



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate C: Migration and Protection  
Unit C1 : Irregular Migration and Return Policy

MIGRAPOL

European Migration Network

Doc 398

**EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK**

**SPECIFICATIONS FOR  
NATIONAL REPORT PART 1  
AND STATISTICAL ANNEX  
CONTRIBUTING TO THE  
EMN ANNUAL REPORT ON MIGRATION AND ASYLUM 2017**

**Final version: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

**Subject:** These specifications were developed to collect information for the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for 2017.

**Action:** EMN NCPs are requested to submit their National Report (Part 1) by the submission date of **15<sup>th</sup> February 2018**. The Statistics Annex and National Report (Part 2) are required by **30<sup>th</sup> April 2018**.

**I. Introduction**

In accordance with Article 9(1) of Council Decision 2008/381/EC establishing the EMN, each EMN NCP is required to provide an annual report describing the migration and asylum situation and developments in the (Member) State as well as statistical data.

**II. Aim, Scope and Outputs of the EMN Annual National Reports 2017**

**a) Aim:** The main aim of the EMN Annual National Reports is to:

- Provide information and contribute to:
  - The EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2017
  - EASO's Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU
  - EMN Country Factsheets 2017
- To reflect current EU policy priorities for migration and asylum, including:
  - European Commission's Communication on the Delivery of the European Agenda on Migration (COM(2017) 558 final)
  - Action Plan on the Integration of third-country nationals (COM(2016) 377 final)<sup>1</sup>
  - Council Conclusions on migrant smuggling (6995/16) of March 2016
  - Communication on a more effective return policy in the EU and enclosed Recommendations (COM(2017) 200 final)
  - European Agenda on Migration (COM(2015) 240 final)
  - EU Action Plan on Return (COM(2015) 453 final)
  - EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling (2015-2020) (COM(2015) 285 final)
  - Council Decisions on 14 September and 22 September 2015 providing for the mandatory relocation of 160,000 asylum seekers from Greece and Italy<sup>2</sup>

Norway's contribution should aim to inform on relevant aspects linked to the EU's migration *acquis*, (e.g. Schengen and the long-term residents' Directive) and to provide any relevant information to the extent possible.

In view of taking into account the **gender dimension and specific challenges** of EU policies, EMN NCPs are requested to provide, whenever possible, the possibility of differentiating between genders (e.g. men/women, boys/girls) in both National Reports and the Statistics Annex. A breakdown by age should be provided (wherever relevant and possible) and fundamental rights issues should also be highlighted wherever relevant.

**b) Scope:** The report shall cover the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

**c) Output:** The completed replies to the questionnaire in this document (National Reports (Part 1)) will feed into the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum (Synthesis Report) and will also be the basis for the development of the Country Factsheets. Individual Member State replies can also be published on the EMN website, at the NCPs request. \_

**III. Structure**

The reporting process for 2017 will be split into four separate activities:

- **The National Report (Part 1):** aimed at contributing fully to the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum and to EASO's Annual Report on the situation of asylum in the EU.

<sup>1</sup> Commission, 2016. [Action Plan on the Integration of third-country nationals](#), COM(2016) 377 final.

<sup>2</sup> [Council Decision \(EU\) 2015/1523](#) of 14 September 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece and [Council Decision \(EU\) 2015/1601](#) of 22 September 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece and

## EMN Annual Policy Report 2017 Specifications

And therefore reporting on the *main policy developments on each Member State, within the EU context.*

- **The Statistics Annex** will be published as a separate document, later in the year, following the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum (Synthesis Report). Statistics are requested as time series in order to quantify and identify trends and developments.
  - **Scope:** the statistics provided in the Statistical Annex should cover the full reference period from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017. Where requested, the latest stock statistics should refer to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.
- **The Country Factsheets** will be published for all reporting Member State plus Norway. They will provide a succinct summary of the National Report Part (1) and up to date statistics.
  - **Scope:** the Country Factsheets will present the most significant national developments as described in the National Reports Part (1) and the most up to date statistics on migration and asylum.
- **The National Report (Part 2):** this report allows for a structure primarily intended for each EMN NCP's *national audience and thus also reporting on national activities developed, including projects and cooperation with civil society.* The specifications for this Report will be detailed in a separate document.
  - **Scope:** the report should cover the full reference period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

#### IV. **Deadlines and Submissions**

In order to meet the deadlines required for the publication of the Commission's Annual Report, it is **essential** to respect the timescale given in these specifications:

- The submission date for the **National Report (Part 1)** is **15<sup>th</sup> February 2018.**
- The submission date for the **Statistics Annex** is **30<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**
- The submission date for the **National Report (Part 2)** is **30<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**
- Publication date of the **EMN Annual report on Migration and Asylum 2017: May 2018**
- Publication date of the **Country Factsheets: July 2018 (TBC)**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2017 ON MIGRATION AND ASYLUM  
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
NATIONAL REPORT (PART 1)**

**[CONTRIBUTION TO EMN AND TO EASO ANNUAL REPORTS]**

The Annual **National Report (Part 1)** has been structured as a common template. The template aims to collect information on both a) national policy developments and b) statistical data.

**a) National Policy Developments**

EMN NCPs are requested to provide information on key measures developed **during the reporting year (2017)** on migration and asylum policies, including both measures on the implementation of EU policy, legislative and financial instruments and any additional key national developments as follows:

- ✓ Key national developments in legislation, policy and practice
- ✓ Any developments resulting from actions at EU level in relation to specific policy topics.

**Instructions on the content and information to be provided**

Please consider the following points while responding the questionnaire provided in this document:

- ✓ Please **only** report on **developments** that took place **during the reporting year (2017)**. The report is aimed at focusing on a single year and not on developments that took place in earlier years. You may also report on *planned national developments that will take place in 2018 to illustrate future trends*. However, **please make sure that you clearly identify these as planned for 2018** rather than actual developments in 2017.
- ✓ **Content** should be as **relevant** to the topic under consideration, and as **concise**, as possible. (e.g. provide only one or two paragraphs for each of your responses).
- ✓ Please report on all relevant measures – i.e. legislation, policy developments or practices – as appropriate.
- ✓ Where relevant, please describe **concrete actions or measures**, for example, resulting from the entry into force of new legislation. Examples are given in each of the sub-sections to ensure consistency and to facilitate your work. Whenever possible, please also provide examples of good practices.
- ✓ Reference to projects developed by civil society or NGOs actions should only be described, whenever these are directly linked to the specific implementation of policy measures. All other activities or projects implemented together with civil society need to be reflected in the National Report (Part 2).
- ✓ Please clearly differentiate between actions undertaken by your government/ public authorities and non-governmental organisations when necessary.
- ✓ If there has been no significant development, please explicitly state it in the relevant section- and do not add any further information- (less is more).
- ✓ Please foresee the liaison and coordination with relevant national contacts including:
  - 2.1 EASO NCPs (as information requested in this template will also serve to inform EASO's Annual Report on situation of Asylum in the EU)
  - 2.2 National Contact Points on Integration (NCPis)
  - 2.3 Frontex Risk Analysis Network (FRAN)
  - 2.4 National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms working against Trafficking in Human Beings.

**b) Statistics**

**Key statistics** are requested to illustrate each policy area of the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum, these are set out in the **Statistics Annex** (Annex 1). Where available, statistics will be

sourced from Eurostat. Other statistics will have to be obtained directly from national sources. **An Excel template will be circulated together with the Study specifications.**

## 1. KEY DEVELOPMENTS ON MIGRATION AND ASYLUM

This section aims to reflect the main/key *policy* developments per “policy area”. Please note that while all the information provided in your National Report will serve for the development of the EMN Country Factsheets, the information in this section will simplify the development of the EMN Country Factsheets and hence shall be reflected in the latter. Therefore **information** in this section shall be concise and shall only focus on policy developments that had a significant impact in the (Member) State during the reporting year (2017).

### 1. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

By passing the Amendments to the Foreigners Act, that came into force on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 and Amendments to the Book of Regulation on Status and Work of Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia, that came into force on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017, the legislative framework regarding legal migration witnessed important changes.

The most important measures introduced include transposing of the Seasonal Workers Directive and Intra-Corporate Transfers Directive, as well as further alignment with the Directive 2014/67/EU on posted workers.

Also, the amendments of the Foreigners Act also tackled some other issues: family reunification, introduction of new grounds for granting temporary residence to a life-partnership for the same-sex persons, to clearly prescribe the condition for residence and work permit regarding self-employment in trade, to precisely define categories of residence that will not be taken into account when granting long-term residence, to facilitate access to long term residence regarding the knowledge of Croatian language, to allow for a new categories of TCNs to work in the Republic of Croatia.

Regarding the work of TCNs, in 2017, the quota for employment of third country nationals set by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and subsequently amended in July 2017, was ultimately set at 9 079 work permits. In comparison to 2016, when the quota was set at 3115, it shows a major increase in the number of work permits.

In addition to these legislative changes, in the beginning of 2017, the new Regulation on the Administrative Fee Tariff entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 (published in the Official Gazette No. 8/17 on 27 January 2017), as a part of government Action Plan for Reducing Administrative Burden on the Economy. This regulation amended amounts of administrative fee tariffs, including fees for the issuance of residence permits to TCNs, that were reduced by 30%.

### 2. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

Amendments on the Act of International and Temporary protection was passed on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 (Official Gazette No 127/17).

**The main Amendments concern that the State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care becomes responsible for ensuring the accommodation for beneficiaries of international protection.** Under provision of accommodation it is also included retrieval, adaptation, equipping, maintaining and settling overheads expenses and rental costs of ensured housing unit. Before Amendments entered into force, the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youths and Social Policy was responsible for the housing of the beneficiaries of international protection.

In addition, the Amendments relate to the integration in the Croatian society. The Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of

Croatia is coordinating authority among the relevant ministries, NGOs and other bodies who participate in the procedure of integration of beneficiaries of international protection into society within the framework of the Permanent Commission for Implementation the Integration and related Working Group. By the Amendments the Working Group is in charge of drafting the proposals of the national strategic documents in this area.

