquisition of Croatian citizenship). Persons entitled to such privileged acquisition of Croatian citizenship are those born within the territory of the Republic of Croatia, those married to Croatian citizens, emigrants from the Republic of Croatia, those belonging to the Croatian people, those whose admission to Croatian citizenship would be of interest for the Republic of Croatia and their spouses, minors whose parents have acquired Croatian citizenship by naturalization, and those whose Croatian citizenship was terminated because it was revoked. The privilege holds relative to the prerequisite of proficiency in the Croatian language and Latin script, submission of proof of revocation of foreign citizenship and the duration and registration of residence within the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

Having compared the Croatian Citizenship Act with the citizenship laws of other European states, we would like to point out that they contain similar or stricter preconditions for the acquisition of citizenship. For example, the British Nationality Act stipulates that a person can acquire British citizenship, *inter alia*, if he/she had spent not less than five years in the UK prior to the submission of application, provided that during that period of time the person was not absent from the UK for more than 450 days and that his/her presence was unlimited for the last 12 months. The Federal Austrian Citizenship Act requires an uninterrupted stay of not less than ten years with a registered residence of at least five years, and it also demands that the applicants revoke their foreign citizenship.

The official registers of this Ministry do not include data on the national affiliation of applicants for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship, but just the grounds justifying the application. The applicants are not obliged to state their national affiliation, and for this reason we are unable to provide data on members of national minorities who exercised their right to Croatian citizenship in the period 2004-2008. As regards members of the Roma national minority and their right to Croatian citizenship, the Republic of Croatia has been implementing the 2003 National Programme for the Roma. Within the framework of the implementation of the said Programme, mobile teams have been formed who visit territories inhabited by the Roma to help them in exercising their status-related rights, primarily residence registration and citizenship. They have also been provided with free legal assistance that should facilitate the exercise of these rights. Regardless of these measures, certain problems have appeared in connection with applications for Croatian citizenship submitted by members of the Roma community, which have been caused by formal shortcomings in the applications (lack of identity documents, lack of certificate on citizenship status in the kin state, documents issued by the former state in which citizenship status is not indicated) and these cause delays in the procedures. In addition, it should be emphasized that a certain number of members of the Roma national minority have been found guilty in criminal proceedings, and therefore they cannot prove that they respect the legal order of the Republic of Croatia. This in turn means that they do not meet all the criteria for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship. Some members of the Roma national minority have failed to

meet their legal obligation to register their residence in the Republic of Croatia, which again means that they do not meet all the criteria for admission into Croatian citizenship.

In line with the National Programme for the Roma, since 30 August 2007 applications for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship submitted by members of the Roma national minority (persons who state in their applications for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship that they are Roma) have been entered in the official registers of the Ministry of the Interior. Due to the specific problems faced by the Roma population in the Republic of Croatia (low level of involvement in social life, low educational level, poor financial conditions etc), procedures initiated by individual applications for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship submitted by members of the Roma national minority are dealt with following an urgent procedure. In 2008, the Ministry held several meetings with representatives of the Roma Association of Zagreb and the County of Zagreb, the attorneys tasked with the provision of free legal assistance and representatives of the Union of Roma of the Republic of Croatia, with the aim of facilitating and accelerating procedures of acquisition of Croatian citizenship and other status rights by members of the Roma national minority.

According to the official records kept by this Ministry, in the period from 30 August 2007 to 12 January 2009, 85 members of the Roma national minority were admitted into Croatian citizenship, while 25 applications were denied. In addition, 17 guarantees of admission to Croatian citizenship were issued, the admission pending the submission of proof of revocation of foreign citizenship. In 12 cases, decisions were made to reject the application, to suspend or terminate the procedure (due to formal shortcomings, withdrawal of the application or death of the applicant). 84 applications for admission of Roma individuals into Croatian citizenship are still pending.

PART III

MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION

From the report of the Office for National Minorities

Seminars on implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities organized by the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Council of Europe

The Government Office for National Minorities and the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities have organized four seminars on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities: in 2004 in Cavtat in the County of Dubrovnik-Neretva, in 2005 in Split in the County of Split-Dalmatia, in 2006 in Peroj in the County of Istria and in 2007 in Vukovar in the County of Vukovar-Srijem.

The *first seminar* on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was held on 21 September 2004 in Cavtat. On that occasion, the seminar participants were informed about the Second Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities submitted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia to the Council of Europe, and the Advisory Committee's Opinion on said Report in which the Committee

expressed its view of the progress achieved in the field of national minority rights and provided some useful recommendations. The adoption of the Constitutional Act and other items of legislation concerning the protection of national minorities has resulted in a high level of normative rights.

In the discussion, the exercising of national minority rights was considered from both the legislative and the implementational points of view. The participants were unanimous in their position that progress had been achieved in the previous period when it came to the improvement of national minority rights, and that the Government of the Republic of Croatia had undertaken measures to encourage real involvement of national minorities in public, social and cultural life.

Members of national minorities pointed out some difficulties in the implementation of laws regulating minority rights, and in that respect they suggested that the Government of the RoC and competent government bodies undertake measures aimed at eliminating those difficulties, in particular: problems relating to the population census, especially as regards the Serbian, Roma and Bosniak national minorities; problems with implementing the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities; difficulty in implementing the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the part that regulates the choice of educational model; unsatisfactory access to and presentation of minorities in the media; securing preconditions for the functioning of councils of national minorities, and the incomplete implementation of the Constitutional Act in the part regarding the participation of minorities in state administration and judicial bodies.

The participants expressed their satisfaction with the Government initiative to organize such seminars, which provided an opportunity for national minority representatives to share their views, opinions and proposals for improvement of the rights of national minorities in the RoC, which is a precondition for an efficient implementation of the overall legislative framework regulating the issue of national minority rights.

The *second seminar* on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was held on 15 September 2005 in Split. The seminar participants concluded that the analysis of the implementation of the relevant Croatian legislation and application of the Framework Convention had revealed that a significant improvement in the implementation had been achieved. This was particularly true in the fields of education of members of national minorities, cultural autonomy, participation in decision making, cross-border cooperation with the minorities' kin states and signing of bilateral agreements.

It was observed that members of national minorities had taken responsibility for their situation through their representatives, their councils and the national Council for National Minorities, and through their elected representatives in local government bodies and in the Croatian Parliament. By doing so, they make a significant contribution to the stabilization of democracy in the Republic of Croatia. It was pointed out that certain difficulties had to be removed, primarily as regards the insufficient representation of national minorities in judicial and administrative bodies. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the National Strategy for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination should be completed and officially adopted as soon as possible.

The Government efforts pertaining to the process of reconstruction and return received a positive review. However, it was noted that additional efforts should be put into the process of return and

restitution of property, and that these problems should be considered in the regional context, with a view to the cooperation of the countries of the region.

With the goal of full integration of national minorities into the political life of the country, the importance of implementation of Article 22 of the Constitutional Act was emphasized, as well as the need to amend electoral legislation and put in order voters' lists. Also, particular attention should be paid to gathering of information, using the positive experience of other countries, while at the same time protecting the privacy of national minority members.

The implementation of the National Programme for the Roma, and adoption of the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, brought about significant improvement in the position of the Roma national minority, especially in the field of education, status-related issues, and creation of preconditions for the achievement of cultural autonomy and better living conditions. Some problems that had persisted were pointed out, such as the lack of involvement of local and regional government in solving the problems of the Roma national minority, particularly as regards the land-plot development and legalization of Roma settlements.

On the basis of a comprehensive analysis and discussion, the political will of all state bodies was recognized: of the Croatian Parliament, the President of the Republic of Croatia and the entire state administration. This political will has been not merely declared, but rather proven through the securing of financial and other support and creating a positive atmosphere which enables full realization of national minority rights in the Republic of Croatia.

The positive role of the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee in monitoring the implementation of the Framework Convention in Croatia was also emphasized. The work of the Advisory Committee also stimulated more efficient application of national legislation.

At the *third seminar* on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities held on 15 October 2006 in Peroj, it was concluded that significant progress in the implementation of national minority rights had been achieved, and measures and support provided by the Government of the RoC in this respect were praised. Various positive examples of co-existence, understanding and joint activities of different ethnicities were cited, as well as of the support provided by local and regional authorities, which contributes to the high level of national minority rights. However, the participants expressed their view that this kind of support for national minority members is not provided by local authorities in all areas, and that this was an area that deserved special attention in the coming period.

During the analysis of the results achieved in presenting national minorities and activities of the new institutes introduced by the Constitutional Act in order to secure participation of national minority members in public affairs, it was pointed out that it was necessary to provide continued support to the work of councils, representatives and coordinating bodies of national minorities.

In the context of the development of minority representation through councils and representatives of national minorities, it was mentioned that the Council for National Minorities ought to be strengthened, since this is the umbrella body of national minorities, and its activities can considerably improve the role of councils and representatives of national minorities in the decision

making. There is also a need to organize training, and to supervise the development of preconditions for the activity of councils and representatives at the local and regional levels.

The seminar participants also expressed their view that implementation of national minority rights does not only depend on the political will of the state, but also on the readiness of minorities to cooperate. The conclusion was reached that national minority members ought to cooperate better in implementing programmes that are in their common interest, and be actively involved in the work of the local government bodies to which they are elected.

It was estimated that a high level of implementation of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities had been achieved, in line with the Croatian educational standard. Efforts were supported that are aimed at intensifying certain measures in some of the communities in the areas of special government care.

