

Franet National contribution to the Fundamental Rights Report 2022

CROATIA

Contractor's name:

Centre for Peace Studies, BaBe, Human Rights House Zagreb

Authors' name: Tea Dabić, Klara Horvat, Sandra Kasunić,
Sara Kekuš, Sara Lalić, Anja Mihajlović,
Cvijeta Senta

Disclaimer: This document was commissioned under contract by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) as background material for the project 'FRA Fundamental Rights Report 2022'. The information and views contained in the document do not necessarily reflect the views or the official position of the FRA. The document is made publicly available for transparency and information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice or legal opinion.

Contents

Franet country study: policy and legal highlights 2021	3
Chapter 1. Equality and non-discrimination.....	5
Chapter 2. Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance	6
Chapter 3. Roma equality and inclusion	9
Chapter 4. Asylum, visas, migration, borders and integration	17
Chapter 5. Information society, privacy and data protection	20
Chapter 6. Rights of the child	39
Chapter 7. Access to justice	43
Chapter 8. Developments in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	45

Policy and legal highlights 2021

Franet country study: policy and legal highlights 2021	
Issues in the fundamental rights institutional landscape	No developments in 2021
EU Charter of Fundamental Rights	<p>Majority of relevant stakeholders are still largely unfamiliar with the Charter, resulting in its rather low usage in adoption of national legislation, parliamentary debates and academia.</p> <p>The Constitutional Court cases referring to the Charter are also rare, however the Charter was given considerable attention in legal analysis of some cases and its provisions were directly used as the basis for argumentation.</p>
Equality and non-discrimination	The National Development Strategy until 2030 , outlining a long-term vision of Croatia's development and its investment priorities in the ten-year period, was adopted by the Parliament on 5 February 2021.
Racism, xenophobia & Roma integration	<p>The new National Plan for Protection and Promotion of Human Rights and Combating Discrimination 2021-2027 is drafted and waiting its adoption by the Government.</p> <p>Protocol on procedure in cases of hate crimes was adopted in April 2021, defining obligations of competent authorities involved in detection, handling and monitoring of hate crimes.</p> <p>On 23 June 2021, the Croatian Government adopted the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021 – 2027 and the corresponding 2021-2022 Action Plan.</p>
Asylum & migration	Advisory Group of Third-Country Nationals and Persons of Migrant Origin was set up in June 2021.
Data protection and digital society	<p>New Electronic Media Act was passed in October 2021 regulating, among others, the responsibility for illegal content published in electronic publications.</p> <p>Part of the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 adopted in October 2021 refers to the growing role of artificial intelligence.</p>
Rights of the child	Sexual abuse and exploitation of a child was included in the catalogue of offences of the Criminal Code with no limitation period for prosecution. Accordingly, the enforcement of penalties in such cases will also have no limitation period.
Access to justice, including victims of crime	<p>Amendment to the Criminal Code extended the meaning of the term "close persons" to also cover current or former partners in intimate relationships. This extension was transposed to the Act on Protection against Domestic Violence, amended in July 2021.</p> <p>Amendment to the Criminal Code incorporated the offence of misuse of sexually explicit content.</p>

Convention on
the Rights of
Persons with
Disability

The Proposal of the National Plan for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2027 and the **Draft proposal of the Social Welfare Act** were sent to public consultation after being put on hold the year before due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chapter 1. Equality and non-discrimination

1.1 Legal and policy developments or measures relevant to fostering equality and combating discrimination against EU citizens based on their nationality and against LGBTI people

The National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030, outlining a long-term vision of Croatia's development and its investment priorities in the ten-year period, was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 5 February 2021.¹

Promotion of equality and equal opportunities is a horizontal priority of the strategy, implying that all public policies and priorities, including acts of strategic planning arising from the strategy, will be implemented in order to foster equality and promote equal opportunities.

The Foreigners Act,² in force from 1 January 2021, does not list life partners and informal life partners as family members and thus they do not have equal rights as spouses and non-marital partners in terms of family members definition under Article 64. In a comparable situation this can result in denial of rights to life partners and informal life partners and, according to the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, represents discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. For example, a Croatian citizen was asked to prove means of subsistence for the purpose of family reunification with her life partner, a foreigner, only because life partners and informal life partners were left out of the definition of family members in Article 64 of the Foreigners Act. The citizen filed a discrimination complaint to the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality on this matter. The Ministry of the Interior did not accept the Ombudsperson's request, claiming that the new Foreigners Act entered into force on 1 January 2021, in which Article 70 stipulates that a life or informal life partner of a Croatian citizen does not have to prove secured means of subsistence. The Ombudsperson for Gender Equality will send a letter to the Ministry of the Interior asking for full harmonisation of rights by defining life partners as family members.

1.2 Findings and methodology of research, studies, or surveys on experiences of discrimination against EU citizens on the grounds of nationality and against LGBTI people

There was no research, studies, or surveys on experiences of discrimination against EU citizens on the grounds of nationality and against LGBTI people.

¹ Croatia, National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 ([Nacionalna razvojna strategija do 2030. godine](#)) (2021), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 13/21.

² Croatia, Foreigners Act ([Zakon o strancima](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 133/20.

Chapter 2. Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance

2.1 Findings and methodology of research, studies, or surveys on experiences of ethnic discrimination, racism and hate crime

There was no research, studies or surveys published in 2021.

The data on complaints filed to the Ombudsperson's Office in 2021 will be available in March 2022. Available data for 2020 rank national origin, race, ethnicity and skin colour as the discriminatory ground with the highest number of complaints (31).³ This is a decrease when compared to 2019⁴ number of cases reported to Ombudsperson's Office (42). When separated into two categories, national origin on one side and race, ethnicity and skin colour on the other, data shows that the national origin ground remained unchanged with 24 cases reported in 2019 and 25 cases in 2020. Significant decrease is visible in the reports on the discriminatory grounds of race, ethnicity and skin colour – from 18 cases in 2019 to six cases in 2020.

2.2 Legal and policy developments or measures relating to the application of the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia and the Racial Equality Directive

According to the Office for Human Rights, the Proposal of the National plan for protection and promotion of human rights and combating discrimination 2021–2027⁵ – drafted in 2021 but not yet adopted by the Croatian Government⁶ – includes a distinct objective related to prevention and suppression of racism, xenophobia and all forms of intolerance. The proposal was drafted in line with guidelines and recommendations of Union policies in the field of anti-

³ Croatia, Ombudsperson's Office (*Ured pučke pravobraniteljice*) (2021), Annual Ombudsman Report for 2020 ([Izvešće pučke pravobraniteljice za 2020. godinu](#)).

⁴ Croatia, Ombudsperson's Office (*Ured pučke pravobraniteljice*) (2020), Annual Ombudsman Report for 2019 ([Izvešće pučke pravobraniteljice za 2019. godinu](#)).

⁵ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), National Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights and Combating Discrimination for the period 2021–2027 ([Nacionalni plan zaštite i promicanja ljudskih prava i suzbijanja diskriminacije za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)).

⁶ The Proposal of the National plan for protection and promotion of human rights and combating discrimination 2021–2027 was submitted to the Government of the Republic of Croatia (Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, General Secretariat of the Government, and Office for Legislation) on 8 June 2021 for approval of the public consultation. The Office for Human Rights and the Rights of the National Minorities (the coordinator of the process) have not received any feedback yet. (Email correspondence with the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of the National Minorities, 17 November 2021).

discrimination, racism, xenophobia and all forms of intolerance, with special attention devoted to including recommendations of the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020–2025 in action plans accompanying the national plan.

In the context of combating racism and xenophobia, the substantive criminal law of the Republic of Croatia has been harmonised with the conventional law (the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination⁷ and Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime⁸) as well as with secondary sources of European Union law.

The introduction of the legal concept of individual victim assessment in the procedural legislation of the Republic of Croatia⁹ has enabled competent bodies to adopt an individual approach particularly towards the victims of hate crimes. The aim of the individual assessment of the victim is to determine whether there is a risk of secondary and repeated victimisation and of intimidation and retaliation during criminal proceedings. If it does, the individual assessment determines specific measures to be applied (special method of testing, use of communication technologies to avoid visual contact with the perpetrator and other measures prescribed by law).¹⁰

A system for monitoring and documenting discrimination-related and hate crime offences has been set in place. Forms for statistical monitoring of court cases related to discrimination and the grounds of discrimination are in use by the Ministry of Justice and Administration since 2013.¹¹ Forms for statistical monitoring of hate crime cases include three types of forms regarding the criminal or misdemeanour offence – for criminal offences these are: form for hate speech monitoring (criminal offences according to Article 325 of the Criminal Code) and form for hate crime monitoring (criminal offences according to Article 87(21) of the Criminal Code) and form for other misdemeanour offences motivated by hatred. All three forms are divided into two parts, the first part containing data on

⁷ United Nations (UN), [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), 21 December 1965.

⁸ Council of Europe, [Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems](#), 28 January 2003.

⁹ Croatia, [Criminal Procedure Code](#) (*Zakon o kaznenom postupku*), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 152/08, 76/09, 80/11, 121/11, 91/12, 143/12, 56/13, 145/13, 152/14, 70/17, 126/19, 126/19.

¹⁰ Croatia, Ordinance on the manner of conducting individual victim assessment ([Pravilnik o načinu provedbe pojedinačne procjene žrtve](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 106/17, 20 October 2017.

¹¹ Croatia, Forms for statistical monitoring of court cases related to discrimination and the grounds of discrimination ([Obrasci za statističko praćenje sudskih predmeta vezanih za diskriminaciju i osnove diskriminacije po kojima se ti postupci vode](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 151/13, 16 December 2013.

hate crimes for the current year and the second part containing data on cases transferred from the previous period.¹²

The Ministry of Justice and Public Administration regularly submits records and statistical data on court cases related to discrimination to the Ombudsperson's Office.

In 2021, the Office for Human Rights drafted and adopted the new Protocol on procedure in cases of hate crimes¹³, a non-normative act defining obligations of competent authorities involved in detection, handling and monitoring of results of processing hate crimes. The protocol also contains provisions regarding the composition and competence of the Hate Crimes Monitoring Working Group, the manner and content of cooperation among competent authorities involved in the detection, handling and monitoring of results of processing hate crimes and other activities of these bodies.

According to the provisions of the protocol, the Office for Human Rights is the central body for collecting and publishing data on hate crimes, and the body responsible to strengthen the system for combating hate crimes and cooperating with civil society and international organisations. In addition to representatives of bodies responsible for combating hate crimes and representatives of the academic community, the Hate Crimes Monitoring Working Group also includes representatives of civil society organisations: Serb National Council (*Srpsko narodno vijeće Zagreb*)¹⁴, Croatian Romani Union 'Kali Sara' (*Savez Roma u Republici Hrvatskoj „KALI SARA”*)¹⁵, Jewish Community Zagreb (*Židovska općina Zagreb*)¹⁶, Zagreb Pride¹⁷ and Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights Osijek (*Centar za mir, nenasilje i ljudska prava Osijek*).¹⁸

¹² Croatia, Protocol for procedure in cases of hate crimes ([Protokol o postupanju u slučaju zločina iz mržnje](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 43/21, 8 April 2021, Appendix 1-3.

¹³ Croatia, Protocol for procedure in cases of hate crimes ([Protokol o postupanju u slučaju zločina iz mržnje](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 43/21, 8 April 2021.