During 2017 Republic of Croatia step up in efforts for conducting relocation and resettlement schemes. In this manner Croatian Government brought a decision to resettle and accept additional 100 refugees from Turkey in 2018.

### 3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Regarding the increased number of unaccompanied minors, the interagency Working Group has been established with purpose to develop the **Protocol for Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors** weather they are asylum seekers or illegal migrants.

### 4. INTEGRATION

The Government of the Republic of Croatia at its session held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 adopted the **Action Plan for Integration of Persons Who Have Been Granted International Protection for the period from 2017 to 2019.**

Planned measures include 6 strategic areas:

- social welfare and health care,
- accommodation and housing,
- language learning and education,
- employment,
- international cooperation,
- interdepartmental cooperation and sensitization of the public and professionals to persons who have been granted international protection.

At its session held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on adoption of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan for the period 2017-2022 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan for the period 2017 to 2019.

### 5. IRREGULAR MIGRATION

In order to adjust the national legislation to EU acquis and for effective control of state border, Act of Amendments of the Foreigners Act (Official Gazette 69/17) has been introduced.

The Transit Reception centres Tovarnik and Trilj have been opened.

### 6. RETURN

The Project on Translation and broadening network of translators in the process of return is

functioning.

## 7. ACTIONS AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

National plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for period 2018-2021 has been drafted. It is expected that the National plan will be finalised in 2018.

During 2017 to reinforce national system three protocols have been developed:

- Protocol for Identification, Assistance and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings;
- Protocol on Treatment in Voluntary Returning Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

## 8. MAXIMISING DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

In 2017 legislative changes were introduced by amending the Foreigners Act to allow for Croats Abroad to facilitate their stay and work in the Republic of Croatia.

State Office for Croats Abroad organized in 2017 numerous projects in order to improve relations with Croatian nationals worldwide.

In 2017 the Republic of Croatia contributed 200,000 EUR towards the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, and in September 2017 the representative of MOI participated in the Ministerial Conferences of the Brdo Process (Slovenia), a sub regional process in the field of migration, mobility, fight against terrorism, illegal migration and organized crime.

## 9. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

### 9.1. Economic migration

#### 9.1.1. *Admission policies of specific categories of third-country nationals*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding admission and access of the following categories of third-country nationals. Please concentrate on measures, besides those introduced through the transposition and implementation of EU legislation (e.g. incentive mechanisms, if applicable).

#### **a) Highly qualified workers;**

Amendments to the Foreigners Act came into force on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017, and regarding the highly qualified workers, there were a few changes concerning the issuance of EU Blue card. The amendments aimed to further clarify the nature of work to be done as well as clarifying the legal entities in the Republic of Croatia with which the work can be concluded. In addition, it aimed to clarify the provision regarding the amount of annual average gross salary to the applicant for EU Blue card.

#### **b) Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICTs);**

By passing the Amendments to the Foreigners Act that came into force on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 and Amendments to the Book of Regulation on Status and Work of Foreigners in the Republic of

Croatia that came into force on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017, the ICT Directive was transposed into national legislation.

The specifications of ICT Directive were implemented in the Foreigners Act and two new types of residence permit were introduced:

- work and residence permit for ICTs
- work residence permit for mobile ICTs.

For short-term mobility, no additional residence and work permit is needed, ICTs issued with another MS ICT permit may work up to 90 days based only on ICT permit issued by another MS.

The quota on the number of ICT permits could be set. This was not set by the Decision on the quota of work permits in 2017. For 2018, the quota for ICTs was set at 250 permits.

**Long term mobile ICTs are issued with residence and work permit outside annual quota.**

**c) Seasonal Workers;**

By passing the Amendments to the Foreigners Act that came into force on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 and Amendments to the Book of Regulation on Status and Work of Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia that came into force on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017, the Seasonal Workers Directive was transposed into national law.

Two new types of residence permit were introduced:

- work and residence permit for seasonal worker up to 90 days and work;
- residence permit for seasonal worker up to 6 months;

Rights of seasonal workers, accommodation requirement, as well as judicial protection were also addressed.

**d) Migrants entrepreneurs;**

Regarding the self-employment of TCNs with its own trade, with the amendments to the Foreigners Act, a clear rule regarding the condition that concerns salary was introduced.

**e) Au pairs;**

There is no such a category in the Foreigners Act.

**f) Other remunerated workers.**

By passing the Amendments to the Foreigners Act that came into force on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017, changes were introduced concerning the categories of TCNs that could be issued with the residence and work permit for work that exceeds 90 days (namely regarding the high budget movie production) and time limit for work of volunteers was introduced (up to one year, and in exceptional cases further prolongation up to 6 months). In addition, regarding the issuance of work registration certificate for work up to 60 days in a calendar year, a new category was introduced (regarding sporting events, fashion editorials and commercial campaigns).

In addition, amendments aimed at clarifying the employment of mobile EU long term TCNs. TCN issued with an EU long term residence permit by another MS can now apply for residence and work permit outside annual quota if employed in the Republic of Croatia.

### 9.1.2. *Satisfying labour market needs - admission policies*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding labour market and skill needs/shortages in relation to the employment of third-country nationals (which were not already covered in question 1.1.1 above).

Having in mind the quota system for employment of third country nationals, the Government of the Republic of Croatia at its session held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016 set the annual quota for the employment of third country nationals for 2017, pursuant to the provisions of Foreigners Act. The Decision on annual quota came into force on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

The total quota for 2017 was set at 7 026 permits, including the permits for new employment (5211) and for the extension of already issued work permits (1800). An additional 15 work permits for seasonal work was also set, having in mind the situation on labour market.

Out of 5211 work permits for new employment, 2320 permits were planned for shipbuilding sector and 2080 in the field of construction sector.

For comparison, the total annual quota for 2016 was set at 3115 work permits (2300 for new employment and 800 for extension, with additional 15 for seasonal employment).

Having in mind the planned investment projects in the sector of construction, in July 2017 the Government of Croatia amended the Decision on annual quota, by additional 2 053 work permits for new employment in the field of construction.

With the amendment, the total quota for 2017 was set at 9 079 work permits, resulting in an increase of work permits for new employment now set at 7 264 work permits, namely in the field of construction, now set at 4 133 work permits.

Comparing to the 2016, it can be seen that the total quota for employment of third country nationals in 2017 was increased by 5 964 permits, by 1000 more permits for the extension of already issued work permits and by 4 964 more permits for new employment.

In the end of 2017, the Government of the Republic of Croatia set the annual quota for the employment of third country nationals for 2018, which came into force on 16 December 2017. With this Decision, the annual quota for the employment of the third country nationals was set at 31 000 permits.

Out of this number, 9000 permits were set for extension of already issued permits, 21 210 permits were set for new employment (construction and tourism sector having the largest number of permits), with 540 seasonal worker permits and 250 ICT permits.

### 9.1.3. *Efforts to avoid 'social dumping'<sup>3</sup> and erosion of labour standards*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures aimed at tackling labour exploitation of third-country national workers legally residing and/or social dumping in your (Member) State.

Aside from regulating the rights of seasonal workers and ICTs in the Foreigners Act in line with the relevant EU laws in July 2017, the amendments to the Foreigners Act included provisions

<sup>3</sup> While there is no definition of the concept of "social dumping" in EU law, the term is generally used to point to unfair competition due to the application of different wages and social protection rules to different categories of worker (Parliamentary questions, 27 May 2015, E-008441-15). The European Commission described the practice as a situation 'where foreign service providers can undercut local service providers because their labour standards are lower', more info at [Eurofound](#)

regarding the posted workers in order to be better aligned with Directive 2014/67/EU. Provisions include better explanation of the rights of posted workers to protection of their rights, obligation to designate domestic authorized recipient in Croatia, as well as administrative cooperation via IMI system.

In 2017, new form of posting declaration has been introduced with the passing of Ordinance on Form and Of the Posting Declaration.

Also, the amendments to the Foreigners Act in 2017 were introduced regarding the provisions regulating the sanctions of employer and TCNs in cases of undeclared work.

Regarding the tackling of labour market exploitation, the Ministry of Labor and Pension System, as the main beneficiary of the IPA 2012 Twinning Project: "Strengthening Policies and Capacities for Reducing Undeclared Work (Black Work)", is planning in the beginning of 2018 to start with a campaign aimed at strengthening public awareness of the negative effects of undeclared work.

#### **9.1.4. Other developments in economic migration**

Please describe any other *new or planned* changes in legislation, policies and measures in the area of economic migration.

Other than measures mentioned above, in 2017 there were no other measures.

In 2018 Amendments to the Foreigners Act are planned to transpose the Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing.

## **9.2. Students and researchers**

### **9.2.1. Admission policies for students and researchers**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to attract students and researchers.

No new measures in 2017.

### **9.2.2. Incentive mechanisms for retaining students and researchers**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to incentivise the retention of students and researchers.

No new measures in 2017.

### **9.2.3. Other measures regarding students and researchers**

Please describe any other *new or planned* policies / measures related to students and researchers.

No new measures in 2017.

## **9.3. Family reunification and family formation**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to regulate the admission of third-country nationals for family reunification and family formation.

With the amendments to the Foreigners Act in July 2017, regarding the scope of family members of TCNs, sponsors who are TCNs and have temporary residence in the Republic of Croatia, categories of sponsors who will not have the right to family reunification have been broadened (now include categories of sponsors who have temporary residence permits for the purpose of seasonal employment and additional: temporary residence for other purposes, posted workers, worker providing services on behalf or in the name of a foreign employer and cross-border workers).

Changes were also introduced regarding the family reunification of TCN who are family members of Croatian nationals. For this category of TCNs, family reunification conditions were facilitated as they do not have to provide a proof of means to support. In addition, their family reunification is further facilitated as they are excused from the obligation to provide for valid travel document (but only in exceptional cases where they do not have valid travel documents and can provide evidence that the travel document cannot be issued in diplomatic mission or consulate office of their country of origin, and their identity can be established beyond doubt, in other manners).

#### 9.4. **Information on routes to and conditions of legal migration**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to improve the provision of information on the routes to and conditions of legal migration for third-country nationals. For example:

No new measures in 2017.