The seminar participants expressed their support for the efforts made by the Government of the RoC and for the method of implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

The conclusion was reached that in some areas there were still problems with local and regional authorities concerning the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities. With the goal of improving the situation and application of the law, the proposal was made that competent bodies inspect the situation, and organize education for state administration, judicial bodies and minority associations concerning the minority right on the use of language and script for official purposes. It was also suggested that competent bodies and councils, representatives and associations of national minorities should implement measures aimed at stimulating national minority members to use their language and script for official purposes, and thus secure their preservation.

It was requested that all relevant bodies, within their scopes of competence, carry out supervision in line with the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, to secure consistent application of domestic and international regulations pertaining to the protection of minority languages.

Certain difficulties were noticed in exercising the national minority right of access to the media. Some of the media were still not paying sufficient attention to real issues concerning national minorities and their objective coverage. Therefore, it was concluded that various incentive measures were needed – such as journalist training, financing of special programmes etc. – to create conditions for full implementation of the national minority right to access the media and receive information in languages and scripts of national minorities.

The *fourth seminar* on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was held on 15 October 2007 in Vukovar. The seminar participants all agreed that in the past period a significant improvement in national minority rights had been achieved, and in that respect they stated their approval of the involvement of the Government of the RoC in the implementation of national minority rights. Given that the seminar was held in a part of the Republic of Croatia in which, during the armed conflict and aggression against the Republic of Croatia, not only the majority population but also national minorities suffered a great number of casualties, and which was levelled to the ground, the participants concluded that over a relatively short period of time

significant progress had been made, in both reconstruction and development of co-existence. Various positive examples of co-existence, mutual understanding and joint activities of members of different ethnicities were shared, as well as of the support provided by local and regional authorities, which contributes to the high level of national minority rights. However, the participants warned that this kind of support for national minority members was not provided by many of the local government bodies, and that this was an area that deserved special attention in the coming period.

During the analysis of the results achieved in presenting national minorities and activities of the new institutes introduced by the Constitutional Act, as well as some difficulties in the involvement of national minority members in public affairs, it was pointed out that it was necessary to provide continued support to the work of councils, representatives and coordinating bodies of national minorities, and of their further training.

The seminar participants also expressed their view that implementation of national minority rights depends not only on the political will of the state and local authorities, but also on the readiness of minorities to co-operate. The conclusion was reached that national minority members ought to co-operate better in implementing programmes that are in their common interest, and be actively involved in the work of the local government bodies to which they are elected.

It was estimated that a high degree of application of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities was achieved, in line with the Croatian educational standard. Efforts were supported that are aimed at intensifying certain measures in some of the communities in the areas of special state care, and a warning was voiced that pre-school education should be better co-ordinated.

The seminar participants expressed their support for the efforts made by the Government of the RoC and for the method of implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

The conclusion was reached that there were still problems in some local and regional authorities concerning the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities. With the goal of improving the situation and application of the law, the proposal was made that competent bodies inspect the situation, and organize education for state administration, judicial bodies and minority associations concerning the minority right on the use of language and script for official purposes.

Certain difficulties were noticed in exercising the national minority right of access to the media. Some of the media were still keen on sensational news, and failed to pay sufficient attention to real issues concerning national minorities and their objective coverage. The proposal was made that the Council for National Minorities pay attention in the coming period to the analysis of national minority reporting in the public media, and undertake appropriate measures on the basis of the results of the analysis. Something that was deemed especially important was the application of Art. 18 of the Constitutional Act (concerning the HRT) and Electronic Media Act, relating to broadcasting in minority languages.

The seminar participants expressed their belief that regular consideration of the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Government of the RoC

and Council of Europe contributed to the harmonization of opinions and proposals with the view of removing difficulties and securing better and more efficient implementation of national minority rights in the entire territory of the RoC. With that in mind, they praised the efforts made by the seminar organizers.

The *fifth seminar* on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was organized by the Office for National Minorities and the Council of Europe and held on 1 December 2008 in Zagreb. Along with representatives of associations and councils of national minorities, members of the Croatian Parliament representing minorities, and representatives of relevant government bodies, Mr. Alan Philips, chairman of the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, also attended the seminar. The participants discussed a range of issues relevant to the exercise of national minority rights, and also the Draft Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities that the Government of the Republic of Croatia is due to submit to the Council of Europe.

As regards the improvement of the operation of councils and representatives of national minorities, it is worth mentioning that the Office for National Minorities has submitted, into a regular procedure, a Proposal for a decision on the financing of councils and representatives of national minorities acting on the territory of economically underdeveloped local self-government units. The 2009 budget of the Office for National Minorities includes an amount of HRK 700,000 earmarked for this purpose.

FROM THE REPORTS OF NATIONAL MINORITY ASSOCIATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

"PREPOROD" - CULTURAL SOCIETY OF BOSNIAKS IN CROATIA

For Bosniaks in Croatia the period 2004-2008 was a time in which they consolidated the activities of the existing associations and institutions and established some new ones. Their activities are mostly financed by the state budget and regional and local budgets, which continually grew throughout this period and thus enabled us to enhance the quality of our work. The councils and representatives of national minorities are in their second term of office and they have developed and implemented an increased number of quality programmes. The member of the Croatian Parliament representing five national minorities has been in the last two mandates a person who belongs to the Bosniak national minority, who received the highest number of votes in elections for the MP representing these five minorities.

As regards the implementation of the legally guaranteed rights, the Bosniaks – the second largest minority in the RoC – have faced some problems, the most significant one being that nearly one half of all the Bosniaks in Croatia stated in the 2001 Population Census that they were Muslims, and this name is not recognized as a name of the national minority. Therefore, they are unable to exercise their minority rights.

BOSNIAK NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF ZAGREB AND THE COUNTY OF ZAGREB

In the 2004 and 2008 elections for councils and representatives of national minorities, members of the Bosniak national minority elected a significant number of councils and representatives they were entitled to pursuant to the Act on the Rights of National Minorities, and thus expressed an interest in their functioning. Although the councils and representatives of national minorities – and not only those of the Bosniak national minority – and the bodies of local self-government are still trying to define their proper position and role in exercising the rights of national minorities, the legislation and the real life practice provide for this significant form of minority influence at the local level. In addition, the Bosniak minority is also represented on the Council for National Minorities by its member of the Croatian Parliament.

During the previous period, the number of associations of the Bosniak national minority has experienced a significant growth, as did the number of programmes they have implemented and a total amount of funds for such programmes allocated by the Council for National Minorities. The amount of HRK 790,000 received for 2004 grew to the sum of HRK 2,006,000 in 2008, which helped balance the disproportion between great needs of the Bosniak national minority as the second minority in terms of numbers, and the funds allocated for the implementation of its programmes.

The access to the public media – and this regards all the national minorities – is intolerably limited, and unsatisfactory in terms of contents. It is impermissible that Bosniaks still get described by the media as Muslims or Bosniaks-Muslims.

The issue of the dual denomination Bosniaks/Muslims is particularly significant now, in the period prior to the 2011 Population Census. It is necessary to resolve the status of the so-called Muslims both in legal and practical terms. In the 2001 Population Census 19,677 persons declared that they were Muslims, and as a consequence they are totally excluded from any consumption of their minority rights. This problem should be resolved both by government bodies and minority associations.

JEWISH COMMUNITY, ZAGREB

The rights of national minorities have been improved. This conclusion is based on the amounts appropriated by the Government of the RoC for the creation of preconditions necessary for the realization of cultural autonomy of national minorities, in the fields of information activities, publishing, cultural amateur activities and cultural events. The funding has also been provided by the ministries and local governments and self-governments, on the basis of public invitations to propose programmes for the current year.

In contrast to these positive measures, the greatest obstacle faced by Jews in their attempt to exercise the minority rights guaranteed by the Constitution are the unlawful actions of the Central State Office for Public Administration, the discriminating actions of the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities, and the inefficiency of the legal system.

In 2006 the Central State Office for Public Administration registered unlawfully the newly-established Jewish religious organizations in the Register of Religious Communities of the RoC. This registration was challenged by a legal action filed to the Administrative Court by the Coordinating Body of Jewish Communities in the RoC. However, the Administrative Court ruled that the action was unfounded.

COMMUNITY OF MACEDONIANS IN THE RoC

In the period 2004-2008 significant improvements of minority rights were achieved, primarily in the fields of cultural autonomy and protection of other human rights. The Community of Macedonians in the RoC, as the umbrella organization of the Macedonian national minority, received funding throughout this period from the central state budget of the RoC, allocated by the Council for National Minorities of the RoC. The funding was designated for the implementation of the Community's programmes and projects in the field of cultural autonomy, and the amounts grew at the same rate as the budget of the RoC. The received sums were transferred to Macedonian cultural societies operating in large towns (Zagreb, Split, Osijek, Rijeka, Pula, Zadar), which form the core of activities of persons belonging to the Macedonian national minority aimed at protecting their national identity, language, culture, tradition etc.

During the same period a lot was done to increase the involvement of the Macedonian national minority in the work of local self-governments through councils and representatives of the Macedonian national minority, depending on the share of Macedonians in the total population of a given area. In the last local elections, the Macedonian national minority used its right to elect its councils and representatives. As a result, 4 councils and 10 representatives of the Macedonian national minority currently operate in towns and counties.

A large part of the efforts to train members of those councils for their participation in the decision-making process was taken over by the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. Many forums, lectures and working meetings were held with the goal to improve the work of these minority bodies, but there is still room for further improvement of their operation.

UNION OF SLOVAKS

With regard to the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in the public life and managing of local affairs through councils and representatives of national minorities, an area that calls for further improvements is access to the public media at the national, regional and local level, which would contribute to the presentation and raising awareness about the role of councils and representative of national minorities in local and regional self-governments.

Legal provisions on the use of the language and script of the Slovak national minority in the RoC have been fully implemented. Still, in certain regions it might be useful to inform local and regional bodies about the ways in which the language and script of the Slovak national minority are to be used.