¹⁴ www.snv.hr

¹⁵ www.kalisara.hr

¹⁶ www.zoz.hr

¹⁷ www.zagreb-pride.net

¹⁸ www.centar-za-mir.hr

Chapter 3. Roma equality and inclusion

3.1 Policy developments in regards to the application of the EU Roma strategic Framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030

The National Roma Inclusion Strategy for the period 2013–2020 expired at the end of 2020.¹⁹ Thus, the Government of the Republic of Croatia, as per the Decision on the establishment of strategic planning acts related to conditions that enable the implementation of European Union funds in the period from 2021 to 2027, deadlines for adoption and bodies in charge of their preparation²⁰ tasked the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities with drafting the new National Roma Inclusion Plan for the period 2021–2027.²¹

A working group of 46 members and 43 deputies was set up to draft the new plan.²² It consisted of representatives of state administration bodies, Roma national minority, civil society organisations, academia, the Ombudsperson and special ombudspersons (for children, persons with disabilities, gender equality).

¹⁹ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), National Roma Inclusion Strategy for the period 2013–2020 ([Nacionalna strategija za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2013. do 2020. godine](#)), 29 November 2021.

²⁰ Croatia, Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Vlada Republike Hrvatske*), Decision on the establishment of strategic planning acts related to conditions that enable the implementation of European Union funds in the period from 2021 to 2027, deadlines for adoption and bodies in charge of their preparation ([Odluka o utvrđivanju akata strateškog planiranja povezanih s uvjetima koji omogućavaju provedbu fondova Europske unije u razdoblju od 2021. Do 2027. godine, rokova donošenja i tijela zauženih za njihovu izradu](#)), 14 October 2021.

²¹ Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), email correspondence, 27 September 2021.

²² Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), Decision On the Establishment of the Working Group on Drafting the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 And the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027, For the Period 2021 to 2021 ([Odluka o osnivanju Radne skupine za izradu Nacrta Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine i Nacrta Akcijskog plana za provedbu Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2022. godine](#)), 23 October 2020; Decision On Supplementing the Decision On the Establishment of the Working Group on Drafting the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 And the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027, For the Period 2021 to 2021 ([Odluka o dopuni odluke o osnivanju Radne skupine za izradu Nacrta Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine i Nacrta Akcijskog plana za provedbu Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2022. godine](#)), 4 November 2021; Decision On Supplementing the Decision On the Establishment of the Working Group on Drafting the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 And the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027, For the Period 2021 to 2021 ([Odluka dopuni odluke o osnivanju Radne skupine za izradu Nacrta Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine i Nacrta Akcijskog plana za provedbu Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2022. godine](#)), 13 November 2021.

The tasks of the members and deputies of the working group were to examine the situation regarding the protection of rights, analyse the improvement of the status of the Roma national minority in Croatia, and to define priorities and horizontal areas of intervention for the draft National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027. In addition, two smaller working groups were set up focusing on: (1) prevention of anti-Gypsyism and discrimination, and (2) combating poverty and social exclusion, and empowering Roma civic participation. The tasks of the smaller working groups included a detailed analysis of the Draft Proposal National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 and drawing up an opinion on the Draft Proposal from the perspective of its contribution to the prevention of anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma, to combating poverty and social exclusion, and strengthening the civic participation of Roma. During this process, three meetings of the working group²³ and two meetings of each of the smaller working groups²⁴ took place.

Representatives of the Ombudsperson's Office participated in the drafting of the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027, and its accompanying Action Plan 2021–2022²⁵ as members of the working group.

The Office for Human Rights held six bilateral meetings with representatives of competent bodies about strategic projects of the National Roma Inclusion Plan and the role of competent authorities in their implementation as well as one meeting with the Coordinating Body for Strategic Planning and Development Management of the Republic of Croatia. Furthermore, public consultations were held after the publication of the Prior Valuation Report, i.e., the evaluation during drafting, from 7 to 24 May 2021.²⁶

The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 at its session on 23 June 2021.

The National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 sets out a strategic framework for the development of equality, inclusion and participation of persons belonging to the Roma national minority in Croatia until 2027. The primary objective is to

²³ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), First Meeting of the Working Group On the Elaboration of the National Roma Inclusion Plan ([Prvi sastanak Radne skupine za izradu Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma](#)), 3 November 2020; Second Meeting of the Working Group On the Elaboration of the National Roma Inclusion Plan ([Drugi sastanak Radne skupine za izradu Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma](#)), 27 November 2020; Third Meeting of the Working Group On the Elaboration of the National Roma Inclusion Plan ([Treći sastanak Radne skupine za izradu Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma](#)), 5 February 2021.

²⁴ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), Activities of the Smaller Working Groups ([Aktivnosti užih radnih skupina](#)), 2021.

²⁵ Ombudsperson's Office (*Ured pučke pravobraniteljice*), email correspondence, 24 September 2021.

²⁶ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), email correspondence, 27 September 2021.

improve the overall integration of Roma people in Croatia and reduce the gap between them and the rest of the population in critical areas of intervention, in line with the European Union Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma by 2030 and the National Development Strategy.

The National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 contains seven areas of action, i.e., three horizontal and four sectoral-specific objectives, the achievement of which is planned to be monitored through 23 primary indicators and a comprehensive list of secondary indicators, in line with the Council Recommendation on Roma inclusion, equality and participation. The objectives are planned to be achieved through 24 measures evenly distributed across the respective areas of action. The funding planned for the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 has been estimated at HRK 118,642,177.00 in total, of which HRK 101,155,827.00 from the state budget and HRK 17,486,350.00 from EU funds.

A total of HRK 53,029,173.00 is planned for the implementation of the Action Plan 2021–2022 accompanying the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027, of which HRK 27,971,705.00 in 2021 and HRK 25,057,468.00 in 2022.

The new document follows up on its predecessor and improves it in terms of concept and content as well as planning and monitoring of the results and outcomes for the Roma national minority. Thus, in line with the findings of an external evaluation of its predecessor and the recommendations stemming from the newly established legislative framework for strategic planning and management of the strategic development of the Republic of Croatia, the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 reduced the number of specific objectives, defined the list of primary outcome indicators and equally distributed the number of measures by area of action. Furthermore, it is possible to monitor its final outcomes on the basis of data, since each of the 23 primary outcome indicators, as well as the planned list of secondary indicators, is associated with an initial value, which in the previous document was possible only for 11 out of 111 indicators.

The first Action Plan 2021–2022 marked the continuation of promising practices developed in the framework of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy 2013–2020, notably in the field of education, but also in preparation of projects – mainly planned with EU funds – which will significantly improve the implementation of the new plan compared to the previous document. These innovative projects aimed at combating poverty and social exclusion and stimulating employment, along with other strategic projects of the National Plan, have been elaborated both based on the relevant literature, public-political documents and recommendations from the EU, the CoE, the UN and the formal and informal consultations carried out by the proponent during the drafting of the document (almost 6,000 stakeholders, of which over 4,500 members of the Roma national minority).

For example, the pilot project for community-based services complements the planned reform of the social welfare system and ensures the sustainability of the project 'Child Guarantee' implemented by UNICEF in cooperation with competent authorities. In addition, the project 'Equality, Inclusion, Participation and Integration of Roma' plans to establish innovative cooperation practices with the entrepreneurial sector through employment, with the ultimate objective of upskilling and training young Roma not in employment, education or training (NEETs), who make up 63.3 % of the total Roma youth population in Croatia.²⁷

Please put down the name of the national Roma framework/Roma strategy/integrated set of policy measures and the link	National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 (<i>Nacionalni plan za uključivanje Roma, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine</i>)
Please add a hyperlink if the strategy is publicly available.	Hyperlink
Did an evaluation of the previous Roma inclusion strategy take place? If yes, please provide reference	Yes /No/Other (please specify)
Does the strategy use the (headline) indicators as suggested in the new portfolio of indicators?	Yes Partially No
Was Roma civil society involved in the development of the strategy? Please provide examples?	Yes /No Yes, the Roma youth organisation of Croatia and the Croatian Romani Union 'Kali Sara' were included in the development of the strategy as per decision of the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia dated 23 October 2020.
Were NHRIs and/or equality bodies involved in the strategy development? Please provide example?	Yes /No Yes, the Ombudsperson's Office, the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities and the Specialist Service of the State Council for National Minorities were involved in the strategy development as per decision of the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia dated 23 October 2020.
Does the new strategy link to the operational programmes for the new EU funding period 2021-2027?	Yes /No/Other (please specify)

3.2 Legal and policy developments or measures directly or indirectly addressing Roma/Travellers inclusion

Since full data for 2021 can be obtained from the authorities only at the beginning of 2022, generally it can be said that the implementation of measures aimed at the integration of members of the Roma national minority continued in 2021.

²⁷ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), email correspondence, 27 September 2021.

Available data provided by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities²⁸ show that, for example, in the field of education, the Ministry of Science and Education implemented measures aimed at including children of the Roma national minority in pre-school, primary and secondary education, providing scholarships for university students, and including adults belonging to the Roma national minority in literacy and training programmes to acquire a profession.

In 2021, the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing continued implementing the Annual Programme to improve the living conditions of persons belonging to the Roma national minority. In addition to providing household appliances, in 2021 the Central Office introduced assistance for the construction of a bathroom and/or sanitary facilities. It is expected that this scheme will further improve the living conditions of hundreds of most vulnerable members of society. The Office for Human Rights does not yet have complete information regarding other areas or regarding a further impact of the measures taken to prevent the pandemic, especially at the local level.²⁹

The Government established a commission for monitoring the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan 2021–2027 at its session of 23 June 2021.³⁰ Two weeks later, the Government appointed the chairman, deputy chair and members of the commission.³¹

The president of the commission is the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia for Social Activities and Human Rights, Mr Boris Milošević and the deputy chair of the Commission is a Member of Parliament, Mr Veljko Kajtazi. Other members, including representatives from the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Ministry of Regional Development and Funds of the European Union, the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy and the Ministry of Finance, and an equal number of representatives of the Roma national minority (7) were appointed following a public call for candidates.³² The main tasks of the commission are: to

²⁸ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina*), email correspondence, 27 September 2021.

²⁹ Croatia, Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing (*Središnji državni ured za obnovu i stambeno zbrinjavanje*), Annual Programme to improve the living conditions of persons belonging to the Roma national minority for 2021 ([Godišnji program unapređenja životnih uvjeta pripadnika romske nacionalne manjine za 2021. godinu](#)), July 2021.

³⁰ Croatia, Decision on the Establishment of the Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan, for the period 2021 to 2027 ([Odluka o osnivanju povjerenstva za praćenje provedbe Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 70/21, 23 June 2021.

³¹ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), Decision On the Appointment of the Working Group Commission on Monitoring the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 ([Odluka o imenovanju Radne skupine Povjerenstva za praćenje provedbe Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)), 19 July 2021.

³² Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), Decision On the Appointment of the Working Group Commission on Monitoring the Implementation of the National

systematically monitor and analyse the implementation of the National Plan based on reports from the implementing body and/or other relevant stakeholders; to draft recommendations, opinions, expert justifications and guidelines on the implementation of the National Plan and the accompanying Action Plan; to propose amendments to the National Plan and the accompanying Action Plan; to monitor the schedule and spending of funds for the implementation of measures financed from the state budget; to adopt criteria for allocating financial assistance to the Roma national minority and to allocate financial assistance under the adopted criteria.³³ From the date of its establishment to September 2021, the Commission held three meetings.³⁴ At the second meeting convened at the end of July 2021, the Commission approved a total of HRK 2,249,614.99 for various needs of members of the Roma national minority (e.g., funding of projects by local self-government units to upgrade infrastructure, co-financing of various projects of civil society organisations and school costs for adult learning).³⁵

Thanks to more updated findings on legislation and policy developments and measures directly or indirectly addressing Roma inclusion in Croatia, the Ombudsperson's Office provided us with information³⁶ on this subject for 2020 and 2021. As the Ombudsperson's Office pointed out in their 2020 report, the outbreak of the epidemic in Croatia caused an increase in the number of public expressions of discrimination against the Chinese, the refugees and the Roma. As a result, the epidemic has significantly adversely affected the most vulnerable members of the society, otherwise exposed to multiple discrimination, such as children and young people, elderly persons and women in Roma and migrant communities.