#### 9.5. **Long-term residence and intra-EU mobility of legally resident third-country nationals.**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to regulate and/or facilitate access to the following:

a) Long-term residence;<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the access to the EU long-term residence, in 2017 changes were introduced with the amendments to the Foreigners Act.

Main changes include broadening the cases of temporary residence permits and residence and work permits that shall not be taken into account for the purposes of calculating the period of 5 years of legal and continuous residence.

Cases include: 1. seasonal work permits, 2. posted workers, 3. worker providing services on behalf or in the name of a foreign employer, 4. cross-border workers, 5. ICTs and 6. work permits issued based on work as other necessary persons, as defined by the Protocol on The Accession of the Republic of Croatia to the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, as well as family members of sponsor to whom permit was issued under point 5. and 6.

Furthermore, TCNs who apply for EU long-term residence do not have to prove anymore knowledge of the Croatian culture and the social system of the Republic of Croatia by filing a questionnaire in the permanent residence application procedure. They still have to provide that they have the knowledge of the Croatian language and Latin script (via courses taken at higher education institutions, secondary schools and institutions for adult education that organize study programs on the Croatian language, on the basis of the permission of the Ministry competent for education).

Regarding the access to the national long-term residence, in 2017 changes in legislation were introduced in order to facilitate access to national long-term residence

<sup>4</sup> A long-term resident is a citizen from a country outside the EU who has been given long-term resident status. This status means that the person will have similar rights as EU citizens. (Directive 2003/109/EC)

for TCN who does not have a valid travel document under the condition that such travel document cannot be issued in diplomatic mission or consulate office of country of origin, and his identity can be established beyond doubt, in other manners. In these cases, no need for enclosing a proof of valid travel document is required.

Intra-EU mobility of third-country nationals between (Member) States.

Changes in legislation were introduced in 2017 regarding:

a) access to the labour market for mobile EU long-term residents

In order to clarify the situation of labour access in the Republic of Croatia of EU long-term resident granted such residence by other MS, the provision now clearly states that such TCN shall be issued with the residence and work permit outside annual quota.

b) mobile ICTs

Long term mobile ICTs are issued with residence and work permit outside annual quota. For short term mobility, no additional residence and work permit is needed, ICTs issued with another MS ICT permit may work up to 90 days based only on ICT permit issued by another MS.

#### 9.6. Other measures on legal migration schemes

Please describe *new or planned* policies / measures on **any other developments regarding legal migration** (not covered or described in the questions above).

No new measures in 2017.

#### 9.7. Schengen governance

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures in relation to Schengen governance. Where relevant, please include any (planned) actions in relation to the new Schengen acquis, temporary suspension of Schengen, etc.

Actions of the Republic of Croatia in the 2017 were aimed at its future entrance into Schengen area, as accession to the Schengen area is one of the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

In that sense, it continues to intensify preparations for entry into Schengen.

In this context, in order to effectively combat illegal migration, new technology has enhanced the surveillance of state and maritime borders. In January 2017, the use of funds from the Schengen Financial Instrument was completed. According to the preliminary calculation, out of these funds, a total of about 116 million EUR was spent, or 97.5% of the total of 120 million available.

Following the successful implementation of the Decision of the Council of the European Union, the Republic of Croatia joined the Schengen Information System in June 2017.

The evaluation of the application of the Schengen acquis in the Republic of Croatia in the SIS-SIRENE area took place from 18 to 22 September 2017.

From 27 November to 1 December 2017 evaluation of the application of the Schengen acquis took place in the external borders management area.

**9.8. Visa Policy**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures in relation to the implementation of the Visa Code and the Visa Information System (VIS) or any other Visa related developments, in particular in relation to cooperation between (Member) States' consulates and the set-up of joint consular services for visas.

In 2017 the work on Ordinance amending the Ordinance on Visa was completed, and the planned changes are to take effect in the beginning of 2018. With this legislative change, new form on visa application is planned, as well as changes in the procedure of issuing visa.

As of June 11, 2017, citizens of Ukraine, holders of biometric passports, do not need a visa to enter Croatia.

## 1. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

**\*NB: This Section will also feed into EASO's Annual Report on the situation of Asylum in the EU.**

### 9.9. Implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and related policy developments

#### 9.9.1. *Changes in legislation, policies and practices*

Please provide **information on new or planned changes in legislation, policies and practices** (adopted, implemented, under preparation or pending) relating to any of the following areas:

##### 9.9.1.1. Access to the asylum procedure

**a) First arrival to territory (including information provided at the time of first arrival to the EU territory and operations to help asylum seekers on arrival;**

During 2017, there was no change on legal framework regarding access to the asylum procedure: a third-country national or a stateless person was able to express his/her intention to apply for international protection during border control at a border crossing or at the police administrations, a police stations or a reception centre for foreigners regardless of their nationality. All police administration and police stations as well as Reception centres for asylum seekers were equipped with leaflets developed by Croatian Law Centre and UNHCR in order to provide on time and adequate information to everyone who might wish to seek an asylum. Besides, police administrations and police stations are also enabled to provide written information on Eurodac regulation 603/2013 and obligation to fingerprinting. To facilitate work of police officers and authorities designated for asylum issues and with purpose of quality work, different Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) were developed.

**b) Access to the asylum procedure (including applications made at the border, within the (Member) State's territory and in detention) - including making and lodging applications;**

There were no changes in legal framework, however in order to response to increased number of asylum seekers 21 new officers were employed in the Department for Asylum (including Dublin unit) and Reception Centre. The result was that asylum procedure was able to be started immediately after arriving to Reception Centre respecting special procedure guarantees.

**c)Registration of applications for international protection, (including subsequent applications and Dublin returnees), identification and fingerprinting.**

Applicants have been registered at the same day of applying at the police station. Immediately upon applying the applicant is identified and fingerprinted respecting the time frames of data transmission to Central system, according to Eurodac Regulation. Subsequent application also has to be recorded at police station. Every Dublin returnee who made application has been registered immediately upon arrival.

In relation to fingerprinting 30 new workstations (mobile and stationary) have been purchased both for police stations and Reception centres for asylum seekers.

This enhanced fingerprinting procedure is in accordance with Eurodac Regulation. However, this also had impact on start the Dublin procedure as soon as possible upon fingerprinting and when the intention for asylum application is expressed or the application is made.

## 9.9.1.2. Reception of asylum applicants

**a) Reception of applicants (please include information on reception capacities – rise/fall/stable, material reception conditions, i.e. housing, food and clothing and financial support, contingency planning in reception, access to labour market and vocational training, medical care, schooling and education, residence and freedom of movement);**

The total capacity of Reception centres for asylum seekers are 700 beds in 2 Reception Centres. Besides accommodation at reception centres asylum seekers are provided with additional material reception conditions such as food, clothing, tickets for public transportation and financial support.

Asylum seekers are entitled to health care which includes emergency medical assistance, and necessary treatment of illnesses and serious mental disorders with special respect for applicants who need special reception and/or procedural guarantees, especially victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence. Those are provided with the appropriate health care related to their specific condition or the consequences of those offences. Health care was ensured at Reception Centres every working day from 16.00 till 20.00 hours by Belgium Doctors of the world (Medicines du monde). Also, twice a month at Reception Centre gynecologist, pediatrician and psychologist are available. Asylum seekers are entitled to emergency health care as well as the specialist doctors and transportation and organization of examination ensured by Croatian Red Cross, which actions are funded by EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

Education of all children was organized at school whether primary, secondary or preschool. Children were assisted by NGOs which supported them in Reception Centre in doing homework and learning Croatian language.

Both Reception Centres are open facilities where one facility has a capacity of 100 beds and is intended for housing of vulnerable category of asylum seekers such as families with minor children, single women and unaccompanied minors.

**b) Detention during the asylum procedure (detention capacity – rise/fall/stable practices regarding detention, grounds for detention, alternatives to detention, time limit for detention).**

Detention capacity during 2017 was stable with total capacity of 120 beds. Grounds for detention are aligned with EU legislation (RCD 33/2013). In most cases asylum seekers are detained on the basis of prevention of abuses of the asylum procedure. Other legal grounds prescribed by the Act on International and Temporary protection (AITP) are:

- establishing the facts and circumstances on which the application for international protection is based, and which cannot be established without restriction of movement, especially if it is assessed that there is a risk of fleeing;
- establishing and verifying identity or nationality;
- protection of the national security or public order of the Republic of Croatia;
- prevention of abuse of the procedure if, on the basis of objective criteria, which include the possibility of access to the procedure of approval of international protection, there is a well-founded suspicion that the intention to apply for international protection expressed during the procedure of expulsion was aimed at preventing the procedure from continuing.

Maximum duration of detention is 3 months and detention may be imposed if, by individual assessment, it is established that other alternative measures would not be effective. In

practice, average duration of detention was 1 month. It is possible to impose detention only based on written decision.

Alternatives to detention are also prescribed by AITP such as:

- prohibition of movement outside the Reception Centre;
- prohibition of movement outside a specific area;
- appearance in person at the Reception Centre at a specific time;
- handing over travel documents or tickets for deposit at the Reception Centre;

During 2017 alternatives to detention have not been used.

### 9.9.1.3. Asylum procedures

**a) Access to information and legal counselling / representation (including at the border and during the asylum procedure);**

Legal counselling and representation was provided by Croatian Law Centre and Centre for Peace studies at Reception Centre and based on Contract with Ministry of Interior. Legal counselling was organized for groups and particularly for individuals.

**b) Provision of interpretation;**

No new developments in 2017.

**c) Dublin procedure (including changes in: the organisational framework, IT systems<sup>5</sup>, practical development and suspension of transfers to selected countries, detention in the framework of Dublin procedures);**

Dublin unit is under umbrella of Department for Asylum where during 2017, 2 new officers were employed. Regarding Dublin transfers Croatia suspended transfers to Greece, Italy and Bulgaria.

**d) Special procedures: border procedures, procedures in transit zones, accelerated procedures, admissibility procedures, prioritised procedures or any special procedure for selected caseloads;**

Border procedure remained inapplicable. Regarding accelerated procedure it is fully aligned with relevant EU legislation. Applications of unaccompanied minors, application made in detention were prioritized.