Representatives of the Slovak national minority would like to point out that major improvement has been achieved when it comes to the right of access to the public media. Nonetheless, we believe that the coverage of national minorities is still insufficient in the programmes of public televisions at national, regional and local levels.

As regards the education in the language and script of the Slovak national minority, we are of the opinion that significant improvements have been made. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has undertaken a range of measures aimed at creating the preconditions for teaching in the Slovak language in areas inhabited by members of the Slovak national minority. In cooperation with representatives of the Slovak national minority, the Ministry has created conditions for opening of new classes in which Slovak language and culture would be taught (a mentor for the Slovak language, textbooks, field school, new classes for the Slovak language...). In the past, the Slovak language and culture were taught in six primary schools. Nowadays, the Slovak language is taught in 12 primary schools. Members of the Slovak national minority in the RoC are also members of the Croatian pluralist society and citizens of the RoC. We are satisfied with the achieved level of recognition of our cultural autonomy. All our results in the past period have been achieved with full recognition and financial support of the Council for National Minorities and the Government of the RoC.

UNION OF ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

According to the data available on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in the RoC during the period 2004-2008, we can state that we are generally satisfied, since we could exercise all the rights stipulated in the Convention. We implemented the programme of activities of the Union of Albanian Communities in the RoC and of Albanian Communities at the county level for each calendar year, and these programmes were financed solely by the Government of the RoC through its appropriations distributed by the Council for National Minorities.

In addition, The Union regularly publishes its monthly magazine "Informator" and every year issues at least one book focusing on the history of the Albanian people or Croatian-Albanian links through history.

With the goal of fostering the Albanian language and culture, we have established good cooperation with competent authorities and we are currently engaged in adjusting our forms of schooling to the national educational standards for primary school education in the part that concerns fostering of the Albanian language and culture.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF MONTENEGRINS IN CROATIA

Croatia has done more for its national minorities than any other Western-European state. In some states a pronounced restrictive pluralism is present, which is evidenced by a low number of national minority associations in those states. In Croatia, all minorities enjoy the same rights and suffer from the same economic problems as the majority population. We expect that the EU will strengthen its

support for Croatia and that the county will join the union of European peoples as soon as possible. In recent years, the National Community of Montenegrins in Croatia has acted as a truly democratic, open and attractive association that gathers not only the elite but rather everybody. This gives us a realistic opportunity to realise – together with other national minorities – a stable cultural autonomy, which will contribute to strengthening the overall cultural achievements of Croatia. Our interests, programmes and initiatives are turned towards the future. Widening of our institutional base through our associations (all the Zagreb associations have merged into a single one, new associations have been established in Karlovac, Pula, Rovinj, Osijek, Umag and an initiation group has been set up to establish an association in Dubrovnik) strengthened our human resources, and this has in turn enabled us to raise the quality of all our activities, with numerous high-quality programmes. The quality of our activities is further ensured by the support of our kin state, the sovereign member of the UN, Montenegro.

CZECH ALLIANCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

In the period 2004-2008, the number of associations of the Czech national minority increased from 24 to 27 associations (the newly-established ones are the Czech Society ("Beseda") of the Municipality of Lipovljani, the Czech Society Sisak, the Czech Society of the Town of Garešnica).

The associations operate in line with the Associations Act and they are registered with competent state administration bodies at the county level, depending on the territory in which each of the Czech associations functions.

All other Czech associations are united (at a voluntary basis, pursuant to a signed membership form) in the Czech Alliance in the Republic of Croatia, as the umbrella association of the Czech national minority. All associations are independent in their activities, and they operate on the basis of their own programme of activities, in line with the provisions of their charters.

The Czech Alliance was established 86 years ago. Pursuant to the provisions of its charter, its role is:

- to develop cultural, artistic and publishing activities of the Czech minority and to cooperate with relevant bodies and organizations of the RoC;
- to engage in the achievement of constitutionally prescribed preconditions for an overall progress of the Czech minority in the RoC, which will allow its minority institutions to operate successfully and to foster its cultural characteristics and its mother tongue;
- to store and collect documents and other historical records on the life of the Czech minority in the RoC;
- to develop all-embracing cooperation with relevant organizations and government bodies that deal with the minority issues, from the municipal level to the national level, with the goal of strengthening unity and equality of peoples and national minorities in the RoC;
- to develop and improve cultural and economic cooperation with the kin nation which will contribute to an approximation of the RoC and the Czech Republic, based on mutual respect, equality, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

The Czech national minority (and the Slovak national minority) are represented at the state level (in the Croatian Parliament) by an elected member of the parliament. We have no information on whether and how the Czech national minority is represented at the local level, in units of regional self-government in which no councils or representatives have been elected.

Members of the Czech national minority who live in the Republic of Croatia (and who are organized in associations) maintain a successful and active cooperation and frequent contacts with associations from the Czech Republic, thus enhancing their ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity. Nearly all associations of the Czech national minority in the RoC have enjoyed long cooperation with similar associations in the Czech Republic, and some associations are linked to several organizations in their kin state. We believe that such good cooperation could serve as an example for other national minorities.

**FUNDS ALLOCATED BY THE OFFICE FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES THROUGH THE
COMMISSION FOR MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL
PROGRAMME FOR THE ROMA
DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Funds</u>
County of Međimurje	HRK 300,000
construction of the Roma settlement in Donja Dubrava	
Ministry of the Interior	HRK 65,500
implementation of a measure of the National Programme for the Roma: operation of mobile teams and visits to Roma settlements	
Ministry of Justice	HRK 70,000
implementation of a measure of the National Programme for the Roma: free legal aid project	
County of Međimurje, for the municipality of Donja Dubrava	HRK 400,000
resolving Roma housing issues	
Municipality of Kotoriba	HRK 120,000
urgent rehabilitation of the settlement of Vrtlarsko Naselje	
Municipality of Podturen	HRK 50,000
procurement of additional teaching equipment and adequate heating for the pre-school in the settlement of Lončarevo Naselje	

Town of Sisak	HRK 30,000
procurement of equipment for the Roma Cultural Centre in Capraška Poljana	
Town of Belišće	HRK 50,000
rehabilitation of the macadam road and community club, construction of pavements and procurement of furniture for the community club to be used by the Roma cultural club in the suburban settlement of Bistrinci	
Town of Bjelovar	HRK 30,000
for the initial programmed activities of the Roma Advisory Centre in Bjelovar	
County of Međimurje	HRK 200,000
purchase of the land in the settlements Parag 1 and Parag 2 necessary to improve infrastructure	
Municipality of Legrad, County of Koprivnica-Križevci	HRK 80,000
improving the living conditions of the Roma	HRK 30,000
refurbishing the "Legrad Home", which is also the venue of cultural events of the Roma	HRK 50,000
Municipality of Petrijanec, County of Varaždin	HRK 20,000
rodent control activities in the Roma settlement	
Municipality of Mali Bukovec, County of Varaždin	HRK 10,000
completion of works in the Community Club in Županac, which is also used by members of the Roma national minority with the goal to promote their integration in the social life	
Municipality of Donja Dubrava, County of Međimurje	HRK 20,000
rehabilitation works on the abandoned facilities used by the Roma	

from the settlement of Donja Dubrava, conditioned by mandatory submission of estimated costs and invoices for the works

Municipality of Donja Dubrava, County of Međimurje **HRK 70,000**

completion of the project aimed at the provision of housing for the Roma threatened by flooding

Municipality of Pribislavec, County of Međimurje **HRK 30,000**

rehabilitation of the road in the Roma settlement of Pribislavec

Municipality of Domašinec, County of Međimurje **HRK 20,000**

development of project documentation for the municipal infrastructure in the Roma settlement of Domašinec

Social Welfare Centre Zagreb **HRK 42,000**

for six Roma families whose houses were destroyed by fire in the Plinarsko naselje in Zagreb

Social Welfare Centre Beli Manastir **HRK 7,000**

one-off assistance for Kristina Petrović, a girl injured in a car accident

Roma Association of Zagreb and the County of Zagreb **HRK 20,000**

implementation of the ECDL programme of education of children and adolescents of the Roma national minority and acquisition of computers

Social Welfare Centre Beli Manastir	HRK 10,000
electrical power connection for Ljuba Hidanović from Bilje	
Municipality of Donja Dubrava, County of Međimurje	HRK 100,000
resolution of housing issues of the Roma	
County of Međimurje	HRK 250,000
preparation for the implementation of projects aimed at improving the infrastructure in Roma settlements	
Town of Sisak	HRK 25,000
organization of transportation to school for Roma children	
Municipality of Podturen, County of Međimurje	
urgent assistance to the population of the Roma settlement of Lončarevo Naselje	HRK 50,000
Municipality of Podturen, County of Međimurje	
rehabilitation of the pre-school facility in Lončarevo Naselje	HRK 30,000
Social Welfare Centre Zagreb	HRK 40,000
one-off financial assistance to the family of Zineta Šarić evicted from an apartment in Ćiro Truhelka Street in Zagreb	
Municipality of Darda, County of Osijek-Baranja	HRK 50,000
co-financing of the main project concerning municipal infrastructure in the Roma settlement of Darda	
Town of Sisak, County of Sisak-Moslavina	HRK 30,000

co-financing of the transportation to school for Roma children	
Roma Association of Zagreb and the County of Zagreb	HRK 6,977
cost of computer repair works for the small IT school	
Roma Women Association "Better Future"	HRK 20,000
research project on the position of Roma women in Croatia	
Association of Croatian Numerous Families 8+	HRK 8,000
compensation for litigation costs for Agim Gušani	
Association of Roma Ludari of Slavonski Brod	HRK 70,000
financial assistance for the improvement works in the Roma settlement	
Town of Našice, County of Požega-Slavonia	HRK 50,000
financial assistance for the construction of pavements in the Roma settlement	
Network of Roma Associations, Zagreb	HRK 20,000
assistance to the family of Šaban Ramadan who were evicted	
Network of Roma Associations, Zagreb	HRK 20,000
assistance for urgent housing of the family of Emšo Šainovski from Zagreb	
Social Welfare Centre Zagreb	HRK 60,000
necessary assistance to the population of the Roma settlement of Struge	
Roma Association of Međimurje	HRK 25,000
overhead expenses and costs of roof reconstruction on the kindergarten "Korak naprijed"	