Although the representative of the Roma national minority emphasised the importance of preventing the spread of the virus in Roma settlements and of the need to assist Roma communities, given that as many as 83 % of Roma households in Croatia live in poverty or at risk of poverty, the efforts to provide them with protective and hygiene tools were sporadic. Furthermore, the funds distributed were insufficient to meet the needs.

Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 ([Odluka o imenovanju Radne skupine Povjerenstva za praćenje provedbe Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)), 19 July 2021.

³³ Croatia, Decision on the Establishment of the Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan, for the period 2021 to 2027 ([Odluka o osnivanju povjerenstva za praćenje provedbe Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) No. 70/21, 23 June 2021.

³⁴ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), Commission on Monitoring the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 ([Povjerenstvo za praćenje provedbe Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)), 2021.

³⁵ Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), email correspondence, 27 September 2021.

³⁶ Croatia, Ombudsperson's Office (*Ured pučke pravobraniteljice*), email correspondence, 24 September 2021.

As unemployment, especially in the service sector, increased, regularly employed Roma lost their jobs as did those working in undeclared labour and those collecting secondary raw material due to the prohibition to leave their place of residence. Since regular bus routes were abolished and there was a lack of organised public transport, Roma had a limited access to institutions in administrative centres. This was exacerbated by the fact that beneficiaries of the guaranteed minimum benefit, which includes many Roma, are not allowed to own or use a private vehicle unless they live in traffic-isolated areas. Some families also lacked the most basic foods, and they did not have the conditions to isolate infected members of the household.

Due to the closure of schools, they also lost various forms of support, such as meals for children, psychological or learning support. Some families did not even have the minimum conditions to follow television-mediated classes or to use tablets because they did not have access to electricity and/or the internet. Since only one fifth of Roma households has adequate technical/information equipment (fixed telephone line, computer, laptop or tablet) to follow distance schooling, the public authorities handed out the necessary equipment. However, many children within the family shared the same tablet. Some parents did not take the handed-out tablets for their children due to fear of damage or destruction of the device and the consequent cost compensation. Many Roma children did not have adequate parental support in learning due to the parents' low level of education or a poorer knowledge of the Croatian language. Many parents could not provide their children with a room for studying within their households.

In 2020, the Ombudsperson's Office received complaints about the absence of teaching instructions on the Croatian National Television in the languages of national minorities and television-mediated Croatian language preparatory courses, particularly affecting Roma as well as migrant children who lack knowledge of Croatian. In these circumstances, the activities of Roma organisations, Roma mediators and the Red Cross have proven to be extremely important, from providing hygienic necessities and food to providing space, equipment and learning support. Further efforts should be made to compensate for or at least reduce the backlog in the adopted material with Roma children and prevent deepening inequalities.

Although the National Vaccination Plan did not prioritise members of the Roma national minority, it provided for priority vaccination of persons in collective housing or communities where the necessary physical distance cannot be achieved. In addition, the vaccine is available to all citizens of the Republic of Croatia, including those without health insurance, which is often the case in Roma communities, and to all foreign citizens located on the territory of the Republic of Croatia, which is important for Roma who are not registered as Croatian citizens. However, the spread of fake news and disinformation about the harmful effects of vaccines on social networks led to a significant decline in the general interest in vaccination, including among members of the Roma minority, of which 85 % was

initially interested. Therefore, affirmative campaigns should continue, including the publication of information about COVID-19 and the benefits of vaccination in the languages of the Roma minority, as the Public Health Institute 'Dr Andrija Štampar' did at the very beginning of the pandemic.

It will be necessary to propose and implement concrete measures to eliminate the negative consequences of the epidemic. According to the Croatian Institute for Public Health and the Office for Human Rights, more complete indicators of the impact of the epidemic on the health of Roma communities could be established by subsequent field analyses and research. Furthermore, to overcome other difficulties in Roma communities, it is essential to implement Roma integration measures adopted in national strategic documents in a consistent and financially sound manner and to amend regulations, such as the Social Welfare Act, which do not contribute to the equal inclusion of Roma in society.

As regards the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance issuing its Conclusions on the implementation of country recommendations for Croatia in 2021³⁷, there was no public debate on this report present in Croatia. The [report](#) is briefly mentioned in an [article](#) published on the Ministry of Interior's website on the International Day for Tolerance from 16 November 2021.³⁸

³⁷ Council of Europe, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, [ECRI Conclusions on the Implementation of the Recommendations in respect of Croatia subject to Interim Follow-Up \(Zaključci ECRI-a o provedbi preporuka u odnosu na Hrvatsku podlonim privremenom nastavnom praćenju\)](#), adopted on 30 March 2021, published on 18 May 2021.

³⁸ Croatia, Ministry of Interior (*Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova*), [International Day for Tolerance: We Are All Different And This Difference Enriches Us](#) (Međunarodni dan tolerancije: *Svi smo različiti, a ta razlika nas obogaćuje*), 16 November 2021.

Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH*), Decision On the Appointment of the Working Group Commission on Monitoring the Implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Plan for the Period 2021 to 2027 ([Odluka o imenovanju Radne skupine Povjerenstva za praćenje provedbe Nacionalnog plana za uključivanje Roma, za razdoblje od 2021. do 2027. godine](#)), 19 July 2021.

Chapter 4. Asylum, visas, migration, borders and integration

4.1 Number of beneficiaries of international protection whose protection status was revoked in 2021

Country	Cessation of refugee status		Cessation of subsidiary protection	
	Number of refugee status revoked	Main reasons	Number of subsidiary protection status revoked	Main reasons
Croatia	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

4.2 National border monitoring mechanisms

Country	Legal source providing for border monitoring	Organisation(s) responsible for monitoring	Is the monitoring body at same time the National Preventative Mechanism? (Y/N)	Are reports publicly available? [if yes, please add hyperlink]	Number of monitoring operations in 2021	Is monitoring (at least partially) funded by the EU? If so, under which modalities?
Republic of Croatia	Cooperation Agreement, Ministry of the Interior of	Civil society organisations : Croatian Red Cross (<i>Hrvatski</i>	No. However, the Ombudspers	On 3 December 2021, a working version of	In the first six months of operation, the	According to the Ministry of the Interior, the monitoring mechanism is

	the Republic of Croatia	<i>Crveni križ</i>) and the Centre for Cultural Dialogue (<i>Centar za kulturu dijaloga</i>) are responsible for monitoring activities. Croatian Academy of Legal Sciences, Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences and independent legal professional Prof. Iris Goldner Lang are also included in the	on's Office in charge of the National mechanism for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Nacionalni preventivni mehanizam za sprečavanje mučenja i drugih okrutnih, neljudskih ili ponižavajućih postupaka ili kažnjavanja), takes part in the Advisory Committee	the 1st semi-annual report of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism of the Conduct of Police Officers of the Ministry of the Interior in the Field of Illegal Migration and International Protection was published at the website of the Croatian	Mechanism conducted 8 observations, of which two were announced, four were unannounced observations.	entirely EU-funded – the European Commission transferred the funds for monitoring mechanism activities to the Croatian state budget. ⁴¹
--	-------------------------	---	---	--	--	--

⁴¹ Croatia, Ministry of the Interior (*Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova Republike Hrvatske*), letter (answer to the Centre for Peace Studies' inquiry according to the Act on the Right of Access to Information), 22 September 2021.

		monitoring mechanism.	of the monitoring mechanism.	Public Health Institute on 3 December 2021 and disappeared just a day later. ³⁹ The final version was released a week later, on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2021. ⁴⁰		
--	--	-----------------------	------------------------------	--	--	--

³⁹ Croatia, Centre for Peace Studies (*Centar za mirovne studije*), [First half-year report of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism](#) (*Prvo polugodišnje izvješće Nezavisnog mehanizma nadzora*), 21 December 2021.

⁴⁰ Croatia, Center for Culture of Dialogue (*Centar za kulturu dijaloga*), First semi-annual report of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism of the Conduct of Police Officers of the Ministry of the Interior in the Field of Illegal Migration and International Protection (*Prvo polugodišnje izvješće Nezavisnog mehanizma nadzora postupanja policijskih službenika Ministarstva unutarnjih poslova u području nezakonitih migracija i međunarodne zaštite*), available at: <https://ccd.hr/prvo-polugodisnje-izvjesce-nezavisnog-mehanizma-nadzora-lipanj-prosinac-2021/>

Chapter 5. Information society, privacy and data protection

5.1 Legal and policy developments or measures that have been implemented related to data protection and private life with regards to security issues

A new Electronic Media Act (EMA) was passed in October 2021. The EMA transposes Directive (EU) 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audio-visual media services (Audio-visual Media Services Directive), Directive 2006/114/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 concerning misleading and comparative advertising and Directive 98/84/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 1998 on the legal protection of services based on, or consisting of, conditional access. According to Article 14 of the EMA, audio and/or audio-visual media services that endanger the constitutional order and national security and publicly incite the commission of the criminal offense of terrorism are prohibited. Moreover, in audio and/or audio-visual media services it is prohibited to encourage, favour and incite hatred or discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin or colour, sex, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin, property status, trade union membership, education, social status, marital or family status, age, health, disability, genetic inheritance, gender identity, expression or sexual orientation and anti-Semitism and xenophobia, ideas of fascist, Nazi, communist and other totalitarian regimes. Article 94 stipulates that providers of electronic publications are obliged to, in accordance with Article 14, take all measures to prevent the publication of content that incites violence or hatred. They are also obliged to take all measures to prevent the publication of content that incites the criminal offenses of terrorism, criminal offenses related to child pornography and criminal offenses related to racism and xenophobia as prescribed by the Criminal Code. The provider of the electronic publication is responsible for all content published on the electronic publication, including content generated by users but only if the provider fails to register the user and does not warn the user in a clear and easily visible way about commenting rules and violations of the above-mentioned provisions.

An international conference 'Digital Transformation and Personal Data Protection in the Age of Global Pandemic'⁴² organised by the Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency (AZOP) on the occasion of the European Day of Personal Data Protection was held in Zagreb on 28 January 2021. The focus of the conference were micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which were the most endangered part of the economic system in Croatia and in the entire European Union during the COVID-19 pandemic. They were given special attention in 2020 through support in harmonisation of business processes with GDPR in the form of holding online workshops tailored to their specific needs. A more agile response to the existing challenges was recommended for this year, i.e., developing a comprehensive strategy for digital business transformation in order to be able to respond to the current crisis. One of the most significant obstacles to digitalisation are users' concerns about cyber-security and the protection of their personal data.

Throughout 2021, the Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency (AZOP) conducted a campaign for data protection officers (DPO) in the private and public sector in the form of online training.⁴³ Training for employees in the private sector has been organised in cooperation with the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, and workshops for civil servants in the public sector have been organised by the Agency itself. According to practical experience at the local and EU level, employees are often insufficiently trained and qualified to perform DPO tasks, and through these workshops data protection officers will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to improve their performance. The purpose of the campaign is to strengthen the role of data protection officers and to provide them with answers and solutions on how to adequately align the operations of their organisations with GDPR.