**e) Safe country concept: safe country of origin, safe third country, European safe third country, first country of asylum (introduction of the concept into law, applicability of the concept in practice, measures undertaken to create, revise or implement a list of safe countries);**

No changes during 2017. The list of safe countries of origin drafted in 2016 still applied in 2017 without revision needed. This concept has legal ground in AITP.

**f) Procedures at first instance (relevant changes in: the authority in charge, organisation of the process, interviews, evidence assessment, international protection status determination, decision making, timeframes, case management, including backlog management);**

<sup>5</sup> For example, information on setting up new databases that allow managing of Dublin cases, problems with managing DubliNet which can cause a delay in sending/receiving Dublin requests, acquisition of new equipment, such as Eurodac machines etc as it is a relevant development in boosting the capacity to conduct Dublin procedures.

Department for Asylum is in charge in first instance procedure. The procedure starts after the application is lodged. The most important part in the procedure is conducting a personal interview upon which decision is delivered. During the interview interpreter is provided as well as a legal counsel/representative.

- g) **Appeal/Judicial Review (changes in: organisation of the process, hearings, written procedures, timeframes, case management, including backlog management);**

The Amendments on the Law on Administrative Disputes entered into force on 1st April 2017 (OG 29/17). Appeal procedure are available at 4 Administrative courts in Zagreb, Osijek, Split and Rijeka. Time frame for appealing is 30 days from the day of receiving the first instance decision. Appeal has suspensive effect except in case against the decision of detention, accelerate procedure, subsequent application, granting protection, refusing access to work.

- h) **Country of Origin Information (changes or updates in: organisation, methodology, products, databases, fact-finding missions, cooperation between (Member) States).**

Country of origin Information are produced by Information and Documentation Centre sitting under the Department for Asylum umbrella. Two officers are in charge of researching databases and for supporting decision makers.

#### 9.9.1.4. Residence/entry documents and rights/obligations of beneficiaries of international protection

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding the rights and obligations related to the status of beneficiary of international protection:

- a) **Residence/entry documents granted to beneficiaries of international protection (including length/duration);**

No new developments in 2017.

- b) **Rights and obligations regarding family reunification, access to social welfare scheme, access to accommodation, healthcare, citizenship, education, employment etc.**

No new developments in 2017.

#### 9.9.1.5. Provision of information on residence/entry documents and rights/obligations of beneficiaries of international protection

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding the provision of information to beneficiaries of international protection on the rights and obligations related to that status, in a language that they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand:

- a) **Information on residence/entry documents granted to beneficiaries of international protection (including length/duration);**

According to the AITP residence documents for beneficiaries of international protection were issued without limit of duration.

- b) **Information on rights and obligations regarding family reunification, access to social welfare scheme, access to accommodation, healthcare, citizenship, employment and integration programme.**

No new developments in 2017.

**9.9.1.6. Withdrawal of international protection**

Please indicate any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding institutional and organisational aspects, procedural rules, grounds for revocation of, ending of or refusal to renew international protection (including cessation, exclusion, misrepresentation and omission of facts and danger to the security or the community) consequences of revocation of, ending of or refusal to renew international protection.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.9.1.7. Cooperation with third countries**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures implemented in cooperation with third countries and activities in the external dimension of the CEAS (including participation in capacity building activities in third countries, Regional Development Protection Programmes or any relevant activities under Partnership Framework with Third Countries and European Neighbourhood Policy).

For example, to equip third countries of first asylum with the means to guarantee refugee protection and to better manage mixed migration flows including national asylum legislation and asylum policy frameworks.

Not applicable.

If evidence is available, please describe the outcomes of these developments (e.g. increased number of asylum applications processed in countries of first asylum)

Not applicable.

**9.9.1.8. Other developments in asylum legislation, policy and practices**

Other *new or planned* policies / measures not covered above.

Government brought Decision on resettlement scheme binding on reception of max.100 persons from Turkey during 2018.

**9.9.2. Institutional changes in the national asylum system**

Please provide information on *new or planned* institutional changes in the asylum field at ministry/agency/section level (including changes in mandate, creation of new entities, internal restructuring and transfer of competences, increase/decrease of staffing).

The number of the reception staff has increased and the new officers as well employed in the Department for Asylum.

**9.9.3. Efficiency and Quality of the national asylum system**

Please provide information on measures undertaken to improve:

- a) **Safeguards of the national asylum system (preventing and combatting unfounded applications, credibility assessment,<sup>6</sup> establishing identity, nationality verification, detection of security concerns, age fraud) including information on tools, mechanisms and training provided to staff;**

During 2017/18 employees of the Department for Asylum together with 6 Reception officers were trained on Interview technics workshop organized by UNHCR. During December

<sup>6</sup> According to EASO, credibility assessment is performed in order to establish if the applicant's statements substantiating the claim are truthful in the light of other circumstances of the case and other means of evidence

2017, they participated together with Croatian Red Cross in workshop on identification of victims of trafficking in human beings.

- b) Quality of the national asylum system (internal measures to improve quality in decision-making processes and the content of issued decisions, in particular by issuing decisions e.g. creation of guidelines and instructions, including information on training, tools and mechanisms (stating how this is measured));**

Please see above.

- c) Efficiency of the processing of (first) applications and appeals (increasing speed, reducing costs, use of new technology, specialised training provided) of the national asylum system.**

Please see above.

Please include information on *effectiveness* of above listed measures (where evidence exists and stating how this is measured).

#### 9.9.4. Challenges in the national asylum system

Please only provide information additional to that presented in sections above

- a) Please indicate which aspects of the national asylum system have (i) proven to be particularly challenging or (ii) have been subject to criticism from third parties (civil society, press, international organisations). Please differentiate between the different aspects in your asylum and reception system;**

The main challenges are the lack of interpreters for Pashto language. Also, very important to mention is slow procedure of appointment of legal guardian for unaccompanied minors. Equal to these issues there were few cases of appointment of a TCN from the group as a legal guardian which has received critics from the Ombudsman for children. Since Croatia is still transit country a number of applicants withdraw their application.

- b) Provide information on actions undertaken to counter these challenges.**

The public invitation for engagement of Pashto interpreters was announced. Regarding appointment of legal guardian to unaccompanied minors is under responsibility of Ministry for Demography, Family, Youths and Social Policy.

#### 9.10. Relocation and resettlement programmes

**NB\* Please note that information collected under this section, will be presented in the Synthesis Report together with the EU overview of relocation and resettlement schemes.**

##### 9.10.1. Relocation<sup>7</sup>

###### 9.10.1.1. Intra-EU relocation mechanism

Please provide information on changes in your national practices with regard to applicants relocated under **the Intra-EU relocation mechanism** in 2017 (at EU level). Please also mention any challenges related to this mechanism.

<sup>7</sup> Relocation: The transfer of persons having a status defined by the Geneva Convention of 1951 or subsidiary protection within the meaning of Directive 2011/95/EU from the EU Member State which granted them international protection to another EU Member State where they will be granted similar protection, and of persons having applied for international protection from the EU Member State which is responsible for examining their application to another EU Member State where their applications for international protection will be examined. In the context of the EU emergency response system, relocation means the transfer of an applicant in clear need of international protection from the territory of the Member State initially indicated as responsible for examining their application for international protection to the territory of the Member State of relocation. Following transfer, the latter will become the Member State responsible for examining the application for international protection (see Art. 2(e) of Council Decision (EU) 2015/1523 and Art. 2(e) of Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601). (see EMN Glossary V5).

Even though Croatia made efforts and sent pledges to Greece and Italy only 62 persons were reallocated: 50 from Greece and 12 from Italy.

### 9.10.1.2. National relocation mechanisms

Please specify any actions undertaken with regard to relocation activities organised under national schemes (i.e. on **bilateral basis**, not EU level schemes).

Not applicable.

### 9.10.2. Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Programmes<sup>8</sup>

#### 9.10.2.1. EU Joint Resettlement Programmes

Please describe activities related to resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes implemented by your (Member) State under EU resettlement programmes. Please also mention any challenges related to these programmes.

Resettlement was conducted upon Agreement between Ministry of Interior and IOM Office in Zagreb. During 2017, 40 persons have been resettled from Turkey to Croatia.

#### 9.10.2.2. National Resettlement Programmes

*\*Please note that this question focuses on national resettlement programmes, such as those implemented by UNHCR, whilst the question on above 2.2.2.1 focuses on EU joint resettlement programmes*

Please describe 2017 resettlement activities to your (Member) State, differentiating between the types of programme:

**a) National resettlement programme (UNHCR);**

No such programme exists in Croatia.

**b) National Humanitarian Admission Programme;**

No such programme exists in Croatia.

**c) Private sponsorship programme/scheme;**

No such programme exists in Croatia.

**d) Ad-hoc special programmes (e.g. national initiatives, and/or international initiatives).**

No such programmes exist in Croatia.

*If applicable, for each of the programmes described, please indicate the resettlement quota established, the actual number of people resettled/admitted and from which countries. Please describe any evidence of the results / outcomes of this cooperation, if available.*

<sup>8</sup> Resettlement: In the EU context, the transfer, on a request from the UNHCR and based on their need for international protection, of a third-country national or stateless person, from a third country to a Member State, where they are permitted to reside with one of the following statuses: (i) refugee status within the meaning of Art. 2(d) of Directive 2011/95/EU; or (ii) a status which offers the same rights and benefits under national and EU law as refugee status. (see EMN Glossary Version 5).

**9.11. Information for EASO report purposes only, not for inclusion in Synthesis Report:**

**Jurisprudence**

Please provide information on precedent setting new national jurisprudence relating to asylum with major policy implications (preferably final judgments) by using the following structure:

- **Court Name**
- **Date of Decision**
- **Title**
- **Case Number/ Citation/Document Symbol**
- **Abstract**
- **Link to the full version**

*Please provide information on the impact of CJEU judgements on national policy*

N/A.