County of Međimurje	HRK 100,000
payment of municipal waste collection in the settlement of Parag, municipality of Nedelišće	
Roma Cultural Centre of Croatia	HRK 20,000
the charity concert "Arsen Dedić for the Roma children"	
Town of Sisak	HRK 30,000
co-financing the transportation of Roma children to their pre-school	
Association "Youth Centre" Zaprešić	HRK 40,000
implementation of the project "Programme of Social Inclusion of the Roma from Pušća" from the territory of the County of Zagreb	
Social Welfare Centre Novi Zagreb	HRK 10,000
for the family of Suzana Kulaš, to cover their utility bills, purchase the necessary furniture and pursue the schooling of their daughter Sara Nikolić	
County of Međimurje	HRK 30,000
acquisition of containers to resolve housing issues of Marija Stančec	
Social Welfare Centre Donja Dubrava	HRK 20,000
payment of rent for the family of Arzija and Senad Osmanović	
Town of Mursko Središće, County of Međimurje	HRK 100,000
financing of the drainage of rain-water in the settlement of Sitnice	
Social Welfare Centre Dugo Selo	HRK 10,000

co-financing of water-supply and electricity-supply connections for the families of Gordana Horvat and Juraj Oršoš

Social Welfare Centre Slavonski Brod	HRK 5,000
necessary assistance to improve living conditions of the family of Ratko Lukić	
Social Welfare Centre Čakovec	HRK 2,700
payment of the water-supply bill of the family of Dušan Horvat	
Social Welfare Centre Čakovec	HRK 5,000
improving the housing conditions of the family of Katarina and Radoslav Ignac	
Social Welfare Centre Sisak	HRK 5,000
procurement of the construction material for the family of Žarko Todorović	
Town of Našice	HRK 70,000
completion of works on the pavement in Braća Radić street in the settlement of Vukojevci	
County of Međimurje	HRK 100,000
payment of one part of the cost of development of main projects for the road and sewage network in Roma settlements in the municipality of Orehovica and the town of Mursko Središće	

**FUNDS ALLOCATED BY THE OFFICE FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES THROUGH THE
WORKING GROUP FOR MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN
FOR THE DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION 2005-2012,
DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Funds</u>
Idemo Institute for Democracy	HRK 20,000
research project "Employment of Members of the Roma National Minority in the Republic of Croatia, with Particular Emphasis on the Employment of Roma Women: Current Situation, Needs, Recommendations"	
Roma Sports and Recreation Club "Roma", Zagreb, Petračićeva 20	HRK 10,000
organization of the Roma European Indoor Soccer Championship in Zagreb.	
Motovun Film Festival	HRK 20,000
screening of a film on the Roma	
Roma Association of Zagreb and the County of Zagreb	HRK 20,761
assistance for the payment of the internet bill and overhead expenses	
Nenad Radosavljević	HRK 10,000
payment of debt resulting from a loan contract, instigated by a distress proceedings	
Šerzada Seferović of Knin, through the competent social welfare centre	HRK 5,000
financial assistance for the procurement of medicine	

Allocation of funds for the preservation of Roma traditional culture

On the basis of an expert analysis made by the Working Group for the allocation of funds for the preservation of Roma traditional culture, in 2004 the Office for National Minorities allocated funds in the amount of HRK 210,000 for the procurement of folk costumes and musical instruments, and for the work of choreographers. The following seven cultural clubs received HRK 30,000 each: Roma Women Association "Better Life", Rijeka; Roma for Roma Association, Zagreb; Cultural Club "The Roma Dream", Slavonski Brod; Cultural Club "Red Rose", Sisak; Council of Roma Associations, Zagreb, for the Cultural Club "Golden Trough"; Cultural Club "Darda", Darda and the Association of Roma from Istria, Pula.

Financing of the procurement of folk costumes and musical instruments, and the activity of choreographers who worked with Roma associations continued in 2005. In July 2005 an expert group composed of researchers from the Institute for Ethnology and Folklore Research and the Ethnographic Museum and representatives of the Office for National Minorities, evaluated submitted programmes and proposed to the Office for National Minorities to allocate funds in the amount of HRK 155,000 for the sole purpose of preservation of traditional culture and to distribute them in the following way: HRK 15,000 to the Association of Roma Friendship "Luna", Beli Manastir; HRK 10,000 to the Association of Roma-Lovari Women for their cultural and artistic activities, town of Bjelovar; HRK 30,000 to the Roma Women Association "The Roma Heart", Jagodnjak; HRK 15,000 to the "Roma for Roma" Association, Vodnjan; HRK 20,000 to the Roma Cultural Club "Darda", Darda; HRK 5,000 to the Croatian Bayash Umbrella Union, Pribislavec; HRK 5,000 to the Roma Association of Rijeka, Rijeka; HRK 30,000 to the Theatre of the Roma National Minority of the County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Rijeka; HRK 15,000 to the Roma Association "Brotherhood", Novska and HRK 10,000 to the Association of Original Lovari Roma, Bjelovar.

In December 2006, on the basis of an expert analysis made by the Working Group for the allocation of funds for the preservation of Roma traditional culture (chaired by a representative of the Roma national minority and composed of experts from the Institute for Ethnology and Folklore Research, the Zagreb Ethnographic Museum and the Fine Arts Centre of the City of Zagreb), a decision was made to allocate funds for financing programmes aimed at preservation of Roma traditional culture in the total amount of HRK 128,800. The funds were to be distributed in the following way: HRK 16,000 to the Bayash Theatre Group "Paduri"; HRK 10,300 to the Croatian Roma Cultural Centre "Romano Centro"; HRK 7,500 to the Cultural Club "Golden Trough"; HRK 4,000 to the Roma Union "Roma Unity", County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar; HRK 3,000 to the Romani Civic Association; HRK 10,000 to the Association of Roma from Istria "Terne Romane Luluđa", Pula; HRK 10,100 to the Union of Association of the Croatian Catholic Roma Lovari; HRK 10,500 to the Cultural Club "Romani Heart"; HRK 10,000 to the Cultural Club "Romani Soul"; HRK 5,400 to the Association of Croatian Roma "Golden Cobra"; HRK 10,000 to the Roma Cultural Club "Black Pearl"; HRK 20,000 to the Roma Cultural Club Darda and HRK 12,000 to the Charity World Roma Organization in Croatia.

In 2007, on the basis of an expert analysis made by the Working Group for the allocation of funds for the preservation of Roma traditional culture, a decision was made to allocate funds in the amount of HRK 180,000 in the following way: HRK 4,000 to a Member of the Roma Union of the County of Vukovar-Srijem, Vinkovci; HRK 8,000 to the Association of Croatian Roma "Golden Cobra"; Association of Croatian Roma "Golden Cobra"; HRK 12,000 to the Croatian Roma Cultural Centre "Romano Centro"; HRK 5,000 to the Romani Civic Association; HRK 15,000 to the Cultural Club "Romani Soul", Zagreb; HRK 4,000 to the Roma Association "Romani Night", Zagreb; HRK 5,000 to the Roma Association of Zagreb and the County of Zagreb; HRK 4,000 to the National Roma Association "Europe", Našice; HRK 10,000 to the Cultural Club "Golden Trough"; HRK 4,000 to the Roma Association of the County of Slavonski Brod-Posavina; HRK 8,000 to the Bayash Black Pearl, Slavonski Brod; HRK 6,000 to the Roma Association of the County of Varaždin; HRK 3,000 to the Roma Association "Roma Ways", Zagreb; HRK 5,000 to the Association of Original Lovari Roma, Bjelovar; HRK 10,000 to the Association for Development and Better Life of Roma, Sisak; HRK 4,000 to the Association "Golden Roma Heart", Zagreb; HRK 8,000 to the Cultural Club "The Roma Dream", Slavonski Brod; HRK 8,000 to the Association of Roma of Rumanian Origin "Ludari", Slavonski Brod; HRK 12,000 to the Roma Cultural Club "Black Pearl", Sisak; HRK 10,000 to the Roma Cultural Centre, Sisak; HRK 3,000 to the Association "Roma Friend", Zagreb; HRK 7,000 to the Cultural Club "Roma Heart", Zagreb; HRK 5,000 to the Association "Roma for Roma", Vodnjan; HRK 8,000 to the Roma Association, Kutina; HRK 4,000 to the Association of Roma from Istria, Pula; HRK 8,000 to the Roma Cultural Club, Darda.