The implementation of the data protection awareness campaign for SMEs continued in 2021 in the framework of the ARC project,⁴⁴ a transnational project that aims to support small and medium-sized enterprises in complying with GDPR by providing training on the practical implications of GDPR provisions. The project is implemented by the Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency in partnership with Data Protection Commission Ireland and Vrije University Brussels.

⁴² Croatia, Central State Office for Digital Society Development (*Središnji državni ured za razvoj digitalnog društva*)(2021), [At the conference 'Digital Transformation and Personal Data Protection in the Age of Global Pandemic', State Secretary Gršić placed special emphasis on the protection of personal data in the digital world](#), press release, 28 January 2021.

⁴³ Croatia, Personal Data Protection Agency (*Agencija za zaštitu osobnih podataka*) (2021), [Campaign for data protection officers](#).

⁴⁴ Croatia, Personal Data Protection Agency (*Agencija za zaštitu osobnih podataka*) (2021), [EU project ARC](#).

On the occasion of the third anniversary of the implementation of GDPR, the Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency issued a Guide on the rights of data subjects under the General Regulation,⁴⁵ aimed at helping citizens understand the rights of data subjects and mechanisms for safe and confidential processing in a simple and understandable way. The guide is intended for a wide range of citizens who want to be informed about the rights they have as data subjects. The purpose of the guide is to raise public awareness about the fact that effective protection of personal data is necessary to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals in the EU. An effective system of personal data protection does not only mean a clear and practically applicable legal framework, independent and high-quality institutional supervision and a high level of awareness of organisations that process personal data, but it also means that individuals whose personal data are processed are adequately informed on their rights.

In their annual work plan for 2021 (published in June 2021),⁴⁶ the Central State Office for the Development of Digital Society included the establishment of a national coordination centre for cyber-security expertise as one of the activities for the digital future of Croatia. The purpose of implementation of the activity is to reduce the gap between technological developments in the cyber-space and competences necessary for their management. The planned budget allocation for this activity is HRK 51,000 and it is supposed to be implemented by 31 December 2021.

On 24 February 2021, the Croatian Parliament Committee on Internal Policy and National Security discussed the Report on police work in 2018 and 2019 (hereinafter: the Report for 2018 and 2019).⁴⁷ Prior to the presentation of the Report for 2018 and 2019, the Chairman of the Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the report was submitted in a merged form for two consecutive years and that the work of the police in 2018 is being assessed only at the beginning of 2021. In relation to the chapter on cyber-crime and cyber-security, it was noted that the police "lagged behind" the perpetrators of these high-tech criminal offences, and that there were insufficient efforts for timely recognition of the crimes, their incorporation into our criminal legislation and their sanctioning, as well as in terms of staffing, technical equipment and

⁴⁵ Croatia, Personal Data Protection Agency (*Agencija za zaštitu osobnih podataka*) (2021), [Guide on the rights of data subjects under the General Regulation](#), January 2021.

⁴⁶ Croatia, Central State Office for the Development of Digital Society (*Središnji državni ured za razvoj digitalnog društva*) (2021), [Annual work plan for 2021](#), June 2021.

⁴⁷ Croatia, Croatian Parliament Committee on Internal Policy and National Security (*Odbor Hrvatskog sabora za unutarnju politiku i nacionalnu sigurnost*) (2021), [Report on police work in 2018 and 2019](#), February 2021.

education. All relevant bodies need to reinforce capacities and enhance preventive action given an enormous increase of such offences (copyright theft, identity theft, banking crime, etc.).

Croatian non-governmental organisation GONG signed an open letter⁴⁸ on 31 August 2021 in which European organisations and the expert community called upon EU policymakers to amend the draft EU Digital Services Act (DSA) to ensure stronger platform accountability measures and more democratic oversight of our online environment. The letter was co-signed by more than 50 organisations and individual researchers, journalists, academics and activists from around the world. Signatories urged lawmakers to consider recommendations aimed at limiting arbitrary actions of major platforms, stricter transparency measures for online platforms (such as establishing an archive of search terms and conditions), ensuring the availability of data on classified ad spending, and more flexible provisions on data access for accredited researchers.

Together with 50 European civil society organisations, on 22 September 2021 Gong sent the open letter⁴⁹ to the EU Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee, which aims to improve the EU Digital Services Act (DSA) in field of algorithms and information use and protection of users and their personal data. As stated by signatories, the algorithms, used by large internet platforms, are a significant aid in the use of internet space, information retrieval and content generation. However, the way algorithms, and those in charge of controlling them, use their users' personal information can be detrimental. The signatories of the letter support the proposals which include informing users in more detail about what algorithms are and what they are used for, opening access to data to journalists and civil society organisations, independent risk assessments of algorithmic systems and stronger protection of users' personal data that algorithms generate.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia appointed a working group to develop a technical solution for digital green certificates (EU digital COVID certificates),⁵⁰ in relation to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the issue aimed at facilitating free movement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Republic of Croatia was the first Member State to start operating the national system of digital green certificates on 1 June 2021. The EU digital COVID

⁴⁸ Croatia, civil society organisation GONG (2021), [Open letter to EU policymakers](#), August 2021.

⁴⁹ Croatia, civil society organisation GONG (2021), [Open letter to EU policymakers](#), September 2021.

⁵⁰ Croatia, Government of the Republic of Croatia (*Vlada Republike Hrvatske*) (2021), [Working group to develop a technical solution for digital green certificates](#), press release, April 2021.

certificate service is available on the e-Citizens digital portal and enables Croatian citizens to obtain a digital green certificate on vaccination, testing and recovery from the COVID-19 disease.⁵¹

5.2 Artificial intelligence and big data

Actor*	Type**	Description	Are Human Rights issues mentioned? (yes/no)	Reference
Government	Draft act	On 18 April 2019, the Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts (now the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development) established a working group to prepare the National plan for the development of artificial intelligence, consisting of experts from the academia, private sector, civil society and public sector. According to the information received from the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development in February 2021, the Draft national plan for the development of artificial intelligence	No.	Information received based on the access to information request sent to the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development in February 2021. Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Public Consultation Plan for 2021 , January 2021

⁵¹ Croatia, e-Citizens Digital Portal (*Digitalni portal e-građani*) (2021), [EU digital COVID certificate service](#), July 2021.

		<p>for the period 2021–2025 is being prepared.</p> <p>According to the Public Consultations Plan of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development for 2021, the approximate date of public consultations on the National plan for the development of artificial intelligence has been scheduled for the 3rd quarter, and its adoption for the last quarter of 2021.</p>		
Government	Other projects	<p>Decision on the establishment of a working group tasked with defining the framework of cooperation with the company Infobip d.o.o. in the field of artificial intelligence development. The tasks of the working group are to define the framework of cooperation with Infobip in the field of artificial intelligence in order to accelerate the digital transformation in the economy, education, science, tourism and public administration and to create preconditions for positioning Croatia as a centre of artificial intelligence in the EU.</p>	No	<p>Government of the Republic of Croatia, Decision on the establishment of a working group, May 2021.</p> <p>Jutarnji list news portal, A working group established to cooperate with Infobip on artificial intelligence.</p>

<p>Independent State Institution (Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia)</p>	<p>Other projects</p>	<p>Ombudswoman Tena Šimonović Einwalter, in her role as Chair of Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies, participated in the third European Forum on Artificial Intelligence that was held on 30 June 2021. This year the Forum was dedicated to current topics in this area and the adoption of effective regulations related to use of AI. In her presentation, Ombudswoman Šimonović Einwalter emphasised the importance of equality and strong legal protection mechanisms in any future EU regulation on artificial intelligence, as well as the role of equality bodies in ensuring that these systems protect the equality of citizens. This refers to the use of various technologies based on artificial intelligence, but also to the phase of their design and development when it is important to think about protecting human rights and combating discrimination. The early involvement of equality experts can ensure that the development and use of artificial intelligence in the EU contributes to the well-being of everyone and avoids potential</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Equality and anti-discrimination</p> <p>The Ombudswoman emphasised the importance of equality and strong legal protection mechanisms in any future EU regulation on artificial intelligence. It is important to think about protecting human rights and combating discrimination in relation to the use of technologies based on artificial intelligence</p>	<p>Ombudsperson's Office, European Forum on Artificial Intelligence, 2 July 2021.</p>
---	-----------------------	---	--	---

		negative consequences for the rights of individuals and different social groups. It can also contribute to avoid creating public distrust related to this technology.	and to the phase of their design and development.	
Parliamentary	National act	<p>A concrete step in regulating deepfake in Croatia in the part related to fake revenge pornographic videos was made by amendments to the Criminal Code that refer to such videos and according to which publishing such videos is considered to be a criminal offence.</p> <p>The amendments to the Criminal Code were adopted in July 2021. According to its new Article 144a (2), abuse of footage with sexually explicit content is punishable in cases of use of a computer system or otherwise creating a new or altering an existing footage of sexually explicit content and using that recording as an authentic one, thereby violating the privacy of the person on the footage.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Right to privacy</p> <p>The provision prescribes punishment for violating the privacy of person who is present on footage of sexually explicit content that was created through use of computer system.</p>	Croatian Parliament, Act on amendments to the Criminal Code (OG 84/21).

NGO, corporate sector and academia	Other project	CroAI (Croatian Artificial Intelligence Association), Agency 404 (communication agency) and the University of Zagreb in cooperation with Reaktor and the University of Helsinki presented 'Elements of AI' – a free online course on the basics of artificial intelligence with the aim of educating primary and secondary school students across Croatia. Their desired goal is to educate 1 % of Croatian citizens in this regard.	No	Croatian Artificial Intelligence Association, ' Elements of AI ' website .
Government /Parliamentary	Adopted Act	<p>The Croatian Parliament adopted the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 on 5 February 2021. Part of the strategy is the growing role of artificial intelligence. In the assessment of development needs and the global and European context, the strategy looks at technological changes and the growing role of artificial intelligence, which is reflected in all spheres of social life.</p> <p>Strategic objective No. 11 refers to the "digital transition of society and economy" which will focus on the implementation of targeted</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Data protection, privacy, protection against discrimination.</p> <p>When improving the legislative framework, the impact of artificial intelligence</p>	Croatian Parliament, National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 (OG 13/21) .