## 2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

### 9.12. Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures in relation to unaccompanied minors (UAMs) **applying for asylum** at national level, following the specific areas below:

**a) Increase/Decrease of Human resources and/or training of staff;**

One social worker was employed in the Reception Centre, currently there are 2 social workers available.

**b) Improvement of protection and care of UAMs, including reception facilities;**

UAMs could be accommodated in the special facilities for children and only exceptionally in the Reception Centre for asylum seekers. All children accommodated at the Reception Centre for asylum seekers during 2017 were enrolled in education system.

**c) Legal guardianship and foster care;**

In practice, there was lack of legal guardians in relation to number of UAMs.

**d) Age assessment;**

Age assessment was not carried out.

**e) Procedural Safeguards;**

Applications of UAMs are prioritized. During entire procedure, the principle of the best interest of child is respected.

**f) Provision of information (info material, e.g. videos, leaflets, booklets etc.);**

Audio information for children has been developed by Croatian Law Centre in project funded by Ministry for Demography, Family, Youths and Social Policy. Information is prepared on Farsi, Arabic, Pashto, English and Croatian language.

**g) Other.**

### 9.13. Other vulnerable groups applying for asylum

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures at national level in relation to other vulnerable groups<sup>9</sup> **applying for asylum**, such as minors, disabled people, elderly people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation, following the specific areas below:

**a) Measures clarifying the definition of vulnerable groups;**

Categories of vulnerable groups are defined in the Act on International and Temporary protection. Obligation on identification persons with special needs arises from the moment of making application for international protection. Identification is understood as continuous procedure.

**b) Special reception facilities for vulnerable groups;**

<sup>9</sup> Not including victims of human trafficking, as this is covered in Section 7.

Croatia established Reception Centre with capacity of 100 beds specially designed for vulnerable persons. Reception Centre is located in Kutina town.

**c) Identification mechanisms/referrals;**

First step in the identification process are police officers while the person is making an application. Upon arrival in the Reception Centre applicants are obliged to undergo a medical examination done by the medical team. In case of persons with the special needs they will be referred to a specialist doctor or provided with psychological support.

**d) Applicable procedural safeguards;**

Persons with special reception needs were provided with adequate accommodation regarding of e.g. type of bed, single room, adequate food.

**e) Other.**

**9.14. Unaccompanied minors NOT applying for asylum**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures in relation to unaccompanied minors (UAMs) **NOT** applying for asylum at national level, following the specific areas below:

- a) Increase/Decrease of Human resources and/or training of staff;
- b) Improvement of protection and care of UAMs;
- c) Legal guardianship and foster care;
- d) Age assessment;
- e) Procedural Safeguards;
- f) Provision of information (info material, e.g. videos, leaflets, booklets etc.);
- g) Other.

In 2017, the Croatian Border Police Directorate actively participated in the work of the interagency Working group in charge of drafting the Protocol on proceedings with the unaccompanied children – foreign nationals, established in the end of 2016. The amendments of the Law of Foreigners include the age assessment, which will be further elaborated by the Protocol on proceedings with unaccompanied children.

The Croatian Border Police Directorate also participated in different projects in cooperation with NGOs concerning children migrants and refugees.

**9.15. Other vulnerable groups NOT applying for asylum**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures in relation to other vulnerable groups **NOT** applying for asylum (such as minors, disabled people, elderly people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation) at national level, following the specific areas below:

- a) Measures clarifying the definition of vulnerable groups;
- b) Special reception facilities for vulnerable groups;
- c) Identification mechanisms/referrals;
- e) Applicable procedural safeguards;
- f) Others.

The amendments of the Law on Foreigners enlarge the definition of vulnerable groups and enable free legal assistance (advisory) for all vulnerable groups. The definition was enlarged in accordance with the Law on International and Temporary Protection. All return-related decisions are brought on the basis of individual assessments in accordance with the principle of proportion.

### 3. INTEGRATION

#### Integration of third-country nationals

##### 9.15.1. Integration through socio-economic participation

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to facilitate integration of third-country nationals, through socio-economic participation. *Please note that this question is intended to capture generic integration policies. Measures targeting specific categories of third-country nationals are addressed in Section 4.2.*

The Government of the Republic of Croatia at its session held on 23rd November 2017 adopted the Action plan for integration of persons who have been granted international protection for the period from 2017 to 2019<sup>10</sup>.

In view of their particular vulnerability and the specific situation in which asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection find themselves, the measures from this Action Plan were aimed to a large extent at regulating the position and integrating precisely those categories of foreigners.

The Working Group for the operative implementation of the tasks of the permanent commission for implementation of the integration of foreigners into Croatian society defined strategic areas and measures to ensure optimal conditions for integration. State of play in the area of immigration policy has been taken into account, as well as the fact that Croatia is participating in European programme of relocation and resettlement of third country nationals or persons without citizenship, who meet the requirements for approval of international protection.

Planned measures include several strategic areas: social welfare and health care, accommodation and housing, language learning and education, employment, international cooperation, interdepartmental cooperation and sensitization of the public and professionals to persons who have been granted international protection.

#### **a) Measures to improve attainment in the education system;**

Planned measures include:

- in the shortest time period to include children and young people in the education system at all levels (pre-school, elementary and high school, higher education) (continuously),
- to enable people who have been granted international protection, and who have enrolled in institutions of higher education in the RC, to apply for student accommodation and state scholarships for students with lower social and economic status, under the same conditions that apply to citizens of the RC (continuously),
- adjust the IT system for enrolment in institutions of higher education for persons who have been granted international protection-time frame December 2017,
- ensure recognition of educational qualifications and competences acquired previously by persons who (due to the crisis and unsafe situation in their country of origin) are not able to obtain their diplomas and other documents to confirm their previous level of education-(continuously),
- to enable persons older than 15 years who did not have the opportunity to complete their education in their own countries, to finish elementary or high school education free of charge within the adult education system-(continuously),

<sup>10</sup> <https://ljudskaprava.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//dokumenti//AKCIJSKI%20PLAN%20ZA%20INTEGRACIJU%202017-2019.pdf>

- to provide persons older than 15 year with free retraining and training to improve their social inclusion and entry onto the labour market -(continuously),
- to inform educational establishments, institutions of higher education and adult education of the rights and obligations of persons who have been granted international protection-(continuously),
- to conduct professional training and provide support to educational and adult education staff for inclusion of children and young people in the education system, and adults in the adult education system -(continuously),
- to strengthen the partnership of civil society organizations and educational and training establishments in implementation of projects for intercultural education and education in civic and human values-(continuously).

**b) Measures to enhance language skills;**

It is especially important to provide support and professional training to educational workers, to continually promote education and training in tolerance of people who have been granted international protection, to conduct civic education and training, and to encourage cooperation with civil associations who run a variety of projects for inter-cultural education and education in civic and human values. The Ministry of Science and Education, in the coming period, planned to use resources from European Funds in order to provide the best opportunities to people who have been granted international protection, and for further training of teaching staff.

Planned measures include:

- provide classes in Croatian language, history and culture in all cities where persons who have been granted international protection are accommodated immediately after receiving international protection (continuously),
- to ensure the implementation of preparatory and supplementary classes for elementary and high school pupils who do not speak Croatian or who do not speak it sufficiently well (continuously),
- to enable people who have been granted international protection, and who have enrolled in institutions of higher education in the RC, to apply for student accommodation and state scholarships for students with lower social and economic status, under the same conditions that apply to citizens,
- adjust the IT system for enrolment in institutions of higher education for persons who have been granted international protection (in December 2017),
- ensure recognition of educational qualifications and competences acquired previously by persons who (due to the crisis and unsafe situation in their country of origin) are not able to obtain their diplomas and other documents to confirm their previous level of education (continuously),
- to enable persons older than 15 years who did not have the opportunity to complete their education in their own countries, to finish elementary or high school education free of charge within the adult education system,
- to provide persons older than 15 year with free retraining and training to improve their social inclusion and entry onto the labour market,
- to inform educational establishments, institutions of higher education and adult education of the rights and obligations of persons who have been granted international protection and conduct

professional training and provide support to educational and adult education staff for inclusion of children and young people in the education system, and adults in the adult education system,

- to strengthen the partnership of civil society organizations and educational and training establishments in implementation of projects for intercultural education and education in civic and human values.

Also, in 2017 the Ministry of Science and Education concluded the contracts with the institutions in Zagreb, Velika Gorica, Kutina, and Crikvenica regarding the implementation of Croatian language, history and culture learning Program for asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection to be included into Croatian society.

**c) Access to social security, healthcare and housing;**

In order to provide persons who have been granted international protection with the appropriate assistance and support in the area of social welfare and health care and ease the situation in which they find themselves, it will be necessary to acquaint them in an appropriate manner with the environment and society in which they now live, from a cultural, historical and economic point of view. In this context, it is necessary to overcome all language barriers and acquaint them with all the rights they may exercise on the basis of their status in the Republic of Croatia. It is particularly important to provide them with the appropriate health care and psychological assistance and support, especially for vulnerable groups of foreigners, and this support must be sensitive in terms of cultural and religious aspects.

In order to provide appropriate accommodation for people who have been granted international protection, it will be important to continually develop and strengthen the cooperation of all competent bodies, especially the Ministry of Demographics, the Family, Youth and Social Policy, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health, with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups and acceptance of people with serious health problems.

Planned measures in this areas include:

- educational presentations in reception centres for asylum seekers on the rights of persons who have been granted international protection, and the traditions, culture and cultural norms of the Republic of Croatia (continuously),

- thematic and educational workshops and counselling on the rights and obligations of persons who have been granted international protection, for the purpose of their integration into the Republic of Croatia, (continuously),

- appointment of experts responsible for realization of the rights of persons who have been granted international protection in the social welfare system , time frame in 2017,

- to undertake activities aimed at raising the quality of life of persons who have been granted international protection (continuously),

- to send a recommendation to meal centres to provide food appropriate for the cultural and religious convictions of foreigners and persons who have been granted international protection (continuously),

- informing people who have been granted international protection about using health care services pursuant to the Act on Mandatory Health Care and Health Care of Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia(continuously),

- systematic provision of information (on a monthly basis) to health care workers on the framework of rights under the Act on Mandatory Health Insurance and Health Care of

Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia, for persons who have been granted international protection-in December 2017,

- to adjust the IT system (CEZIH) for the more efficient definition of the manner and procedures for exercising rights to health care by persons who have been granted international protection-in December 2017,

- Provision of mediation and chaperones in health care institutions for persons who have been granted international protection, to ease their understanding of the scope of their work, and overcome language and cultural barriers (continuously),

- monitoring the implementation of the exercise of rights by persons who have been granted international protection prescribed by the Act on Mandatory Health Insurance and Health Care of Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia(continuously),

- the adoption of the Act on Amendments and Supplements to the Act on International and Temporary Protection, which will define the competence of the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing, and this also relates to provision of housing units to persons who have been granted international protection-Act came into force in January 2018.