In 2008, once again on the basis of an expert analysis made by the Working Group, a decision was made to allocate funds for the preservation of Roma traditional culture in the amount of HRK 218,000 in the following way: HRK 5,000 to the Roma Cultural Centre of Croatia; HRK 8,000 to the Croatian Bayash Umbrella Union; HRK 20,000 to the Cultural Club "Romani Soul", Zagreb; HRK 5,000 to the Association for Development and Better Life of Roma; HRK 5,000 to the Association of Bayash Roma of the County of Sisak-Moslavina; HRK 5,000 to the Roma Association, Kutina; HRK 5,000 to the Cultural Club "Kutina Pearls"; HRK 5,000 to the Association of Roma Friendship "Luna"; HRK 10,000 to the Association of Roma Women "Roma Heart"; HRK 10,000 to the Roma Theatre "Chaplin"; HRK 7,000 to the Cultural Club "Black Pearl", Sisak; HRK 5,000 to the Roma Association of Zagreb and the County of Zagreb; HRK 7,000 to the the Charity World Roma Organization in Croatia; HRK 5,000 to the Association "Roma Rights", Sisak; HRK 5,000 to the Cultural Club "Black Arrows"; HRK 15,000 to the Roma Cultural Club Darda; HRK 5,000 to the Association of Bayash Roma of the Town of Slavonski Brod; HRK 5,000 to the Roma Cultural Club "Djelem Djelem"; HRK 12,000 to the Roma Cultural Centre; HRK 20,000 to the Cultural Club "Romani Heart", Zagreb; HRK 20,000 to the Art School M. Magdalenić, Čakovec; HRK 20,000 to the Music School, Slavonski Brod; HRK 14,000 to the Primary School for Classical Ballet and Modern Dance at the Primary School Vežica, Rijeka.

PROJECTS FOR ROMA

One crucial aspect of improving Roma position in society is housing and infrastructure. Therefore, the Government of Croatia, in addition to funds from the budget, is also using EU preaccession funds to improve the housing and infrastructure in places with a large number of members of Roma national minority. Here, infrastructure improvement is not only conceived as physical improvement of settlements, but also as an opportunity and mechanism that aims at building or strengthening partnerships between the local authorities and Roma communities, working side by side to achieve a better or improved living environment with adequate facilities.

The preparation of detailed plans for improvement was conducted with full involvement of the Roma community in the planning and decision making process. Members of the Roma community are also involved in the local monitoring and coordination of activities as well as contributing to the execution of the works. Several members of the Roma community were hired by the contractor. In cooperation with Croatian Employment Services, Roma community is involved in the improvement of infrastructure by participating in constructions and in works related to the improvement of the environment.

The first project implemented by the Government Office for National Minorities was the PHARE 2005 Roma support project. It consists of two components, works and services in education. Supervision of works was paid by the Međimurje County. The works component was envisaged as a pilot project of construction of infrastructure in the Roma settlement of Parag in Međimurje County. The EU contribution was 75 % (468,597.13 EUR), while the Government of Croatia has contributed 25 % (156,199.47 EUR). All the works within the infrastructure component have been delivered in 2008, but the process of legalisation of the houses in the Parag settlement is still ongoing. It is expected that the works component will be closed in September 2009. It is important to note that the Government of Croatia has provided additional 5 million HRK (approximately 690,000 EUR) for the legalisation, i.e. amount larger than the value of works themselves. The service component project-*Improving access to education and employment opportunities for the Roma national minority*, financed completely by EU (747,700.00 EUR), commenced in January, 2008 and ended in January, 2009. The main goal of the project was to provide training for the Roma teaching assistants, professionals from other education and social care services dealing with parents, and improvement of the education quality management system. All the services have been provided and the final visibility conference is scheduled for the beginning of July 2009.

After this pilot project, The Government Office for National Minorities has continued with the implementation of infrastructure projects financed by preaccession funds with PHARE 2006 Roma support project phase II. This project has two components, works on infrastructure in three Roma settlements in Međimurje County (Lončarevo, Piškorovec and Pribislavec) and services, i.e. supervision of works. EU is contributing with the full cost of supervision of works (194,920.00 EUR), and 70 % of value of works (2,279,736.04 EUR), while the Government of Croatia is providing 30 % (975,079.96 EUR). In addition, the Government of Croatia has contributed 2,900,000 HRK from the budget for legalisation of houses in these settlements. (approximately 400,000 EUR). The works commenced in February 2009, and they are expected to finish by the end of 2009.

Currently, an IPA 2008 project is being developed (the implementation is planned for 2010), involving infrastructure improvements (electricity, water and sewage, roads) in the last two large Roma

settlements in Međimurje County, Orehovica and Sitnice. The EU contribution is 2,500,000 EUR. In addition to the contribution to the cost of the project (733,230 EUR), the Government of Croatia has provided 1,300,000 HRK (approximately 180,000 EUR) for the legalisation of houses in Orehovica and Sitnice.

However, the infrastructure is only one of important problems for the members of the Roma national minority. Therefore, the Government Office for Minorities and other relevant institutions are involved in development of several other projects for EU preaccession funds directed at unemployment, education and other areas.

Similar approach in the usage of EU preaccession funds in relation to their key problems is planned for other vulnerable minority groups in the Republic of Croatia.

	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
I. ALBANIANS										
1. UNION OF ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES	508 000	10,00%	558 800	17,57%	657 000	10,82%	728 100	8,64%	791 000	55,71%
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, ZAGREB										
2. CLUB OF ALBANIAN WOMEN «QUEEN TEUTA», Zagreb					10 000	150,00%	25 000	100,00%	50 000	
3. FORUM OF ALBANIAN INTELLECTUALS IN CROATIA							34 000	158,82%	88 000	
ALBANIANS IN TOTAL:	508 000	10,00%	558 800	19,36%	667 000	18,01%	787 100	18,03%	929 000	82,87%
II. BOSNIAKS										
I. CULTURAL SOCIETY OF BOSNIAKS IN CROATIA										
"PREPOROD", ZAGREB	529 500	1,98%	540 000	9,81%	593 000	10,96%	658 000	10,64%	728 000	37,49%
2. BOSNIAK NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF CROATIA									45 000	
3. BOSNIAK NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF CROATIA										
IN THE COUNTY OF SISAK-MOSLAVINA	30 000	16,67%	35 000	14,29%	40 000	37,50%	55 000	45,45%	80 000	166,67%
4. BOSNIAK NATIONAL COMMUNITY										
IN THE COUNTY OF PRIMORJE-GORSKI KOTAR			15 000	100,00%	30 000	33,33%	40 000	67,50%	67 000	

5. CULTURAL CLUB «BOSNIA» OF THE COUNTY OF ISTRIA					28 000	25,00%	35 000	-28,57%	25 000	
6. BOSNIAK CULTURAL CLUB «NUR», SISAK					35 000	42,86%	50 000	38,00%	69 000	
7. BOSNIAK CULTURAL CLUB "BEHAR", GUNJA							40 000	100,00%	80 000	
8. CULTURAL CLUB "SELAM", DUBROVNIK							40 000	75,00%	70 000	
9. CULTURAL CLUB „SEVDAH“, ZAGREB							40 000	152,50%	101 000	
10. BOSNIAK NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF THE CITY OF ZAGREB AND THE COUNTY OF ZAGREB	210 500	4,99%	221 000	22,17%	270 000	52,59%	412 000	-3,16%	399 000	89,55%
11. BOSNIAK NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF ISTRIA, PULA	20 000	25,00%	25 000	-100,00%					22 000	10,00%
12. UNION OF BOSNIAK ASSOCIATIONS					225 000	46,67%	330 000	-3,03%	320 000	
13. BOSNIAK COMMUNITY OF CROATIA, COUNTY OF VUKOVAR-SRIJEM			15 000	-100,00%						
BOSNIAKS IN TOTAL:	790 000	7,72%	851 000	43,48%	1 221 000	39,23%	1 700 000	18,00%	2 006 000	153,92%
III. BULGARIANS										
1. NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF BULGARIANS										
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, ZAGREB	35 000	37,14%	48 000	25,00%	60 000	18,33%	71 000	18,31%	84 000	140,00%
BULGARIANS IN TOTAL:	35 000	37,14%	48 000	25,00%	60 000	18,33%	71 000	18,31%	84 000	140,00%

	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
IV. MONTENEGRINS										
1. NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF MONTENEGRINS OF CROATIA	429 000	12,56%	482 900	18,99%	574 600	18,01%	678 100	18,01%	800 200	86,53%
ZAGREB										
2. UNION OF MONTENEGRIN ASSOCIATIONS OF CROATIA	50 000	-100,00%								
MONTENEGRINS IN TOTAL:	479 000	0,81%	482 900	18,99%	574 600	18,01%	678 100	18,01%	800 200	67,06%
V. CZECHS										
1. "JEDNOTA" PUBLISHING HOUSE, DARUVAR	1 181 000	-5,09%	1 120 900	37,92%	1 546 000	18,01%	1 824 500	12,33%	2 049 400	73,53%
2. CZECH ALLIANCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, DARUVAR	1 031 000	-9,40%	934 100	18,99%	1 111 500	17,99%	1 311 500	26,08%	1 653 500	60,38%
CZECHS IN TOTAL:	2 212 000	-7,10%	2 055 000	29,32%	2 657 500	18,01%	3 136 000	18,08%	3 702 900	67,40%
VI. HUNGARIANS										
1. DEMOCRATIC UNION OF HUNGARIANS OF CROATIA,										

OSIJEK	1 908 500	5,07%	2 005 350	-12,72%	1 750 300	9,98%	1 925 000	6,13%	2 043 000	7,05%
2. UNION OF HUNGARIAN ASSOCIATIONS, ZAGREB	555 500	26,92%	705 050	109,21%	1 475 000	30,51%	1 925 000	29,87%	2 500 000	350,05%
HUNGARIANS IN TOTAL:	2 464 000	10,00%	2 710 400	19,00%	3 225 300	19,37%	3 850 000	18,00%	4 543 000	84,38%
VII. MACEDONIANS										
1. COMMUNITY OF MACEDONIANS										
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, ZAGREB	451 000	10,00%	496 100	15,90%	575 000	17,60%	676 200	17,57%	795 000	76,27%
2. MACEDONIAN CULTURAL CLUB "KRSTE MISIRKOV" ZAGREB					15 000	33,33%	20 000	35,00%	27 000	
MACEDONIANS IN TOTAL:	451 000	10,00%	496 100	18,93%	590 000	1070,54%	6 906 200	-88,10%	822 000	82,26%
VIII. GERMANS AND AUSTRIANS										
1. COMMUNITY OF GERMANS IN CROATIA, ZAGREB			101 390	-7,29%	94 000	38,30%	130 000	18,46%	154 000	
2. UNION OF GERMANS AND AUSTRIANS OF CROATIA, OSIJEK	15 000	10,00%	16 500	21,21%	20 000	20,00%	24 000	20,83%	29 000	93,33%
3. NATIONAL UNION OF GERMANS OF CROATIA, ZAGREB	15 000	10,00%	16 500	21,21%	20 000	20,00%	24 000	20,83%	29 000	93,33%