		<p>digitisation programmes. Particular attention will be paid to improving the legislative framework governing the use and privacy of data in order to strengthen opportunities for digital entrepreneurship, including the area of Big Data analysis and artificial intelligence. When improving the legislative framework, the impact of artificial intelligence and big data analysis on fundamental human rights and protection against discrimination will also be considered.</p> <p>Strengthening and building strategic digital capacities, monitoring the development of digital services and digital transformation of the economy will provide an administrative and legislative framework that allows entrepreneurial and market freedoms and the application of advanced technologies, protects personal data, privacy and workers' rights, consumer and citizen rights in general and excludes any form of discrimination.</p>	<p>and big data analysis on fundamental human rights and protection against discrimination will also be considered.</p> <p>The strategy states that all public policies and priorities described in its chapters and in the strategic planning acts will be implemented with the aim of establishing equality and promoting equal opportunities. In this regard, special emphasis is placed on combating</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

		<p>The horizontal priorities of the strategy state that all public policies and priorities described in its chapters and in the strategic planning acts will be implemented with the aim of establishing equality and promoting equal opportunities. In this regard, special emphasis is placed on combating discrimination, protecting the rights and dignity of work and workers, work/life balance, gender equality, protecting and promoting the rights of national minorities, and creating an environment that stimulates the development of civil society. It also states that in the implementation of all public policies, Croatia will take into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities, with special emphasis on ensuring equal access to education, employment and all public services, and especially on incorporating the principle of accessibility to all digital content.</p> <p>Appendix 4 of the Strategy comprises an indicative list of strategic planning acts that support the implementation of the strategic framework introduced by the</p>	<p>discrimination, protecting the rights and dignity of work and workers, work/life balance, gender equality, protecting and promoting the rights of national minorities, and creating an environment that stimulates the development of civil society. It also states that in the implementation of all public policies, Croatia will take into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities,</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

		National Development Strategy. It foresees, among others, the adoption of the National Plan for Digital Transformation of the Economy for the period 2021-2027 by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and adoption of the National Plan for Digital Transformation of Society that should be adopted by the Central State Office for Digital Society Development.	with special emphasis on ensuring equal access to education, employment and all public services, and especially on incorporating the principle of accessibility to all digital content.	
Other	Other projects	On 14 April 2021 the Croatian Agency for SMEs, Innovation and Investments (HAMAG-BICRO) organised an online workshop on artificial intelligence and its application in business and industry as part of the activities of the CEUP 2030 project (Central Europe Upstreaming for Policy Excellence in Advanced Manufacturing & Industry 4.0 towards 2030). The workshop was conceived as an exchange of knowledge and experience between the private sector, academic community and	No	HAMAG-BICRO, CEUP 2030 workshop: Application of artificial intelligence in business and industry , April 2021.

		policymakers in the Republic of Croatia.		
Other/Business	Other projects	On 23 November 2021 members of the Croatian Public Relations Association opened the educational project Artificial Intelligence in Public Relations (AI in PR). It is a series of five specialized lectures by leading American artificial intelligence experts, intended for university professors, lecturers and students with the aim of informing about news in the field of artificial intelligence in order to improve and expand their knowledge and transfer it to students of communication and public relations. The project was designed in collaboration with the US Embassy. Lecturers from the US were selected in collaboration with the American Society for Public Relations (PRSA) and the American Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence. Students from the Faculty of Electronics and Computing and the Faculty of Organization and Informatics in Varaždin are involved in the project.	No	Media Marketing portal, Artificial intelligence as a tool in public relations: Educational project AI in PR opened (<i>Umjetna inteligencija kao alat u odnosima s javnošću: otvoren HUOJ-ev edukativni projekt AI in PR</i>), November 2021.

Government /Parliamentary	Adopted Act	<p>The Croatian Government adopted the National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2023 that was approved by the European Commission in July 2021. The Plan is structured to include five components and one initiative (Economy, Public administration, justice and state assets, Education, science and research, Labour market and social protection, Health care and Initiative: Reconstruction of buildings).</p> <p>Under the Economy component, there are measures/reforms foreseen to achieve Resilient, green and digital economy</p> <p>One of those measures (measure C1.1.2. R3) foresees establishing a strategic and operational framework for digital economic transformation and artificial intelligence. The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development is in charge of implementing this reform with the aim of setting a strategic framework for the digitalization of the Croatian business sector. This will help increase the capacity of enterprises,</p>	No	<p>Government of the Republic of Croatia, National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2026 (<i>Nacionalni plan oporavka i otpornosti 2021.-2026.</i>), July 2021.</p>
---------------------------	-------------	--	----	--

		especially SMEs (MSPs) for digital transformation and the development and application of artificial intelligence. Within this reform, the National Plan for the Digital Transformation of the Croatian Economy and the National Plan for the Development of Artificial Intelligence are foreseen to be finalized.		
Other/NGO	Other projects	In October 2020, the Croatian Association for Artificial Intelligence (CroAI) launched a relevant overview of all stakeholders in the Croatian AI Landscape which is constantly being updated in order to reflect market changes. It represents the key foundation for the upcoming AI Roadshow. The Croatian AI Landscape lists all AI stakeholders including companies, start-ups, educational and research institutions and other relevant organizations.	No	CRO AI, Croatian AI Landscape (Hrvatski AI krajolik) , version from October 2021.
Other/Business	Other projects	The Lipik Artificial Intelligence Centre has launched a six-month training for an artificial intelligence programmer for students from all over Croatia. The training consists of	N/A	AI Centre Lipik, Six-month free training for an artificial intelligence programmer in Lipik (Šestomjesečno besplatno osposobljavanje za

		<p>theoretical and practical training lasting five days a week, eight hours a day. In addition to education, all participants will work on the development of their product.</p> <p>Lipik Artificial Intelligence Centre (AI Centre Lipik) was established in 2020 as a department within the Lipik Development and Tourism Agency LIRA d.o.o. Within the centre, there are the Artificial Intelligence Education Centre, which conducts student education and training, and the Entrepreneurial Artificial Intelligence Incubator, which provides accommodation and support to companies dealing with programming and artificial intelligence.</p>		<i>programera/programerku umjetne inteligencije u Lipiku)</i>
Government	Other projects	<p>On 11 June 2021, members of five thematic innovation councils (TIC) were appointed for a two-year period. TIC members include representatives of the business sector, academia and public authorities and they provide operational support to the Government's Innovation Council for the Industry.</p>	No	<p>Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, <u>Beginning of the development of the Smart Specialization Strategy of the Republic of Croatia and the contribution of the Thematic innovation councils</u> (<i>Početak izrade Strategije pametne specijalizacije Republike Hrvatske i doprinos tematskih</i></p>

		TICs will play a role in the development of the new Smart Specialization Strategy of the Republic of Croatia (S3), which will enable the use of EU funds in the period 2021-2027 during the continuation of the entrepreneurial discovery process. Considering that one of the key features of the concept of smart specialization is the bottom-up approach in the entrepreneurial discovery process (EDP). This means that the comparative advantages and innovation potentials should be the result of a joint effort of the relevant stakeholders of the innovation system, and in particular the result of cooperation between the business sector and the academic community. In this sense, the TICs will have an important task in achieving this cooperation.		<i>inovacijskih vijeća</i>), September 2021.
Academia	Scientific article	The article assesses the need to regulate artificial intelligence in the European Union and boundaries of possible regulation of the new technological processes. It specially addresses the rules on product safety and liability for damage	Yes In relation to the future legal regulation of the AI, the article	Ana Pošćić, Is there a need to regulate artificial intelligence in the European Union: Reasons for and against (<i>Postoji li potreba pravnog uređenja umjetne inteligencije u Europskoj uniji - razlozi za i</i>

		<p>caused by the use of artificial intelligence, as well as the use of algorithms in competition law. It concludes that the minimum common rules are required to strike a balance between the future development and promotion of innovation, while preserving legal certainty and respect for moral, ethical and social standards.</p>	<p>concludes that it is necessary to maintain balance between the promotion of innovation and new technologies and the need for legal security, while respecting moral, ethical and sociological standards. It states that any regulation must incorporate into its foundations the principle of responsibility for artificial intelligence systems, transparency, protection of privacy and</p>	<p><i>protiv</i>), Registry of the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka, Vol. 42, No. 2, p. 385-404 (2021)</p>
--	--	---	--	--

			non-discrimination.	
--	--	--	---------------------	--

Chapter 6. Rights of the child

6.1 Measures taken during the COVID 19 to ensure the well-being of children living in poverty and the protection of children from violence

<p>Measures to address the specific vulnerabilities of children living in poverty</p>	<p>In December 2020, the Croatian Minister of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Josip Aladrović, and Head of the UNICEF Office for Croatia, Regina M. Castillo, signed a Memorandum of Understanding, an agreement linked to the implementation of the 'EU Child Guarantee' project. Croatia is one of the seven EU Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania and Spain) in which UNICEF, in partnership with the European Commission, selected to test the feasibility of the 'EU Child Guarantee' project. The Memorandum of Understanding seeks to create the necessary conditions for the implementation of Phase III of the 'EU Child Guarantee' in Croatia. One of the main goals of the 24-month pilot programme 'Testing the European Child Guarantee in EU Member States' in Croatia is to develop a concrete National Plan for Combating Child Poverty and Social Exclusion, based on comprehensive policies, detailed analyses, and the development of innovative models of services and interventions. The implementation of the 'EU Child Guarantee' will be tested in the Međimurje County. In Croatia, specific interventions in the framework of Phase III aim to ensure access to integrated, multidisciplinary, adequately resourced community and family-based support services, pre-school education and early childhood intervention for children living in precarious situations (including families living in poor households, with special attention to Roma children and families) and children with disabilities in the Međimurje County in Croatia.⁵²</p> <p>Since December 2020, the results of the programme have been the following: the Family Centre within the Social Welfare Centre Čakovec was provided with additional capacities; parenting support programmes and activities reached more than 250 beneficiaries; 45 employees of kindergartens, family centres and CSOs were trained to ensure availability of the universal parenting support programme; the indicative parenting support programme</p>
---	--

⁵² Croatia, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (*Ministarstvo rada, mirovinskog sustava, obitelji i socijalne politike*) (2020), [UNICEF and the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy signed the Memorandum of Understanding for the international pilot programme EU Child Guarantee](#), press release, 15 December 2020.

(for parents who are raising children in adverse circumstances) was adapted to Roma families, including 21 Roma facilitators from seven Roma settlements; Čakovec Faculty of Teacher Education was provided with didactic materials and furniture with the aim of ensuring a quality pre-school education. Regarding the improvement of early childhood interventions, a multi-sectoral task group has been established at the county level to oversee the piloting of these services; an international working group has been established in the Međimurje County to develop a comprehensive, affordable and high quality model of early childhood intervention service; the research on mapping and assessing resources for early intervention and early childhood development services for children has been completed, presented and discussed as part of the ongoing development of an integrated Early Childhood Interventions Action Plan/Framework for Međimurje County.⁵³

In August 2021, the Croatian Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy adopted a Funding Decision as a conclusion of the open call for providing school nutrition for children at risk of poverty (2021–2022). The call was published under the Operational Programme for Food and Basic Material Assistance for the period 2014–2020, through which HRK 22,597,637.14 were allocated to 28 beneficiaries (local and regional self-government units) with the aim of providing school nutrition for children at risk of poverty.⁵⁴

On 26 August 2021, Zagreb City Assembly decided to temporarily suspend new applications for financial support for parent-educators. The term parent-educator refers to a mother or father, foster parent or other person to whom the child is entrusted, who lives in a common household with at least three children, the youngest of whom is not yet in primary school, and the eldest one is under the age of 26. This measure was adopted in 2016 as a demographic policy measure, but although the annual expenditure for the implementation of this measure increased from HRK 21 million in 2016 to HRK 440 million in 2020, data from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics show that the number of children born in Zagreb remained the same for years – about 8,000 per year.⁵⁵

⁵³ Croatia, UNICEF Office for Croatia (*UNICEF Ured za Hrvatsku*) (2021), [The European Child Guarantee](#), report, June 2021.

⁵⁴ Croatia, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (*Ministarstvo rada, mirovinskog sustava, obitelji i socijalne politike*) (2021), [Funding Decision](#), public act, 16 August 2021.

⁵⁵ Croatia, Zagreb City Assembly (*Gradska skupština Grada Zagreba*) (2021), [Decision about the Amendment](#), public act, 26 August 2021.