- active cooperation between the Ministry of Demographics, the Family, Youth and Social Policy and the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing, in order to provide housing urgently to accommodate persons who have been granted international protection (continuously),

- active cooperation with the Ministry of State Property in order to continue to provide accommodation owned by the Republic of Croatia (activities related to equipping and adaptation of flats owned by the Republic of Croatia) (continuously),

- publication of a Public Call for Tenders for Lease of furnished flats or houses pursuant to the Relocation Plan and pursuant to decisions by the Ministry of the Interior to grant international protection, or by making use of offers in the press and electronic media in cases when there is an insufficient number of housing units, (continuously),

- drawing up and keeping records of persons who are exercising the right to accommodation (continuously),

- employment of the optimum number of staff in the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing to work on providing accommodation for persons who have been granted international protection,

Measures planned for 2018 and 2019:

- send a recommendation to units of local and regional self-government for their Decisions on Social Welfare to cover persons who have been granted international protection.

Also, in 2017 the amendments to the Law on obligatory health insurance and health care for foreigners in the Republic of Croatia were initiated to tackle the problems that persons granted international protection face in everyday life.

#### **d) Integration into the labour market.**

The successful integration of persons who have been granted international protection is only possible if they are enabled to become the part of labour market. The first step is to establish the level of knowledge of the Croatian language. In that context, the Croatian Employment Service will cooperate with the Ministry of Science and Education in order to select language learning programmes according to the needs of the job the person who has been granted international

protection is looking for. For job-seekers, it is necessary to identify the barriers to their integration into the labour market, and encourage them to focus on the competences which will most quickly lead to employment, i.e. drawing up a job profile through an interview and counselling, and a job seeking plan, the realization of which should be monitored by the appointed employment counsellor.

Planned measures include:

- during individual counselling in the Croatian Employment Service (CES) to activate, motivate and guide people who have been granted international protection to take a Croatian language course (continuously),
- to inform persons who have been granted international protection about their rights and obligations within the employment system (continuously),
- counselling and professional orientation of persons who have been granted international protection (continuously),
- to educate the staff of the Croatian Employment Service, as part of their regular training, about the needs and rights of persons who have been granted international protection(continuously),
- inclusion of persons who have been granted international protection in active employment policies(continuously),
- to draw up a professional plan of work, taking into consideration the person's qualifications and their previous work experience, and the needs of the labour market, and plan possible further education of the person who has been granted international protection(continuously),
- on the basis of the established needs for education, to finance the education of unemployed persons who have been granted international protection (continuously).

### **9.15.2. Integration through civic participation**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to promote the integration of third-country nationals through civic participation: rights and obligations and belonging. For instance, consider measures to increase the participation of third country nationals' representatives (including women) in the design and implementation of integration policies; outreach programmes and work placements to build capacity within migrant organisations and encourage support at local level; and measures to enhance democratic participation, for example, training mentors etc.

The integration of persons who have been granted international protection is a process that requires the active involvement of all the competent bodies of state administration, but also bodies of units of local and regional self-government, in provision of support and assistance to all people in the field of employment, health care, housing, education, learning the Croatian language, and all the other rights all the other citizens of this country exercise. Here it is of great importance to establish and systematically strengthen cooperation between all these bodies, and civil society organizations, international organizations and religious institutions, who regularly work in the field of protection and promotion of the rights of person who have been granted international protection.

Since it may be expected that due to the possible new migration trends, prejudice against persons who have been granted international protection may increase, it is important to work to raise awareness of these matters and the various aspects of the post-migration process, through provision of information and sensitization of the public and state and public officials to the presence and rights of various categories of foreigners in Croatia. It is necessary to act both preventively and pro-actively in order to make a real legal and social framework possible for inter-cultural dialogue and integration of foreigners into Croatian society. From this, the need

arises to create and conduct campaigns to sensitize the public to the need to welcome people who have been granted international protection into Croatian society.

Measures under new Action plan for integration of persons who have been granted international protection for the period from 2017 to 2019 also include:

- a public campaign on a national level aimed at sensitizing the public and reducing social prejudice,
- to provide translation services for persons who have been granted international protection, in exercising their rights in the social welfare and health care systems, education, housing and employment,
- amendments and supplements to and printing of a Guide for the Integration of Foreigners, and its translation into the necessary languages,
- creation, printing and translation of a catalogue of rights and services prescribed for persons who have been granted international protection planned to take place in 2018 and 2019,
- creation of a new implementation framework for integration policies on a local level Responsible,
- creation of a Protocol on procedures in relation to persons who have been granted international protection,
- adoption of a Relocation Plan once a year, in line with the established needs of persons who have been granted international protection.

#### 9.16. Promoting integration of specific categories of third-country nationals

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures specifically targeted to facilitate integration of specific categories of third-country nationals, such as beneficiaries of international protection, family migrants, etc.

Please see the answer to q. 4.1.1. since the new Action plan for integration for the period from 2017 to 2019 is aimed at persons who have been granted international protection.

#### 9.17. Non-discrimination

Please describe any *new or planned* relevant activity, legal or policy development and related actors that concern promotion, implementation and monitoring of non-discrimination policies, in particular on grounds of ethnicity, race or others that would be particularly relevant for third-country nationals. Specifically mention any measures beyond those introduced through the transposition and implementation of EU legislation.<sup>11</sup>

At its session held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on adoption of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan for the period 2017-2022 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan for the period 2017 to 2019.

National Plan for Combating Discrimination is a strategic document that sets out the priorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, proposes targets and directs its efforts to build a

<sup>11</sup> European non-discrimination law, as constituted by the EU non-discrimination directives (Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directive), and Article 14 of and Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, prohibits discrimination across a range of contexts and a range of grounds.

comprehensive system of protection against discrimination in the Republic of Croatia for a six-year period, while the Action Plan for implementation of the National Plan for the fight against discrimination for the period 2017-2019 presents a following operational document that sets out specific measures for the implementation of the National Plan for the first three years.

76 measures were planned in the field of work and employment, education and science, social welfare and family matters, health insurance, housing, public information and media.

In order to monitor the implementation of the National Anti-Discrimination Plan 2017 to 2022, a Working Group is to be set up to monitor the implementation of the National Plan and report to the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

### **9.18. Promoting integration at local level and cooperation, consultation and coordination of local stakeholders**

Please describe new or planned relevant activities by national, regional and/or local governments on the integration of third-country nationals involving the active participation of local authorities and/or civil society. Measures might include activities addressing integration challenges in disadvantaged urban areas; improving multi-level cooperation between different levels of governance (e.g. national, regional, local government); granting voting rights in local elections.

In line with the Action plan for integration of persons who have been granted international protection for the period from 2017 to 2019, planned measures to ensure the requirements are met for life and co-existence in the local community include:

- recommendation to units of local and regional self-government for their Decisions on Social Welfare to cover persons who have been granted international protection, recommendation to meal centers to provide food appropriate for the cultural and religious convictions of foreigners and persons who have been granted international protection, strengthen the partnership of civil society organizations and educational and training establishments in implementation of projects for intercultural education and education in civic and human values, establishment of a network of contact persons for realization of the rights of persons who have been granted international protection on a local level, creation of a new implementation framework for integration policies on a local level.

As part of the IPA 2012 "Support for Migration Integration Policy Support" project, the Framework for integration of persons with international protection at local level was developed. The aim of this Framework is to provide specific guidance to local self-government units on the basis of which they will, if necessary, prepare their documents relating to the integration of persons who have been granted international protection.

### **9.19. Awareness raising on migration in the hosting (Member) State**

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures aimed at raising awareness / engaging the receiving community within the (Member) State in order to enhance its understanding of the phenomenon of migration and thereby promote integration and social cohesion (information campaigns, websites, etc.).

It is important to work to raise awareness and the various aspects of the post-migration process, through provision of information and sensitization of the public and state and public officials to the presence and rights of various categories of foreigners in Croatia. It is necessary to act both preventively and pro-actively in order to make a real legal and social framework possible for inter-cultural dialogue and integration of foreigners into Croatian society. From this, the need

arises to create and conduct campaigns to sensitize the public to the need to welcome people who have been granted international protection into Croatian society

In line with the Action plan for integration of persons who have been granted international protection for the period from 2017 to 2019, planned measures to ensure the phenomenon of migration and thereby promote integration and social cohesion include:

- public campaign on a national level aimed at sensitizing the public and reducing social prejudice (media campaigns (TV, radio, internet), research activities, public events (panel discussions, round tables), workshops aimed at children and young people, coordination activities), education of professional staff in social welfare, health care, the police, the labour market, education and the civil sector, who are directly involved in providing assistance and protection to persons who have been granted international protection, education of professional staff in the social welfare system allocated to work with persons who have been granted international protection, to acquire new knowledge and skills to contribute to more effective work, support for projects which affirm cultural and artistic creativity of foreigners on an amateur and a professional level, support to partner programmes of civil society organizations in nurturing and promoting diversity of cultural expression.

## 9.20. Integration measures involving countries of origin and/or diaspora communities

### 9.20.1. Pre-departure integration measures in countries of origin

Please describe any new or planned pre-departure policies / measures taking place in the countries of origin of third-country nationals to prepare for their integration after arrival. For example, language training, vocational training, recognition of qualifications and skills.

No new developments in 2017.