4. ASSOCIATION OF GERMANS AND AUSTRIANS, VUKOVAR			10 000	20,00%	12 000	20,83%	14 500	37,93%	20 000	
5. GERMAN PEOPLE'S UNION -										
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DANUBIAN SCHWABEN IN CROATIA	406 000	-22,85%	313 210	28,62%	402 840	15,70%	466 100	18,00%	550 000	35,47%
	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
5 ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRIANS IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA		#DIV/0!	22 000	0,00%	22 000	-31,82%	15 000	-13,33%	13 000	
GERMANS AND AUSTRIANS IN TOTAL:	436 000	10,00%	479 600	19,02%	570 840	18,00%	673 600	18,02%	795 000	82,34%
IX. POLES										
1. POLISH CULTURAL ASSOCIATION "MIKOLAJ KOPERNIK" ZAGREB	10 000	60,00%	16 000	31,25%	21 000	152,38%	53 000	30,19%	69 000	590,00%
2. POLISH CULTURAL ASSOCIATION "FRYDERYK CHOPIN", RIJEKA	15 000	40,00%	21 000	14,29%	24 000	-29,17%	17 000	-17,65%	14 000	-6,67%
POLES IN TOTAL:	25 000	48,00%	37 000	21,62%	45 000	55,56%	70 000	18,57%	83 000	232,00%
X. ROMA										
1. ROMA ASSOCIATION OF ZAGREB AND THE COUNTY OF ZAGREB	89 000	-100,00%			107 000	22,43%	131 000	37,40%	180 000	102,25%
2. ROMA CULTURAL CLUB «DARDA», DARDA					35 000	14,29%	40 000	75,00%	70 000	
3. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA YOUTH OF CROATIA					10 000	0,00%	10 000	50,00%	15 000	

4. ROMA YOUTH CLUB OF CROATIA					12 000	108,33%	25 000	-40,00%	15 000	
5. ROMA ASSOCIATION OF CROATIA "ROMA WAYS" ZAGREB	17 000	10,00%	18 700	-35,83%	12 000	66,67%	20 000	50,00%	30 000	76,47%
6. CHARITY "WORLD ORGANIZATION OF ROMA" IN CROATIA, ZAGREB			37 500	17,33%	44 000	31,82%	58 000	-100,00%		
									83 000	
7. ROMA CULTURAL CENTRE "ROMANO CENTRO" ZAGREB	40 000	10,00%	44 000	22,73%	54 000	48,15%	80 000	37,50%	110 000	175,00%
8. ASSOCIATION OF BAYASH ROMA OF THE COUNTY OF MEĐIMURJE, ČAKOVEC	40 000	35,00%	54 000	-53,70%	25 000	40,00%	35 000	-57,14%	15 000	-62,50%
9. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA FRIENDSHIP "LUNA", BELI MANASTIR					22 000	50,00%	33 000	21,21%	40 000	
10. CULTURAL CLUB "SAN ROMA", SLAVONSKI BROD									25 000	
11. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ROMA «EUROPE»-NAŠICE					10 000	250,00%	35 000	42,86%	50 000	
12. BAYASH UMBRELLA UNION – PREBISLAVAC - ČAKOVEC					10 000	300,00%	40 000	-62,50%	15 000	
13. CULTURAL CLUB „ROMA HEART“, ZAGREB	15 000	-100,00%			35 000	28,57%	45 000	33,33%	60 000	300,00%
14. ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND BETTER LIFE OF ROMA, SISAK							25 000	0,00%	25 000	
15. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA OF MEĐIMURJE, PODTUREN							25 000	20,00%	30 000	
16. ROMA FOR ROMA (VODNJAN)	10 000	120,00%	22 000	18,18%	26 000	15,38%	30 000	33,33%	40 000	300,00%
17. ROMA CULTURAL CLUB "DJELEM DJELEM", BELI MANASTIR							15 000	166,67%	40 000	

18. ASSOCIATION OF LUDARI ROMA OF RUMANIAN ORIGIN, SLAVONSKI BROD	20 000	-100,00%		#DIV/0!	22 000	-100,00%			30 000	50,00%
	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
19. CULTURAL CLUB "BLACK PEARLS", SISAK							25 000	20,00%	30 000	
20. BAYASH THEATRE GROUP PADURI									30 000	
21. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA FRIENDS "AMAL ROMA", ZAGREB					10 000	0,00%	10 000	50,00%	15 000	
22. NETWORK OF ROMA ASSOCIATIONS, ZAGREB	276 200	-4,66%	263 320	5,57%	278 000	16,19%	323 000	-0,31%	322 000	16,58%
23. CULTURAL CLUB "ROMANI SOUL", Zagreb									20 000	
24. ASSOCIATION FOR ELDERLY AND INFIRM ROMA OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA									15 000	
25. BAYASH ROMA ASSOCIATION OF SLAVONSKI BROD									15 000	
26. CENTRE FOR ROMA COUNSELLING, EDUCATION AND CULTURE, BJELOVAR									45 000	
27. "KALI SARA", ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTION OF ROMA EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA									35 000	
28. ASSOCIATION OF BAYASH ROMA OF THE COUNTY OF SISAK-MOSLAVINA									15 000	
29. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA OF BELI MANASTIR - BARANJA			10 000	100,00%	20 000	-100,00%			40 000	
30. ROMA CULTURAL CENTRE SISAK		#DIV/0!							20 000	
31. MEMBER OF THE ROMA UNION OF THE COUNTY OF VUKOVAR-SRIJEM	20 000	-100,00%			25 000	-8,00%	23 000	-100,00%		-100,00%

32. ROMA ASSOCIATION PRALIPE NOVSKA	20 000	-100,00%			37 000	-18,92%	30 000	-100,00%		-100,00%
33. ROMA FOR ROMA ASSOCIATION, ZAGREB	110 000	23,64%	136 000	22,79%	167 000	-17,96%	137 000	-100,00%		-100,00%
34. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA OF THE COUNTY OF SISAK-MOSLAVINA	25 000	-100,00%								-100,00%
35. UNION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF CATHOLIC ROMA LOVARI	12 000	-100,00%			12 000	-100,00%				-100,00%
36. COUNCIL OF ROMA ASSOCIATIONS, ZAGREB			203 900	-100,00%						
37. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA OF THE VALPOVO REGION, VALPOVO			10 000	-100,00%						
38. CHAPLIN THEATRE - THEATRE OF THE ROMA NATIONAL MINORITY, RIJEKA					35 000	-100,00%				
39. ASSOCIATION OF THE ORIGINAL LOVARI ROMA					25 000	40,00%	35 000	-100,00%		
40. ASSOCIATION OF ROMA OF THE COUNTY OF BJELOVAR-BILOGORA							20 000	-100,00%		
ROMA IN TOTAL:	684 200	-29,93%	479 420	115,47%	1 033 000	21,01%	1 250 000	18,00%	1 475 000	115,58%
XI. RUSSIANS										
1. NATINAL COMMUNITY OF RUSSIANS OF CROATIA, ZAGREB			32 000	25,00%	40 000	62,50%	65 000	18,46%	77 000	
RUSSIANS IN TOTAL:			32 000	25,00%	40 000	62,50%	65 000	18,46%	77 000	140,63%
XII. RUTHENIANS AND UKRAINIANS										

	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
1. UNION OF RUTHENIANS AND UKRAINIANS										
<i>IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, VUKOVAR</i>	902 000	10,00%	992 200	16,48%	1 155 700	20,53%	1 393 000	-3,59%	1 343 000	48,89%
2. CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY "IVAN FRANKO", VUKOVAR									64 000	
3. CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY «TARAS ŠEVČENKO» KANIŽA									76 000	
4. CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY "UKRAINE", SLAVONSKI BROD									54 000	
5. CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY "KARPATI", LIPOVLJANI									83 000	
6. UKRAINIAN CUTLURAL SOCIETY, ZAGREB	33 000	10,00%	36 300	15,70%	42 000	22,14%	51 300	65,69%	85 000	157,58%
7. ASSOCIATION OF RUTHENIANS IN THE RoC					13 100	-100,00%				
8. ASSOCIATIOAN OF THE UKRAINIAN CHRISTIAN FAMILY, VUKOVAR					13 100	-100,00%				
RUTHENIANS AND UKRAINIANS IN TOTAL:	935 000	10,00%	1 028 500	19,00%	1 223 900	18,01%	1 444 300	18,05%	1 705 000	82,35%
XIII. SLOVAKS										
1. UNION OF SLOVAKS, NAŠICE	913 000	10,00%	1 004 300	18,99%	1 195 000	18,08%	1 411 000	18,00%	1 665 000	82,37%