	<p>The "Croatia for Children" Foundation is providing financial support for children in the education system. This support is available for families with one or more children attending primary or secondary schools, colleges, other higher education institutions, universities, professional or specialist study programmes. There are seven subtypes of this support, depending on the purpose of application: to procure school supplies; to procure a personal computer/laptop for online education; to procure furniture; to procure clothing, footwear and toiletries; to cover the costs of extracurricular activities; to cover the costs of accommodation (in a student dorm) outside the place of permanent residence for educational purposes; in any other case in which, pursuant to the assessment of the Foundation's Commission, it is necessary and/or beneficial to grant the financial support.⁵⁶</p>
<p>Measures to protect children from violence</p>	<p>Amendment to the Croatian Criminal Code, in force from 31 July 2021, included sexual abuse and exploitation of a child (Article 166) in the catalogue of offences with no limitation period for prosecution. This Amendment refers to serious forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of a child that are qualified by a more severe consequence, such as: causing grievous bodily harm to a child, impairing their physical or emotional development or pregnancy, participation of several perpetrators in the act, committing the act against a particularly vulnerable child, if the act was committed by a family member or person with whom the child lives in a common household, or if the act was committed in a particularly cruel or humiliating manner. Accordingly, the enforcement of penalties in such cases will also have no limitation period.⁵⁷</p> <p>The same Amendment redefined Article 173 of the Croatian Criminal Code, which regulates the failure to implement the decision to protect the welfare of the child or other vulnerable person, and acts against the rules of professional conduct, by specifying the conduct of the official or responsible person which constitutes a criminal offence.⁵⁸</p> <p>In order to strengthen multi-sectoral cooperation and implement new knowledge and experience, the Criminal Police Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior actively supported and contributed organisationally and technically to the realisation of a training planned by the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy and</p>

⁵⁶ Croatia, „Croatia for Children“ Foundation (*Zaklada „Hrvatska za Djecu“*) (2020), [Financial support](#) official website.

⁵⁷ Croatia, Criminal Code (*Kazneni zakon*) (2011), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18, 126/19, 84/21.

⁵⁸ Croatia, Criminal Code (*Kazneni zakon*) (2011), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18, 126/19, 84/21.

	UNICEF in May 2021. The training was organised online for social workers, police officers, educators, healthcare and judicial workers as part of the 'Stronger Families' programme. It counted 384 participants. ⁵⁹
--	--

6.2 Legal and policy developments or measures relating to criminal proceedings

Legislative changes	There were no relevant legislative changes in 2021.
Policy developments	There were no relevant policy developments in 2021.
Other measures or initiatives	The Croatian Academy of Justice, in cooperation with the UNICEF Office for Croatia, developed the Framework for lifelong learning of justice professionals and professional associates of non-legal professions working with children involved in legal proceedings. According to this Framework, by the end of 2022, justice professionals working with children in legal proceedings will attend 10 three-day seminars called 'Basic professional training for all groups of justice professionals working with children in legal proceedings'. ⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Croatia, Ministry of the Interior (*Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova*), email correspondence, 3 September 2021.

⁶⁰ Croatia, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration (*Ministarstvo pravosuđa i uprave*), email correspondence, 9 September 2021.

Chapter 7. Access to justice

7.1 Legal and policy developments or measures relevant to the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive and the EU strategy for Victims' Rights 2020-2025

Amendment to the Croatian Criminal Code, in force from 31 July 2021, enhanced the protection of victims of crime. This was achieved by extending the meaning of the term "close persons", referred to in Article 87 (9) of the Criminal Code, to cover also current or former partners in intimate relationships. The extension of the term "close persons" has resulted in stronger criminal protection in the form of *ex officio* prosecution of the offender or higher prescribed sentences when a crime committed against a close person is prescribed as a qualified form of crime (e.g., in the case of crimes of personal injury, grievous bodily harm, threats, etc.).⁶¹

In order to strengthen the protection of victims of crime, security measures prescribed by the Croatian Criminal Code have also been revised. Instead of optional pronouncement of security measures, Amendment to the Criminal Code prescribed mandatory imposition of psychosocial treatment (Article 70) and removal from the common household (Article 74) under the condition the perpetrator at the time of sentencing poses a possible threat, and the mandatory imposition of a security measure prohibiting the performance of a particular duty or activity (Article 71) when the risk of recidivism was assessed.⁶²

The security measure of surveillance after the custodial sentence had been fully served (Article 76), which has so far been pronounced *ex lege*, was amended in such a way as to be imposed by the court when the sentence is issued, which in the event of its violation will lead to liability for committing a new offence or failure to serve the custodial sentence, referred to in Article 311 of the Criminal Code.

Regarding strategic documents and regulations, and with the aim of further implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive in the Croatian legal system, the Ordinance on informing victims about the exit or escape of prisoners is being amended to be in accordance with the Custodial Sentence Act, and a new National Strategy for the Development of Victims and Witnesses Support Systems is being drafted.⁶³

⁶¹ Croatia, Criminal Code (*Kazneni zakon*) (2011), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18, 126/19, 84/21.

⁶² Croatia, Criminal Code (*Kazneni zakon*) (2011), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18, 126/19, 84/21.

⁶³ Croatia, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration (*Ministarstvo pravosuđa i uprave*), email correspondence, 9 September 2021.

7.2 Measures addressing violence against women

Amendment to the Act on Protection against Domestic Violence, in force from July 2021, extended the meaning of the term "close persons", referred to in Article 8 (2), which now also covers current or former partners in intimate relationships. The Amendment allows and obligates police officers and other relevant authorities to act in cases of violence in relationships that do not have the characteristics of marital or cohabiting relationships or formal or informal life partnerships.⁶⁴

In addition, procedural presumptions for the prosecution of sexual harassment offences, referred to in Article 156 of the Croatian Criminal Code, were redefined in such a way that their prosecution will be *ex officio* and the proposal for prosecution will not be needed anymore.⁶⁵

Amendment to the Croatian Criminal Code, in force from 31 July 2021, incorporated the offence of misuse of sexually explicit content into the Criminal Code. The Amendment was adopted after a public consultation and proposal by women's rights association B.a.B.e. (Be Active. Be Emancipated.), supported by many other associations and independent experts. Article 144 (a) of the Amendment prescribes a prison sentence up to one year for anyone who abuses a relationship of trust and without the consent of the filmed person makes available to a third party a recording of sexually explicit content that was recorded with the consent of that person for personal use, and thus infringes on that person's privacy. This Article also refers to anyone who uses a computer or other tools to create a new or modify an existing recording of sexually explicit content and uses that recording as an original, thereby infringing the privacy of the person on that recording. Anyone who makes the recording available to a wider number of people, through a computer system or network or other equivalent tools, will be punished up to three years in prison.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Croatia, Act on Protection against Domestic Violence ([Zakon o zaštiti od nasilja u obitelji](#)) (2017), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 70/17, 126/19, 84/21.

⁶⁵ Croatia, Criminal Code ([Kazneni zakon](#)) (2011), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18, 126/19, 84/21.

⁶⁶ Croatia, Criminal Code ([Kazneni zakon](#)) (2011), Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*) Nos. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15, 101/17, 118/18, 126/19, 84/21.

Chapter 8. Developments in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

8.1 CRPD policy & legal developments

The Institute for Expertise, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities launched a public call⁶⁷ for applications for financial assistance to employers who employ persons with disabilities in the earthquake-affected area, in order to safeguard employment of persons with disabilities and bring the business activity of employers in the earthquake-affected area to the level of business activity before the damage, i.e., to repair the damage caused by the earthquake which is necessary for the continuation of business activity. The amount of support is HRK 50,000 for each employed person with a disability with whom an employment contract was concluded (full-time or part-time) before 4 January 2021, and who was registered in the Register of Employed Persons with Disabilities on the day of submitting the application.

On the occasion of the National Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (22 September) Croatian Network of Women with Disabilities (SOIH) expressed solidarity and encouraged the Croatian Government to provide support to women refugees with disabilities as well as to children with developmental difficulties from Afghanistan in case of their reception in Croatia.⁶⁸

In September 2021, 13 national alliances of persons with disabilities initiated the process of public advocacy for the adoption of the Social Housing Act in the Republic of Croatia with the aim of exercising the right to adequate housing for persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups.⁶⁹

On 12 July 2021, the Ministry of Science and Education published Guidelines for working with students with disabilities⁷⁰ as a framework for planning, implementation and evaluation of the educational process of students with disabilities intended for teachers, professional associates and principals of primary

⁶⁷ Croatia, Institute for Expertise, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities (*Zavod za vještačenje, profesionalnu rehabilitaciju i zapošljavanje osoba s invaliditetom*) (2021), [Public call for applications for financial assistance to employers who employ people with disabilities in earthquake-affected areas](#), 22 February 2021.

⁶⁸ Croatia, Croatian Union of Associations of Persons with Disabilities (SOIH), [Call for support to women with disabilities in Afghanistan](#), September 2021.

⁶⁹ Croatia, Croatian Union of Associations of Persons with Disabilities (SOIH), [Participate in the research on attitudes and needs of persons with disabilities regarding adequate housing](#), 9 September 2021.

⁷⁰ Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education (*Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja*), Guidelines for working with students with disabilities ([Smjernice za rad s učenicima s teškoćama](#)), 12 July 2021

and secondary schools that implement regular curricula. The Guidelines include instructions on identifying students with disabilities, the processes of assessing their educational needs and on planning, implementation and evaluation of the learning and teaching process of students with disabilities. Also, the Guidelines describe the roles of different participants in the educational process and appropriate forms of support to students. They are designed to provide teachers and professional associates with basic information on the essential components of the individualized curriculum and refer them to additional sources of learning, while respecting the professional autonomy of each employee involved in the process of education.

Following last year's warning of the Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities about the reference to the pandemics as an explanation for putting on hold the work on reform processes in the field of protection of persons with disabilities and failure to adopt acts to regulate some burning issues such as personal assistance, in 2021 certain legislative activity was launched. For instance, several documents were sent for public consultation, such as the National Plan for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the Social Welfare Act.⁷¹

The Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities is active in promoting the CRPD and its principles by holding trainings for various state and public bodies.

In 2021, Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities will hold a total of 6 workshops on anti-discrimination, gender equality and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in European and Investment Funds (ESI Funds). This is a part of the annual training program of the Ministry of Regional Development and European Union funds for all employees working in the management and control system of the European Structural and Investment Funds. Each workshop is attended by 20 participants who are introduced to the challenges of ensuring physical, communication and information accessibility, as well as practical examples regarding the fulfilment of horizontal conditions that enable implementation.⁷²

On 25 October 2021 in Zagreb Prison, Deputy Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities gave a lecture to the participants of the 39th Basic Course of the Judicial Police. Participants in the course are members of various criminal bodies: the Prison Hospital in Zagreb, prisons in Rijeka, Zadar, Split, Zagreb and Penitentiaries in Požega and Glina. The course began in October and will run for the next four months. One of the special subjects of this education is the topic "Persons with disabilities in the prison system". The participants are acquainted with the international and national legal framework for exercising the rights of

⁷¹ Croatia, Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities (*Pravobraniteljica za osobe s invaliditetom*), email correspondence, 5 November 2021.

⁷² Croatia, Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities (*Pravobraniteljica za osobe s invaliditetom*), email correspondence, 5 November 2021.

persons with disabilities, and a lot was said about the specifics of dealing with persons with different types of disabilities, ways of effective and correct communication. During the presentation, numerous practical examples from the work of judicial police officers are presented. Among other topics, the participants are acquainted with the basic principles of the CRPD. Participation in the implementation of the basic course program for the judicial police is a continuation of the cooperation of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities with the Training Centre of the Directorate for the Prison System and Probation of the Ministry of Justice and Administration.⁷³

On the occasion of marking the second anniversary of the Regional Office of the Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities in Split, the Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities organized a panel discussion entitled "The Gap between the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Reality - Guidelines for Real Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Local Community." Based on reports from citizens, monitoring of local policies and media announcements, several areas have been identified in which additional efforts are needed to improve the position of persons with disabilities and children with disabilities, which are the responsibility of local and regional self-government units: accessibility of public areas, mobility or accessible and / or organized public transport, partnership with local civil society organizations, provision of affordable housing and employment of persons with disabilities with special emphasis on the obligation of quota employment in local self-government units and legal entities owned by them.⁷⁴

8.2 CRPD monitoring at national level

On 29 March 2021, the Government of the Republic of Croatia held the first session of its Commission for Persons with Disabilities.⁷⁵ The discussion focused on the Draft Proposal of the National Plan for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2027 and the Action Plan for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2023. The European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030 and the Action Plan for the

⁷³ Croatia, Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities (*Pravobraniteljica za osobe s invaliditetom*), 39th basic course of judicial police ([39. temeljni tečaj pravosudne policije](#)), 25 October 2021.