### 9.20.2. Integration measures involving the diaspora communities in Member States

Please describe new or planned integration policies / measures involving the diaspora communities in your Member State (as a host country). For example, activities either organised by public authorities or by diaspora communities with the government's support, to promote cultural awareness and/or integration activities for particular diaspora communities.

No new developments in 2017.

#### 4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION

##### 9.21. Enhanced border management at the external borders

###### 9.21.1. *Border control measures/management*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures in relation to border control measures/management implemented during 2017

**NB:** This question only pertains to measures taken at the external border.

No new developments in 2017.

###### 9.21.2. *Activities to improve the effectiveness of controls at external borders*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to ensure more effective control of the external borders, such as reinforcing border control staff, providing training, increasing overall resources, introducing action plans or protocols, etc.

Border police in 2018 continue to equip border crossings with the aim of increasing the security of external borders. For this purpose, border crossings will be additionally equipped with the technical equipment, video surveillance systems as well as improved IT solutions within the National Information System for State Border Management. In addition, in 2018, completion of the new border crossings will be finalised and the relocation of border police staff to new buildings is planned.

In the area of border police training, in 2018, training of border police officers related to risk analysis is planned through the following programs:

- Risk Analysis for Border Police Multipliers - Analytical Products,
- Risk Analysis for Border Police - Analytical Products,

and new training programs planned are:

- Additional training on the use of the National Information System for State Border Management,
- Training of police officers, use of coercive means (for police officers working at reception centres for foreigners),
- Training of police officers in the prevention of contagious diseases, use of protective measures and equipment (for police officers working in reception centres for foreigners).

It should also be emphasized that this year, many training courses for border police, which do not carry field multipliers, will be deployed outside the Police Academy, to the instructive and training centres so that the practical part of the training can be realized directly in the field, in the "natural" environment of the border police, which will also contribute to a better focus on practical problems.

The Risk Management Board updates and implements Enhanced Monitoring Plans for Prevention of Illegal Migration.

Given the security situation regarding the inflow of illegal migrants, at the end of November 2017, plans for the Prevention of Illegal Migration to the Republic of Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been updated.

The plans include, among other things, 3 scenarios in the case of attempted illegal crossing of the state border (case I up to 1000 per day, case II of 1000 to 3000 per day and case III above 3000 per day) and 3 zones of treatment. The first zone covers all activities on the immediate state border, the second zone covers all the activities carried out by the Police Directorate on its own territory, the third zone involves dealing in the depth of the territory of the Republic of Croatia actively involving the Police Directorate in all directions leading from the state border to the interior.

#### Border with the Republic of Serbia

For the effective control of illegal migrants at the Police Directorate in Vukovar-Srijem, through the ISF fund, 12 stationary thermos-vision systems with radar have been purchased and used to monitor and control the state of the border with the Republic of Serbia.

In addition to the mentioned stationary thermos-vision system, the PU of Vukovar-Srijem also has 39 thermo-vision devices which are further used for the purpose of effective detection and control of illegal migration at the state border towards the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Furthermore, due to the current situation, the Vukovar-Srijem Police Directorate, through the ten-day rotation of the staff, has constantly been strengthened with 120 police officers, assisted by other police administrations. Also in order to ensure better visibility of the area along the state border and to improve the reaction speed in the area of the eastern border, 164 km of canal network has been cleared.

In order to strengthen the supervision of the joint state border and maintain a favorable state of security, i.e. the prevention of illegal migration and all forms of cross-border crime, representatives of the Croatian and Serbian Border Police are in accordance with the Protocol between the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia, Police Directorate and Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia, mixed patrols along the common state border, developed and agreed on a common curriculum, education and places for conducting mixed patrols.

There are 48 police officers of the border police, 24 of them on each side who will participate in the implementation of mixed patrols on the common state border of the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia.

#### The border with Bosnia and Herzegovina

At the beginning of January 2018, migration wave was redirected, due to the change of part of the route from Greece to Albania, and the Balkan migrant route through Bosnia and Herzegovina. In connection with the aforementioned, on February 5, 2017, by the Border Management Board instructions the Risk analysis has been developed analysing increased pressure of illegal migrants on the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Due to the raising of the level of protection of the state border, the cooperation of all lines of police work as well as cooperation with the border police of Bosnia and Herzegovina was intensified in order to plan and take timely joint measures and actions related to the smuggling of persons and illegal migrations. In addition to these activities, members of the border police of the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of combating illegal migration and the prevention of cross-border crime are carrying out a Protocol on the implementation of daily mixed patrols.

Regarding the establishment of technical supervision of the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina, the process is to determine strategic positions. Also in the phase of preparation of project documentation for the procurement process of vehicles with built-in thermos-vision control systems and procurement process of fixed wings drones medium ranges.

**9.21.3. Preventing and combatting irregular immigration by ensuring reinforced cooperation with third countries in the area of border management.**

Please list any 2017 or planned agreements, and other forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with third countries with an objective to strengthen the operational capacity in combatting irregular migration and controlling of external borders.

Title of agreement (where relevant)	Third country (countries) with whom the cooperation exists	Description (e.g. provision of border equipment, training of border guards, etc.)

*If information is available, please describe any evidence of the effectiveness of these measures*

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22. Preventing and tackling of misuse of legal migration channels**

**9.22.1. Irregular migration as a result of visa liberalisation**

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures introduced to prevent irregular migration as a result of visa liberalisation.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.1.1. Effects of visa free regimes**

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures introduced to monitor the effects of visa free regimes in your (Member) State.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.1.2. Key findings of monitoring activities**

Please describe the results/key findings of these monitoring activities – especially in relation to impact on the number unfounded asylum applications registered in your (Member) State.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.2. Irregular migration as a result of misuse of legal migration channels**

**9.22.2.1. Misuse of legal migration channels by third-country national workers**

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures to tackle misuse of legal migration channels by **third-country national workers**.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.2.2. Misuse of legal migration channels by third-country national students and researchers**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to tackle misuse of legal migration channels by third-country national students and researchers.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.2.3. Misuse of family reunification migration channels**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to tackle misuse of family reunification migration channels.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.3. False travel documents**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to prevent, identify and/or investigate fraudulent acquisition and use of false travel documents.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.22.4. Irregular migration caused by the misuse of free movement rights by third-country nationals and preventing the fraudulent acquisition and use of free movement rights by third-country nationals**

Please describe any *new* activities implemented during 2017 to prevent the fraud and misuse of free movement rights.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.23. The fight against facilitation of irregular migration ('smuggling') and prevention of irregular stay**

**9.23.1. Combatting facilitation of irregular migration (smuggling)**

Please provide information on any *new or planned* policies / measures aimed at preventing and combatting facilitation of irregular migration (smuggling), including facilitation of unauthorised entry.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.23.2. Prevention of irregular migration**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures responding to the objective of prevention of irregular migration (for example, through unsafe routes) from third countries of origin and transit (information campaigns, websites, projects with grass-roots NGOs or involving the diaspora, etc., with the exception of cooperation activities with third countries to be reported in section 5.3.4).

No new developments in 2017.

**9.23.3. Prevention of irregular stay**

Please provide information on any *new or planned* policies / measures aimed at preventing and combatting facilitation of irregular stay, including disincentives and sanctions.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.23.4. Cooperation with third countries to prevent irregular migration:**

Please describe any specific cooperation activities developed in 2017 in your (Member) State to prevent irregular migration in relation to the specific regions outlined below:

- a) the Western and Southern Mediterranean countries (i.e. Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania Palestine\*, Syria and Tunisia);

No new developments in 2017.

- b) the Eastern Partnership countries (i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine);

No new developments in 2017.

- c) the Western Balkans countries (i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia);

No new developments in 2017.

- d) Countries in the African Atlantic coast (e.g. Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast etc.).

No new developments in 2017.

**9.23.5. Monitoring and identifying irregular migration routes**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to identify, monitor and aggregate information on irregular migration routes and please explain how is this information used to develop your (Member) State's response to migratory flows?

No new developments in 2017.

## 5. RETURN

### 9.24. Enhancing return migration management including cooperation among EU Member States on return practices

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SECTION 6.1 OF THE SYNTHESIS REPORT WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING

**9.24.1. Summary of the EMN REG return and reintegration activities developed during 2017 (To be drafted by the EMN Service Provider)**

**9.24.2. Summary of the Frontex Return Implementation Framework, including Joint Return Operations (JTOs) (To be provided by Frontex)**

**9.24.3. Maximising the potential of a common EU approach in the field of return, both voluntary and forced in compliance with existing EU acquis (To be drafted by COM)**

### 9.25. Main national developments in the field of return

#### 9.25.1. *Swift, sustainable and effective return*

##### 9.25.1.1. *Overarching policy developments in the area of return*

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures to develop swift, sustainable and effective return.

The amendments of the Act on Foreigners have completely incorporated the Article 2. paragraph 2A of the Return Directive. The planned Rule on Proceedings with Foreigners will elaborate in detail the procedures with foreigners mentioned in that article and paragraph.

##### 9.25.1.2. *Issuing Return decisions*

Please describe and new or planned policies / measures with regard to issuing return decisions.

Return decisions forms will be issued in more languages.

##### 9.25.1.3. *Issuing Entry bans*

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures with regard to issuing entry bans.

According to the amendments of the Act on Foreigners, entry ban is valid for the whole EEA.

##### 9.25.1.4. *(Assisted) voluntary return*

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures with regard to (assisted) voluntary return.

In 2017 public tender was announced for assisted voluntary return.

##### 9.25.1.5. *Use of (alternatives for) detention in return procedures*

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures with regard to the use of detention and alternatives to detention in return procedures.

In the framework of AMIF the draft Project has been made.

**9.25.1.6. Recording of entry bans in the SIS and exchange of information**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures with regard to recording entry bans in the SIS and facilitating the exchange of information on entry bans.<sup>12</sup>

No new developments in 2017.

**9.25.1.7. Operation of national forced return monitoring system**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures with regard to the operation of the national forced return monitoring system (established in accordance with Article 8 (6) of the Return Directive).<sup>13</sup>

National forced return monitoring system is functional (in cooperation with the Croatian Legal Centre).