SLOVAKS IN TOTAL:	913 000	10,00%	1 004 300	18,99%	1 195 000	18,08%	1 411 000	18,00%	1 665 000	82,37%
XIV. SLOVENES										
<i>1. UNION OF SLOVENIAN ASSOCIATIONS</i>										
<i>IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, ZAGREB</i>	<i>451 000</i>	<i>10,00%</i>	<i>496 100</i>	<i>18,93%</i>	<i>590 000</i>	<i>18,05%</i>	<i>696 500</i>	<i>18,02%</i>	<i>822 000</i>	<i>82,26%</i>
SLOVENES IN TOTAL:	451 000	10,00%	496 100	18,93%	590 000	18,05%	696 500	18,02%	822 000	82,26%
XV. SERBS										
<i>1. SERBIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY "Prosvjeta", Zagreb</i>	<i>3 109 000</i>	<i>11,61%</i>	<i>3 470 000</i>	<i>13,83%</i>	<i>3 950 000</i>	<i>17,22%</i>	<i>4 630 000</i>	<i>16,48%</i>	<i>5 393 000</i>	<i>73,46%</i>
<i>2. SERBIAN DEMOCRATIC FORUM, ZAGREB</i>	<i>449 200</i>	<i>9,08%</i>	<i>490 000</i>	<i>30,61%</i>	<i>640 000</i>	<i>12,50%</i>	<i>720 000</i>	<i>11,11%</i>	<i>800 000</i>	<i>78,09%</i>
<i>3. SERBIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL, ZAGREB /NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING BODY/</i>	<i>1 907 200</i>	<i>10,11%</i>	<i>2 100 000</i>	<i>20,67%</i>	<i>2 534 000</i>	<i>43,61%</i>	<i>3 639 000</i>	<i>15,72%</i>	<i>4 211 000</i>	<i>120,79%</i>
<i>4. JOINT MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, VUKOVAR</i>	<i>200 000</i>	<i>10,00%</i>	<i>220 000</i>	<i>22,73%</i>	<i>270 000</i>	<i>29,63%</i>	<i>350 000</i>	<i>37,14%</i>	<i>480 000</i>	<i>140,00%</i>
<i>5. SERBIAN CULTURAL, ARTISTIC AND SPIRITUAL SOCIETY «ĐURĐEV DAN» IN DREŽNICA</i>					<i>75 000</i>	<i>6,67%</i>	<i>80 000</i>	<i>12,50%</i>	<i>90 000</i>	
<i>6. SERBIAN ECONOMIC SOCIETY " Privrednik ", ZAGREB</i>									<i>200 000</i>	
<i>7. NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SERBS, ZAGREB</i>	<i>88 000</i>	<i>25,00%</i>	<i>110 000</i>	<i>22,73%</i>	<i>135 000</i>	<i>-62,96%</i>	<i>50 000</i>	<i>-100,00%</i>		<i>-100,00%</i>
SERBS IN TOTAL:	5 753 400	11,06%	6 390 000	3,35%	6 604 000	43,38%	9 469 000	18,01%	11 174 000	94,22%

XVI. ITALIANS										
1. "EDIT" PUBLISHING HOUSE, Rijeka	3 284 600	10,00%	3 613 060	19,01%	4 300 000	17,91%	5 070 000	18,00%	5 982 600	82,14%
	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
2. CENTRE FOR HISTORIC RESEARCH, ROVINJ	477 400	10,00%	525 140	19,02%	625 000	17,60%	735 000	18,00%	867 300	81,67%
3. ITALIAN DRAMA, RIJEKA	367 400	10,00%	404 140	19,02%	481 000	17,46%	565 000	18,00%	666 700	81,46%
CROATIAN NATIONAL THEATRE "IVANA PL.ZAJCA"										
4. ITALIAN UNION, RIJEKA	512 600	10,00%	563 860	18,88%	670 300	19,36%	800 100	18,06%	944 600	84,28%
ITALIANS IN TOTAL:	4 642 000	10,00%	5 106 200	19,00%	6 076 300	18,00%	7 170 100	18,01%	8 461 200	82,27%
XVII. JEWS										
1. JEWISH COMMUNITY, ZAGREB	339 000	10,50%	374 600	24,61%	466 800	-11,95%	411 000	-14,84%	350 000	3,24%
2. CULTURAL CENTRE. "MIROSLAV ŠALOM FRAIBERGER", ZAGREB							90 600	-6,18%	85 000	
3. ASSOCIATION OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN CROATIA, ZAGREB			10 000	-100,00%			14 000	42,86%	20 000	
4. MIXED CHOIR «LIRA», ZAGREB	50 000	10,00%	55 000	12,73%	62 000	17,74%	73 000	19,18%	87 000	74,00%
5. JEWISH RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY										
BET ISRAEL IN CROATIA							35 000	380,00%	168 000	

6. BEJAHAD JEWISH CULTURAL SCENE	37 000	8,11%	40 000	5,00%	42 000	19,05%	50 000	20,00%	60 000	62,16%
7. RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION CENTRE "CENDO" ,ZAGREB									25 000	
8. JEWISH COMMUNITY, OSIJEK	10 000									
JEWS IN TOTAL:	436 000	10,00%	479 600	19,02%	570 800	18,01%	673 600	18,02%	795 000	82,34%
TOTAL:	20 692 600	11,75%	23 123 720	20,85%	27 944 240	21,10%	33 841 500	18,02%	39 939 300	93,01%
CREATING THE PRECONDITIONS FOR THE REALIZATION OF CULTURAL AUTONOMY										
CZECHS	362 000	4,48%	378 200	-57,69%	160 000	-25,00%	120 000	-16,67%	100 000	-72,38%
ROMA	396 000	-19,19%	320 000	18,75%	380 000	-28,95%	270 000	11,11%	300 000	-24,24%
SLOVAKS					120 000	-16,67%	100 000	0,00%	100 000	
SERBS	100 000				100 000	30,00%	130 000	23,08%	160 000	60,00%
JEWS							20 000	500,00%	120 000	
BOSNIAKS	80 000				80 000					
MONTENEGRINS					30 000					
ALLOCATED IN TOTAL:	938 000	-25,57%	698 200	24,61%	870 000	-26,44%	640 000	21,88%	780 000	-16,84%
DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION (2005-2015)			30 600							
MEMORIAL CENTRE FOR ROMA VICTIMS OF										

THE FASCIST TERROR OF THE CONCENTRATION CAMP JASENOVAC			38 200							
INFORMATION AND TRAINING OF MEMBERS										
OF MINORITY COUNCILS AND REPRESENTATIVES			140 000	78,57%	250 000	36,00%	340 000	-35,29%	220 000	
JOINT PROGRAMMES	319 000	-41,04%	188 080	-25,16%	140 760	-40,32%	84 000	173,81%	230 000	-27,90%
"MINORITY FORUM " bimonthly publication for councils and representatives of national minorities									250 000	
THE COUNCIL FOR NAT. MINORITIES' WEB PAGE									50 000	
	2004	increase 2004-2005	2005	increase 2005-2006	2006	increase 2006-2007	2007	increase 2007-2008	2 008	increase 2004-2008
CO-FINANCING OF THE RADIO BROADCASTS AT THE REGIONAL AND										
AND LOCAL LEVEL INTENDED FOR MEMBERS OF									42 200	
NATIONAL MINORITIES AND BROADCAST IN MINORITY LANGUAGES	154 400	94,30%	300 000	50,00%	450 000					
X. ANNUAL EVENT "CULTURAL CREATIVITY OF NATIONAL MINORITIES"							80 000			

UNALLOCATED	50 000	0,00%	50 000	-10,00%	45 000	-67,78%	14 500	191,03%	42 200	-15,60%
1,a	22 000 000	11,36%	24 500 000	21,22%	29 700 000	17,85%	35 000 000	18,60%	41 511 500	88,69%

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES HELD IN VUKOVAR ON 15 OCTOBER 2007

A seminar on implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, organized by the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Council of Europe, was held in Vukovar on 15 October 2007. The seminar was attended by representatives of the Council of Europe, national minorities, relevant ministries and other government bodies. This was the fourth seminar aimed at analysing the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and national legislation regulating the field of national minority rights.

The seminar participants all agreed that in the past period a significant improvement of national minority rights had been achieved, and in this respect they expressed their approval of the involvement of the Government of the RoC in the implementation of national minority rights. Given that the seminar was held in a part of the Republic of Croatia in which, during the armed conflict and aggression against the Republic of Croatia, not only the majority population but also national minorities suffered a great number of casualties, and which was levelled to the ground, the participants concluded that over a relatively short period of time significant progress had been made, in both reconstruction and development of co-existence. Various positive examples of co-existence, mutual understanding and joint activities of members of different ethnicities were shared, as well as of the support provided by local and regional authorities, which contributes to the high level of national minority rights. However, the participants warned that this kind of support for national minority members was not provided by all of the local government bodies, and that this was an area that deserved special attention in the coming period.

During the analysis of the results achieved in the presentation of national minorities, and in the activities of the new institutes introduced by the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, as well as some difficulties in the involvement of national minority members in public affairs, it was pointed out that it was necessary to provide continued support for the work of councils, representatives and co-ordinating bodies of national minorities, and for their further training.

The seminar participants also expressed their view that implementation of national minority rights depends not only on the political will of the state and local authorities, but also on the readiness of minorities to co-operate. The conclusion was reached that national minority members ought to co-operate better in implementing programmes that are in their common interest, and be actively involved in the work of the local government bodies to which they are elected.

It was estimated that a high degree of application of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities was achieved, in line with the Croatian educational standard. Efforts were supported that are aimed at intensifying certain measures in some of the communities in the

areas of special state care that are still faced with difficulties, and a warning was voiced that pre-school education should be better co-ordinated.

The seminar participants expressed their support for the efforts made by the Government of the RoC and for the method of implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, and they welcomed the results that had been achieved in that field.

The conclusion was reached that there were still problems in some local and regional authorities concerning the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities. With the goal of improving the situation and application of the law, the proposal was made that competent bodies inspect the situation, and organize education for state administration, judicial bodies and minority associations concerning the minority right on the use of language and script for official purposes.

Certain difficulties were noticed in exercising the national minority right of access to the media. Some of the media were still keen on sensational news, and failed to pay sufficient attention to real issues concerning national minorities and their objective coverage. The proposal was made that the Council for National Minorities pay attention in the coming period to the analysis of national minority reporting in the public media, and suggest appropriate measures on the basis of the results of the analysis. Something that was deemed especially important was the application of Art. 18 of the Constitutional Act (concerning the HRT) and Electronic Media Act, relating to broadcasting in minority languages.

The seminar participants expressed their belief that regular consideration of the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Government of the RoC and Council of Europe contributes to a harmonization of opinions and proposals with the view of removing difficulties and securing a better and more efficient implementation of national minority rights across the entire territory of the RoC. With this in mind, they praised the efforts made by the seminar organizers.

Seminar participants

Vukovar, 15 October 2007

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES
HELD IN PEROJ ON 14-16 SEPTEMBER 2006**

At the seminar on implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, organized by the Office for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia and the Council of Europe, held in Peroj, municipality of Vodnjan, from 14 to 16 September 2006, there were representatives of national minorities, relevant ministries and other government bodies and experts in national minority rights. This was the third seminar that focused on analysing the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and national legislation regulating national minority rights.

The seminar participants reached a unanimous conclusion that significant progress in the implementation of national minority rights had been achieved, and measures and support provided by the Government of the RoC in this respect were praised. Various positive examples of co-existence, understanding and joint activities of different ethnicities were cited, as well as of the support provided by local and regional authorities, which contributes to the high level of national minority rights. However, the participants expressed their view that this kind of support for national minority members was not provided by local authorities in all areas, and that this was a topic that deserved special attention in the coming period.

During the analysis of the results achieved in the presentation of national minorities, and in the functioning of the new institutes introduced by the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities in order to secure participation of national minority members in public affairs, it was pointed out that it was necessary to provide continued support for the work of councils, representatives and co-ordinating bodies of national minorities.

In the context of the development of minority representation through councils and representatives of national minorities, it was mentioned that the Council for National Minorities ought to be strengthened, since this is the umbrella body of national minorities, and its activities can considerably improve the role of councils and representatives of national minorities in decision-making. It is also necessary to organize training activities and supervise the development of preconditions for the activities of minority councils and representatives at the local and regional levels.

The seminar participants also expressed their view that implementation of national minority rights does not only depend on the political will of the state, but also on the readiness of minorities to co-operate. The conclusion was reached that national minority members ought to co-operate

better in implementing programmes that are in their common interest, and also co-operate with the local government bodies to which they are elected.

It was estimated that a high level of implementation of the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities had been achieved, in line with the Croatian educational standard. Efforts were supported that are aimed at intensifying certain measures in some of the communities in the areas of special state care.

The seminar participants expressed their support for the efforts made by the Government of the RoC and for the method of implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

The conclusion was reached that in some areas there were still problems with local and regional authorities concerning the implementation of the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities. With the goal of improving the situation and application of the law, the proposal was made that competent bodies organize education for state administration, judicial bodies and minority associations concerning minority rights on the use of language and script for official purposes. It was also suggested that competent bodies and councils, representatives and associations of national minorities should implement measures aimed at encouraging national minority members to use their language and script for official purposes, and thus secure its preservation.

It was requested that all relevant bodies, within their scopes of competence, carry out supervision in line with the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, to secure consistent application of domestic and international regulations pertaining to the protection of minority languages.

Certain difficulties were noticed in exercising the national minority right of access to the media. Some of the media were still not paying sufficient attention to real issues concerning national minorities and their objective coverage. Therefore, it was concluded that various incentive measures were needed – such as journalist training, financing of special programmes etc. – to create conditions for full implementation of the national minority right of access to the media and to receive information in the languages and scripts of national minorities.

The seminar participants concluded that regular analysis of the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, organized by the Government of the RoC and the Council of Europe, contributes to a harmonization of views and proposals aimed at eliminating problems and securing a better and more efficient exercising of national minority rights across the entire territory of the RoC. With this in mind, they praised the efforts of the organizers.

SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

Peroj, 16 September 2006

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION
OF NATIONAL MINORITIES HELD IN SPLIT
ON 15 AND 16 SEPTEMBER 2005

A seminar on implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, organized by the Office for National Minorities and the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, was held on 15 and 16 September 2005 in Split.

The Second Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which was submitted by the Government of the RoC, and the Advisory Committee's Opinion on said Report, analysed the progress achieved in the field of national minority rights and provided some useful recommendations. The adoption of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and other items of legislation concerning the protection of national minorities has resulted in a high level of normative rights.

The seminar participants concluded that the analysis of the implementation of the relevant Croatian legislation and application of the Framework Convention had revealed that a significant improvement in the implementation had been achieved. This was particularly true for the fields of education of members of national minorities, cultural autonomy, participation in decision-making, cross-border co-operation with the minorities' kin states and conclusion of bilateral agreements.

It was observed that members of national minorities had taken responsibility for their situation through their representatives, their councils and the national Council for National Minorities, and through their elected representatives in local government bodies and in the Croatian Parliament. By doing so, they make a significant contribution to the stabilization of democracy in the Republic of Croatia.

It was pointed out that certain difficulties had to be removed, primarily as regards the insufficient representation of national minorities in judicial and administrative bodies. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the National Strategy for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination should be completed and officially adopted as soon as possible.

The Government efforts pertaining to the process of reconstruction and return received a positive review. However, it was noted that additional efforts should be put into the process of return and restitution of property, and that these problems should be considered in the regional context, with a view to the co-operation of the countries of the region.

With the goal of full integration of national minorities into the political life of the country, the importance of the implementation of Article 22 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities was emphasized, as well as the need to amend electoral legislation and put in order voters' lists, with the aim of ensuring a more efficient integration.

Also, particular attention should be paid to the gathering of information, using the positive experience of other countries, while at the same time protecting the privacy of national minority members.

The implementation of the National Programme for the Roma, and adoption of the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, have brought about significant improvement in the position of the Roma national minority, especially in the field of education, status-related issues, and creation of preconditions for the achievement of cultural autonomy and better living conditions. Some problems that had persisted were pointed out, such as the lack of involvement of local and regional government in solving the problems of the Roma national minority, particularly as regards the land-plot development and legalization of Roma settlements.

On the basis of comprehensive analysis and discussion, the political will of all state bodies was recognized: of the Croatian Parliament, the President of the Republic of Croatia, the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the entire state administration. This political will has been not merely declared, but rather proven through the securing of financial and other support and creating a positive atmosphere which enables full realization of national minority rights in the Republic of Croatia.

The positive role of the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee in monitoring the implementation of the Framework Convention in Croatia was also emphasized. The work of the Advisory Committee has also stimulated more efficient application of national legislation.

Finally, the seminar participants expressed their satisfaction with the initiative of the organizers – the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Council of Europe – in organizing such seminars, which provide an opportunity for national minority representatives to share their views, opinions and proposals for improvement of the rights of national minorities in the RoC, which is a precondition for efficient implementation of the overall legislative framework regulating the issue of national minority rights.

REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

Split, Croatia, 16 September 2005

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES HELD IN CAVTAT ON 20 AND 21 SEPTEMBER 2004

A seminar on implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, organized by the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia, was held on 20 and 21 September 2004 in Cavtat.

The basis for the discussion was the Government's Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and an Alternative Report prepared by the Vukovar Centre for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance and the Serbian Community of Rijeka. The seminar participants were representatives of national minority associations and institutions, national minority councils, their coordinating bodies and national minority representatives, national minority deputies to the Croatian Parliament and representatives of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and various government bodies.

The discussion provided a comprehensive view of the exercising of national minority rights, both at the legislative level, and particularly at the level of its implementation. The participants were unanimous in their position that progress had been achieved in the previous period when it came to the improvement of national minority rights in the Republic of Croatia, and that the Government of the Republic of Croatia had undertaken measures to encourage the exercising of such rights and real involvement of national minorities in public, social and cultural life.

Members of national minorities pointed out some difficulties in the implementation of laws regulating minority rights, and in that respect they suggested that the Government of the RoC and competent government bodies undertake measures aimed at eliminating those difficulties, in particular:

1. problems relating to the population census, especially as regards the Serbian, Roma and Bosniak national minorities;
2. problems with implementing the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities as regards the numbers of persons belonging to national minorities in certain areas and their acquired rights;
3. difficulties in implementing the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities in the part that regulates the choice of educational model, which is a consequence of the non-existence of an advisor for minority education and administrative delays in granting approvals for the rights that are stipulated by this Act;
4. unsatisfactory access to and presentation of minorities in the media, in relation to Article 18 of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, and delays in establishing a Fund for encouraging pluralism and diversity in the electronic media;

5. securing preconditions for the functioning of national minority councils and representatives, and the need to amend implementing regulations in the part that regards nomination of candidates and elections for national minority councils and representatives;

6. the incomplete implementation of the Constitutional Act in the part regarding the participation of minorities in state administration, judicial bodies and public companies, and the need to provide incentives for the employment of persons belonging to national minorities.

Finally, the participants expressed their satisfaction with the organizers' initiative in organizing such seminars, which provided an opportunity for national minority representatives to share their views, opinions and proposals for improvement of the rights of national minorities in the RoC, which is a precondition for efficient implementation of the overall legislative framework regulating the issue of national minority rights.

Representatives of national minorities

Seminar participants

Cavtat, Croatia, 21 September 2004