**9.25.1.8. Other actions related to swift, sustainable and effective return**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures related to the field of return not covered above.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.25.2. Return of rejected asylum seekers**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding the **return of rejected asylum applicants** (including measures in relation to reception measures and supports, (alternatives) to detention, etc.). Please specify if there are any specific measures for unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups<sup>14</sup>.

New Standard operating procedures have been issued concerning all asylum applicants, including the rejected asylum applicants.

**9.25.3. Return of irregular migrants**

Please describe *any new or planned* policies / measures to ensure the accelerated and swift return of persons, to be overstaying permissions to stay or otherwise misusing legal migration channels. Please specify if there are any specific measures for unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.25.4. Evidence of the effectiveness of the measures to ensure return**

Please provide information regarding the effectiveness of the above-mentioned measures in ensuring return.

In 2017, 3107 return decisions were issued and 1025 were enforced.

<sup>12</sup> This category of measure relates to the commitments of the Stockholm Programme specifically.

<sup>13</sup> Directive 2008/115/EC

<sup>14</sup> This group includes minors, disabled people, elderly people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation.

### 9.26. Strengthening cooperation with third countries of origin and transit on return and reintegration management

#### 9.26.1. *Involvement of third countries in return measures*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures regarding return activities implemented – or to be implemented- in cooperation with third countries:

No new developments in 2017.

#### 9.26.2. *Ensuring implementation of all EU readmission agreements to their full effect<sup>15</sup>*

Please report on activities undertaken to support the implementation of EU readmission agreements (implementing protocols, cooperation (including diplomatic pressure) with third countries to encourage implementation) by completing the table and providing any additional relevant information in the box below:

EU Readmission agreement (country)	National development (i.e. implementing protocol, cooperation)	Date of agreement (if relevant)
Russia	On 18 October 2017 Implementing Protocol of the EU-Russia Agreement on Readmission was signed in Moscow between the Croatian Government and the Government of the Russian Federation.	18/10/2017

#### 9.26.3. *Reintegration measures implemented in cooperation with third countries, e.g. countries of origin.*

*Measures to support return may include developing a rights-based framework for re-integration and for temporary and circular migration.*

Please describe any *new or planned* measures regarding **reintegration activities** implemented – or to be implemented- in cooperation with countries of origin.

<sup>15</sup> Norway is invited to report on any National agreements in place.

## 6. ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

*This Section should be completed in the context of the "EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016)"<sup>16</sup> and you should liaise with your National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings or Equivalent Mechanism (NREMs).*

Please note that the scope of this section refers only to third-country national victims of trafficking.

*NREMs share information with the Commission (via the informal EU Network of NREMs) on a biannual basis on developments relevant to their national legal and policy framework. This information can be used for this reporting exercise too. All information is uploaded accordingly to the EU Anti-Trafficking Website under the section of national pages.<sup>17</sup>*

### 9.27. National strategic policy developments

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures regarding the prevention and/or the fight against trafficking in human beings of third-country nationals (e.g. national action plans or national strategies introduced during 2017)

National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for period 2018- 2021 has been drafted. It is expected for the National plan to be finished in 2018.

During 2017 to reinforce the national system three protocols have been developed:

- Protocol for identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings;
- Protocol on integration/reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings;
- Protocol on treatment in voluntary return of victims of trafficking in human beings.

### 9.28. Improving identification of and provision of information to third-country national victims of human trafficking

#### 9.28.1. Provision of information on assistance and support to third-country national victims

Please describe any new or planned policies / measures for the improvement of **provision of information on assistance and support to third-country national victims (including child victims and applicants for asylum)**. Please describe the information according to:

#### a) Legislative changes/policies;

No changes.

#### b) Training and awareness raising measures;

No new developments in 2017.

#### c) Measures on cooperation between national authorities;

With purpose of public sensitivity on trafficking in human beings issues as well as prevention of trafficking, SOS telephone line (0800 7799) is operational. The purpose of the SOS is for the civilians to seek information or report doubt on trafficking.

#### d) Measures on cooperation between (Member) States.

<sup>16</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/>

<sup>17</sup> [\\_http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/member-states-0\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/member-states-0_en)

Nothing to report.

### 9.28.2. *Identification of victims*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures for the improvement of **the identification of victims (including child victims and applicants for asylum)**. Please describe the information according to:

#### a) **Legislative changes/policies;**

Protocol for identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings has been developed.

#### b) **Training and awareness raising measures;**

During 2017, 18 employees of Department for Asylum together with 6 employees of Reception Centre and Croatian Red Cross were trained on identification of victims of trafficking in human beings.

#### c) **Measures on cooperation between national authorities;**

Several projects have been conducted with purpose of provision of education and information on victims of trafficking in human beings with focus on civilians and police officers to be informed and trained (Project "Together"). Additional project "I have a choice" was conducted having been focused on education of school children and their teachers on trafficking. During 2017, 50 children participated in the workshops. Additional project named "Stop to trafficking," also conducted with school population targeted 540 pupils.

#### d) **Measures on cooperation between (Member) States.**

International festival called "Blue Carpet" was organized in Zagreb as a joint project with German region Baden- Wurttemberg. Festival was carried out in cinema "Europa" in Zagreb in duration of 4 days. Every day was dedicated to one special subject and the last day of the festival was dedicated to trafficking issue.

### 9.28.3. *Cooperation with third countries*

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures involving cooperation with third-countries on the prevention and fight against trafficking in human beings.

#### a) **Training and capacity building measures;**

Nothing to report.

#### b) **Joint investigation teams;**

Nothing to report.

#### c) **Information and prevention campaigns.**

Nothing to report.

**7. MAXIMISING DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY****9.29. Progress towards mainstreaming migration in development policies**

Please describe any *new or planned* relevant activity to mainstream migration in development policies. For example: studies, development of approaches to make migration an integral part in sectoral policies (e.g. agriculture, health, education etc.), solidarity development projects, etc.

The Republic of Croatia in 2017 contributed 200,000 EUR towards the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, created to fund projects addressing the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration and composed by three windows: the North Africa window, the Sahel and Lake Chad window and the Horn of Africa window.

In September 2017, the representative of MOI participated in the Ministerial Conferences of the Brdo Process (Slovenia), a sub regional process in the field of migration, mobility, fight against terrorism, illegal migration and organized crime, that brings together Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania.

**9.29.1. Cooperation with partner / third countries for economic migration**

Please note that this section will be completed with an updated overview on the (Member) States' involvement in EU Mobility Partnerships, provided by the European Commission.

In addition to the EU Mobility Partnerships, please indicate if your (Member) State has planned or implemented bilateral agreements linked to economic migration (including circular migration) during the reporting period (2017)

Nothing to report.

**9.29.2. Efforts to mitigate 'brain drain'**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures to mitigate brain drain. For example: awareness rising actions, development of data and indicators on this phenomenon, prevention, list of countries and professions subject to brain drain.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.30. Migrants' Remittances**

Please describe any *new or planned* policies / measures with regard to remittances. For example measures to facilitate remittance flows or improve access to banking and financial services in developing countries.

No new developments in 2017.

**9.31. Working with Diasporas**

Please provide information on *new or planned* policies / measures for involving third-country diaspora groups in development initiatives and supporting third-country diaspora groups in their efforts to enhance development in their countries of origin. Including for example:

In 2017 legislative changes were introduced by amending the Foreigners Act to allow for Croats Abroad to facilitate their stay and work in the Republic of Croatia.

State Office for Croats Abroad, established to improve relations with Croatian nationals worldwide through connecting the domestic educational and scientific institutions and individuals with the Croatian associations, institutions and individuals outside the Republic of Croatia in order to enhance the mutual cooperation and utilization of the potentials of the Croatian scientists and experts. The office in 2017 provided numerous initiatives to support relations with the Croatians outside the Republic of Croatia.

In 2017, G2.3 conference was held in Zagreb, aimed at connecting the business people of Croatia's origin abroad with the business people from Croatia.

First international conference "Immigration Tourism - National and Global Perspective" was organized in June/July 2017 in Zadar, under the auspices of the State Office for Croats Abroad, Ministry of tourism and the City of Zadar in cooperation with the Croatian Emigrants' Institute for Migration, Institute for Social Sciences Ivo Pilar and Centre for Culture and Information Maksimir. The aim of the conference was to bring together scientists and tourists from different countries of the world, in particular the Mediterranean, with the aim to exchange experience from their countries, and cooperation in development and access to emigrant tourism.

State Office and the University of Zagreb, promoting the care for Croats outside the Republic of Croatia, concluded a Cooperation agreement and mutual understanding of the improvement of relations between the Republic Croatia with Croats outside the Republic of Croatia in the field of education and science.

The agreement provides for the promotion of the preservation, strengthening and development of educational and scientific progress of Croats in Croatia and Croats outside Croatia, and provides an opportunity for achieving stronger cooperation between the Republic of Croatia and Croats outside the Republic of Croatia in the field of education and science. The Agreement includes, inter alia, the development of study programs aimed at the integration and strengthening of Croat community outside of Croatia, promotion of scientific and research work on Croatian emigration, Croat minorities and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as on migration trends, and to design and support the student exchange projects.

In 2017, the initiative of the State Office in cooperation with Croaticum - Centre for Croatian as second and foreign language of the Faculty of humanities and social sciences of the University of Zagreb, have launched an e-course of the Croatian language at the A1 level, intended primarily for Croats outside Croatia, interested in learning the Croatian language.

In October 2017, the ceremony of awarding scholarships for learning Croatian language was organized in Split at the Centre for Croatian Studies. On that occasion, 15 participants received a scholarship for the winter semester, coming mostly from the South American countries.

In order to provide support for Croatian language and culture teaching, the State Office organized seminars and workshops in Canada in April 2017 for teachers and students. This event was organized at the invitation and in co-operation with the diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of Croatia, teachers of the Croatian language and Croatian parishes in Canada, and in cooperation with other competent institutions: The Ministry of Education and Science, the Education Agency and the Croatian Emigrant's Office.

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