⁷⁴ Croatia, Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities (*Pravobraniteljica za osobe s invaliditetom*), On the occasion of marking the 2nd anniversary of the Regional Office in Split, a panel discussion was held ([Povodom obilježavanja 2. godišnjice rada Područnog ureda u Splitu održana panel rasprava](#)), 26 October 2021.

⁷⁵ Croatia, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, [1st session of the Commission of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Persons with Disabilities held](#), 30 March 2021.

Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights were also presented at the sessions. The Commission members were informed about the continuation of the drafting of the Act on Inclusive Allowance and the Act on Personal Assistance. It was also agreed to hold a thematic session on the topic of disability certificate so that all participants have the opportunity to express their views and ideas.

Regional office of the Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities in the city of Rijeka officially started operating on 15 July 2021.⁷⁶ Due to the current epidemiological situation, the opening ceremony and presentation of the Rijeka Regional Office have been postponed and are planned for September 2021. The Regional Office will cover the areas of Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Istria, Lika-Senj and Karlovac counties, where more than 55,000 persons and children with disabilities live.

On 29 December 2021, the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities announced a public call⁷⁷ to elect members of the 5th convocation of the Expert Council of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities for a two-year mandate from 17 January 2022-31 December 2023. The call will be open until 12 January 2022. Within its mandate, the Expert Council, among other activities, conducts monitoring and promoting the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and national strategy documents, proposes measures to promote the rights and improve the position of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia, and cooperates with institutions and bodies in order to improve, protect, include and socially engage persons with disabilities.

⁷⁶ Croatia, Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities, [Press release on the opening of the Regional Office of the Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities in Rijeka](#), July 2021.

⁷⁷ Croatia, Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities, Public call to elect members for the 5th convocation of the Expert Council of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities, December 2021.

Annex 1 – Promising Practices

Thematic area	<p style="text-align: center;">EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please provide one example of a practice to tackle nationality-based discrimination, or discrimination against LGBTI people, such as awareness raising campaigns or training for relevant professionals. Where no such examples are available, please provide an example of an awareness raising campaign held in your country in 2021 relevant to equality and non-discrimination of EU citizens or LGBTI people, preferably one conducted by a national equality body.</p>
Title (original language)	Jednodnevni trening za policijske službenike o prepoznavanju i postupanju u slučajevima zločina iz mržnje
Title (EN)	One-day training for police officers on recognizing and conducting cases of hate crime.
Organisation (original language)	Kuća ljudskih prava Zagreb u suradnji s Britanskim veleposlanstvom, Ravnateljstvom policije i Policijskom upravom splitsko-dalmatinskom
Organisation (EN)	Human Rights House Zagreb in cooperation with the British Embassy, the Police Directorate and Split-Dalmatia Police Department
Government / Civil society	Civil society
Funding body	N/A
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	Human Rights House Zagreb web site

Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	January 2021
Type of initiative	Training for professionals
Main target group	Police officers
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	Regional
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>On 26 January 2021, the Human Rights House Zagreb in cooperation with the British Embassy, the Police Directorate and Split-Dalmatia Police Department organized a one-day training for police officers on recognizing and conducting cases of hate crime. Training was held online and 32 police officers from Split-Dalmatia County participated.</p> <p>The training consisted out of four lectures and workshops. The first was given by the Deputy County State's Attorney of the County State's Attorney in Zagreb, Natali Novak Koštić, who presented the criminal and legal aspects of hate crimes in Croatia, especially focusing on challenges in practice. The second, dealing with the specifics of criminal investigations of hate crimes, was given by the Head of Terrorism Service within the Police Directorate of the Ministry of Interior, Krešimir Mamić. The third lecture, especially important when it comes to discrimination of LGBTI people, was given by Marko Jurčić from Zagreb Pride, who dealt with recognizing the special needs of the victims and the specifics of hate</p>

	crimes against LGBTIQ persons. Lastly, lawyer Natalija Labavić of the Law Firm Bandalo & Labavić j.t.d., presented practical examples of the cases of hate crime at the national and international courts.
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	This type of training and cooperation can be transferable in other counties in Croatia and other member states of the European Union. The diversity of the training organizers and lecturers sets a good practice examples, as the participants of the training can see different perspectives of the stakeholders (public prosecutor, Ministry of Interior, LGBTI civil society organization and a lawyer) working in the area. Also, the basic program of the training can be transferred to other contexts as well.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	The participants at the training can be the multipliers of the knowledge gained at the training among other police officers. Also, the program can be transferred also to other thematic or geographical contexts.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact	The most important measurable impact is that 32 police officers participated at the training. As these officers are likely to be the first ones to contact the victims of hate crimes, it is important that they don't further discriminate and that they approach the matter correctly. In the long term, it will be possible to see whether this approached helped more precise and correct qualifications of hate motivated crimes in Split-Dalmatia County.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings	This type of training and cooperation can be transferable in other counties in Croatia and other member states of the European Union. The diversity of the training organizers can be transferred to other contexts, as each of them can give different expertise in the topic, mobilize participants, utilize different resources etc. Similarly, diversity of the lecturers can also be transferable, as the participants of the training can see different perspectives of the stakeholders (public prosecutor, Ministry of Interior, LGBTI

and/or Member States?	civil society organization and a lawyer) working in the area. Also, the basic program of the training can be transferred to other geographical contexts and other member States, as these phenomena have similar origins and practical challenges.
Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.	N/A
Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	N/A

Thematic area	<p align="center">RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE</p> <p align="center">Please provide one example of a promising practice to address racism and xenophobia. Please give preference to a promising practice about either: active cooperation with CSOs in addressing racism and hate crime; or combating racism and unequal treatment in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Where no such practice exists, please provide one example of a promising practice related more generally to combating racism, xenophobia, and related intolerances.</p>
Title (original language)	Protokol o postupanju u slučaju zločina iz mržnje
Title (EN)	Protocol for procedure in cases of hate crimes
Organisation (original language)	Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH
Organisation (EN)	Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia
Government / Civil society	Government
Funding body	Government
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	Protocol for procedure in cases of hate crimes, published in the Official Gazette
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	2011 - ongoing (revision in 2021)

Type of initiative	Legislative initiative
Main target group	Hate crime victims
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	Protocol for procedure in cases of hate crimes is a non-normative act defining the obligations of competent authorities involved in detection, handling and monitoring of results of processing hate crimes. The protocol also contains provisions regarding the composition and competence of the Hate Crimes Monitoring Working Group, the manner and content of cooperation among competent authorities involved in the detection, handling and monitoring of the results of processing hate crimes and other activities of these bodies.
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	The composition of the working group as defined by the protocol is transferable: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and State Attorney's Office as core institutions in charge of detection, handling and monitoring of results of processing hate crimes; national human rights institution or equality body or equivalent, CSOs representing vulnerable communities, and human rights watchdog organisation.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	The practice is ongoing for 10 years now and there is no reason for it to stop.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>Impact is measurable by concrete actions based on the protocol – established cooperation between state institutions and CSOs, the number of professional training sessions for police staff held, data collection process established, the number of public campaigns implemented etc. as all of these are listed under Articles 16–20 of the protocol.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>Most of the EU MS have similar institutional structure for combating hate crimes. This model of cooperation and exchange between different actors could be established in any MS.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>The practice involves beneficiaries through civil society organisations that are included in the Hate Crimes Monitoring Working Group, as stated in Article 16 of the protocol. There are four CSOs involved as representatives of vulnerable communities (Serbian, Jewish, LGBT and Roma) and one human-rights watchdog organisation.</p>

Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	N/A
---	-----

Thematic area	ROMA EQUALITY AND INCLUSION Please provide one example of promising practice related to the two topics addressed in the chapter. Please make the link between the selected practice and the topics explicit.
Title (original language)	Tjedni jednakosti
Title (EN)	Equality Weeks
Organisation (original language)	Centar za mirovne studije
Organisation (EN)	Centre for Peace Studies
Government / Civil society	Civil Society
Funding body	European Commission, DG Justice and Consumers, Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program (2014–2020)
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	Centre for Peace Studies – Equality Weeks Roma Youth Organisation – Equality Weeks
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	8 April 2021–26 September 2021
Type of initiative	9 Local cultural festivals

Main target group	General and local public; high school students
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	Local and national
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>The local culture festival 'Equality Weeks' took place in a total of 8 cities in Croatia. The cities were chosen based on a significant share of Roma in the local population. The 'Equality Weeks' were implemented in a participatory manner through cooperation with local Roma and pro-Roma CSOs.</p> <p>The festival consisted of several activities: an audio-visual exhibition 'One day life will be beautiful', a theatre play 'LOOKATME' (<i>POGLEDAJME</i>) performed twice in every city, public and digital space interventions, and visits to Roma communities. The 'Equality Weeks' were accompanied by an online campaign #ProBudiJednakost (Wake Up Equality) which followed the local cultural festival online and helped to disseminate information about the local activities nationally through media cooperation.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	Audio-visual exhibition; theatre play; public space/digital space intervention or flash mob; cooperation with local Roma and pro-Roma CSOs.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	Conducted locally and in cooperation with local Roma (communities), CSOs, public authorities, activists or artists, a local culture festival can be conducted with a rather small budget, and it can be adapted to local ideas, resources, capacities and needs. Since many efforts taken in the field of Roma inclusion face budgetary limits, sustainability is hampered, too. Low-cost activities such as a local culture festival that includes artistic and cultural activities are sustainable because they can be done with a small budget or in some cases no budget at all, especially when done in cooperation with local authorities that offer public venues etc.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>The aim of 'Equality Weeks' was to familiarise the (local) public and high school students with difficulties and injustices (young) Roma face in their everyday life and to give a voice to young Roma, who presented their personal stories and experiences to the public. The (local) public was introduced to the side of the story which is rarely heard and they were encouraged to have greater sensitivity and understanding towards the Roma population.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>Similar as above – the aim of 'Equality Weeks' was to familiarise the (local) public and high school students with difficulties and injustices (young) Roma face in their everyday life and to give a voice to young Roma, who presented their personal stories and experiences to the public. The (local) public was introduced to the side of the story which is rarely heard and they were encouraged to have greater sensitivity and understanding towards the Roma population. As this activity can be adapted to national and local needs and circumstances, the idea is transferable to other local and national contexts.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>The practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders as they were involved in the process of designing, planning and implementing the activities of 'Equality Weeks'. The CSO Roma Youth Organisation of Croatia and the pro-Roma artistic organisation Arterarij were Centre for Peace Studies' partners in the joint project Arise Roma thanks to which the local culture festival was funded. Moreover, in each city we cooperated with Roma communities and Roma and pro-Roma CSOs who contributed with their own activities and were involved in implementing the local cultural festival.</p>

Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	N/A
---	-----

Thematic area	INFORMATION SOCIETY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION Please provide one example of a promising practice related to the topics addressed in the chapter, i.e. data protection, and/or artificial intelligence systems.
Title (original language)	Rasprava "Utjecaj internetskih platformi na ljudska prava", Human Rights Film Festival
Title (EN)	Online discussion "The Impact of Internet Platforms on Human Rights" as part of Human Rights Film Festival
Organisation (original language)	Kuća ljudskih prava Zagreb
Organisation (EN)	Human Rights House Zagreb
Government / Civil society	Civil society
Funding body	N/A
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	Announcement of online discussion "The Impact of Internet Platforms on Human Rights" Recording of the discussion is available here
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	8 December 2021

Type of initiative	Online discussion on the impact of the Internet platforms on human rights and the challenges of protecting human rights – the right to freedom of expression, participation, non-discrimination, privacy and workers’ rights.
Main target group	Public institutions, independent institutions, trade unions, civil society
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>As part of the Human Rights Film Festival, on 8 December 8 2021, an online public debate was held on the impact of Internet platforms on human rights. The impact of online platforms in various aspects of private and public life, the European Union's plans to regulate this area and the situation in Croatia were discussed by the following participants: Tena Šimonović Einwalter (Ombudswoman of the Republic of Croatia), Diego Naranjo (Head of Policy, European Digital Rights Initiative), Birgitte Kofod Olsen (co-founder of think-tank DataEthics), Iva Filipović (Digital Platform Workers' Union), Sunčica Brnardić (Croatian Federation of Independent Trade Unions) and moderator Tina Đaković (Human Rights House Zagreb).</p> <p>The participants concluded that the successful continuation of the use of Internet platforms in all spheres of public and private life requires an equal focus on the issue of platform responsibility, as well as ways to ensure that the operation of Internet platforms is as consistent as possible with human rights.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	Gathering of relevant national and international stakeholders from different sectors who are experienced in the topic and may provide an insight into implications of technological developments on human rights in various spheres of public and private life.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')</p>	<p>The practice is sustainable because it refers to the issue of growing importance that reflects in all spheres of social life. Public debate concerning the implications of online platforms and artificial intelligence on human rights is at its beginnings and it is expected to continue in the future, along with the development of new technological solutions that may have implications on human rights.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>Through interest and response that followed the organization of the discussion. Along with the contribution to the discussion from different national and international experts, national media outlets have also shown interest for the topic and conclusions of the discussion which were presented by the organisers on several radio and TV shows.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>The practice is transferable because all Member States are facing the challenges of balancing human rights and technological developments. Considering that it is relevant to regulate this issue on national and EU level, fostering public discussion on this topic is of interest to all Member States, including the exchange of experience among experts from other countries.</p>

<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>Relevant experts from different sectors (ombuds institution, NGO, trade union, think tank) were included in the discussion as panellists where they had the opportunity to share their experiences and views on the impact of digital technologies on human rights.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Thematic area	RIGHTS OF THE CHILD Please provide a promising practice related to the topics addressed in the chapter.
Title (original language)	Za snažniju obitelj
Title (EN)	For a Stronger Family
Organisation (original language)	Ministarstvo rada, mirovinskoga sustava, obitelji i socijalne politike Ured UNICEF-a za Hrvatsku
Organisation (EN)	Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy UNICEF Office for Croatia
Government / Civil society	Government and civil society
Funding body	Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy UNICEF Office for Croatia
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	UNICEF website Results of "For a Stronger Family"
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	Started in July 2017

Type of initiative	Education of professionals, support for parents and carriers
Main target group	Professionals who work with children, parents, carriers
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>The Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy and the UNICEF Office for Croatia started an initiative that aimed to: develop professional tools and improve assistance and support for primary families; standardize assessment, licensing, education and support for foster care families; educate professionals who work with children and families.</p> <p>Through the initiative, more than 2600 experts from the social welfare system attended training and were provided with educational materials, a new model of support for parenting has been developed, including a support programme for fathers. A training programme for foster families and new tools for monitoring the quality of foster care services have been developed and have so far reached 1,294 foster families and 2,214 children in foster care.</p> <p>More than 900 experts from the judiciary, police, health and education system attended training and guidelines to strengthen multi-sectoral cooperation were adopted.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	The entire initiative is easily transferable to local and regional self-government units and/or other EU member States if enough human and financial resources are provided.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')</p>	<p>This practice is sustainable because trained professionals can share their knowledge with other colleagues, the implemented training programmes can be reused by organizing new trainings, and produced educational materials can be used for training and other purposes for as long as needed.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>The impact of this initiative can be measured by the number of professionals that were trained, number of materials that were created, number of training programmes that were implemented, and the number of children, families and foster families that were reached by the initiative.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>The entire initiative is easily transferable to local and regional self-government units and/or other EU member States if enough human and financial resources are provided.</p>

<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>The practice may involve beneficiaries and stakeholders in the review of the implementation by evaluation questionnaires filled out during trainings.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	<p>Produced materials can be reviewed by professionals, implemented trainings by participants, and the reach of the entire initiative is visible from the number of people involved in trainings, meetings etc.</p>

Thematic area	ACCESS TO JUSTICE Please provide one example of a promising practice related to the topics addressed in the chapter.
Title (original language)	Zaustavimo osvetničku pornografiju!
Title (EN)	Stop Revenge Pornography!
Organisation (original language)	B.a.B.e. Budi aktivna. Budi emancipiran.
Organisation (EN)	B.a.B.e. Be Active. Be Emancipated.
Government / Civil society	Civil society
Funding body	European Commission; DG Justice and Consumers; Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program (2014–2020)
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	Stop Revenge Pornography! – website babe.hr Sentence of up to three years in prison for revenge pornography – website babe.hr Petition · Stop Revenge Pornography! · Change.org
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	The campaign started on 13 May 2021 and ended on 31 July 2021.

Type of initiative	Public campaign, Petition, Support for victims
Main target group	Victims of misuse of sexually explicit content
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	Association B.a.B.e. submitted a proposal amending the Criminal Code in such a way to include revenge pornography as a separate criminal offence, punishable with a prison sentence up to one year, or more if the recording was made available to a wider number of people through internet or similar tools. To raise public awareness about the issue of revenge pornography and to increase the impact on decision makers, as part of the campaign, B.a.B.e. organised a petition signed by more than 10,000 people requesting amendments to the Criminal Code.
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	During their campaign, B.a.B.e. used the right to petition to increase the impact of their request. According to national and EU legislation, any citizen and any natural or legal person has the right to petition. The legal concept of petition is highly transferable and should be frequently used to achieve participation and active citizenship.
Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')	This practice is sustainable because it requires minimal funds and basic digital knowledge. Websites as change.org are available to all people and can be easily used to reach a great number of people, even during lockdowns.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>The result of B.a.B.e.'s campaign and the petition was an Amendment to the Criminal Code which included the misuse of sexually explicit content as a criminal offence.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>The right to petition is one of the fundamental rights in the EU legal system. All private and legal entities have the right to petition.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>The petition 'Stop Revenge Pornography!' was signed by more than 10,000 people, including victims of revenge pornography. By signing the petition, they managed to raise their voice and express their opinion about the need of sanctioning such behaviour and protecting the victims.</p>

Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.	N/A
---	-----

Thematic area	Developments in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Please provide one example of a promising practice related to projects or programmes implementing the CRPD or promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.
Title (original language)	Kampanja „Je li osobama s invaliditetom u RH primjereno stanovanje lutrija?“
Title (EN)	Campaign 'Is adequate housing a lottery for persons with disabilities in Croatia?'
Organisation (original language)	<p>The campaign was launched by 13 national associations of persons with disabilities included in the 8th Knowledge Centre (a kind of a think-and-do tank) in the field of improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities. The organisations are as follows:</p> <p>Zajednica saveza osoba s invaliditetom Hrvatske – SOIH Hrvatski savez slijepih Hrvatski savez gluhih i nagluhih Savez društava multiple skleroze Hrvatske Savez društava distrofičara Hrvatske Hrvatski savez gluhoslijepih osoba „Dodir“ Hrvatske udruge paraplegičara i tetraplegičara Hrvatski savez udruga osoba s tjelesnim invaliditetom Hrvatski savez udruga cerebralne i dječje paralize Hrvatski savez udruga invalida rada Hrvatski savez udruga za osobe s intelektualnim teškoćama Savez udruga za autizam Hrvatske Savez civilnih invalida rata Hrvatske</p>

Organisation (EN)	<p>Croatian Alliance of Associations of Persons with Disabilities – SOIH Croatian Association of Blind Persons Croatian Association of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons Croatian Alliance of Associations of Persons with Multiple Sclerosis Societies Croatian Alliance of Associations of Persons with Muscular Dystrophy Croatian Association of Deafblind Persons "Dodir" Croatian Association of Paraplegic and Tetraplegic Persons Croatian Alliance of Associations of Persons with Physical Disabilities Croatian Alliance of Associations of Persons with cerebral palsy and polio Croatian Association of Disabled Workers Croatian Alliance of Associations of People with Intellectual Disabilities Croatian Autism Association Croatian Association of Civilian War Invalids</p>
Government / Civil society	Civil society
Funding body	National Foundation for Civil Society Development
Reference (incl. URL, where available)	Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities – website
Indicate the start date of the promising practice and the finishing date if it has ceased to exist	8 September 2021

Type of initiative	Campaign for the adoption of legal framework in the field of social housing, aimed at enabling persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups to exercise their right to adequate housing
Main target group	Persons with disabilities, other vulnerable groups facing poor living conditions
Indicate level of implementation: Local/Regional/National	National
Brief description (max. 1000 chars)	<p>On 8 September 2021, 13 national associations of persons with disabilities launched a campaign 'Is adequate housing a lottery for persons with disabilities in Croatia?'. The aim of the campaign is to adopt an appropriate legal framework for social housing in the Republic of Croatia, which will consist of the Social Housing Act and the Housing Policy Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030.</p> <p>According to the campaign, the Republic of Croatia must provide sufficient resources and prioritise the needs of vulnerable and marginalised individuals or groups living in precarious housing conditions, especially persons with disabilities. The organisations involved advocate for the provision of a sufficient amount of adequate and affordable social housing units to meet the housing needs of all individuals and groups who cannot afford housing under market conditions.</p> <p>In the frame of the campaign, the organisations started conducting research that aims to collect socio-demographic data of persons with disabilities, as well as their attitudes on their own experience related to social housing.</p>
Highlight any element of the actions that is transferable (max. 500 chars)	The main elements of the practice are transferable to other topics and settings. Those elements include joint campaigns by CSOs active in a specific field, conducting research and needs assessments within the relevant community, and advocating to decision makers.

<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as sustainable (as opposed to 'one off activities')</p>	<p>Appropriate policies and measures in support of adequate housing are crucial to balance and strengthen the economic development of housing, so that society as a whole benefits and provides an accessible and adequate living environment and independent living for people with disabilities. The need to ensure adequate living conditions for vulnerable groups is a constant factor in different social settings. Therefore, it is not likely that the problem of accessible housing will be solved through one campaign, but it can nevertheless contribute to positive developments.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as having concrete measurable impact</p>	<p>The impact of this initiative can be measured through the adoption of the Social Housing Act and the Housing Policy Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030, as well as by measuring the amount in which the suggestions and ideas of the organisations that launched the campaign were taken into consideration when drafting those legal and policy documents.</p>
<p>Give reasons why you consider the practice as transferable to other settings and/or Member States?</p>	<p>Social rights and access to housing are important issues in every EU Member State. Civil society organisations dealing with rights of certain vulnerable groups have the best insight into main problems and challenges of the respective community. This practice is easily transferable to other settings as it may be reflected in similar joint initiatives and campaigns mounted by actors who are familiar with problems certain communities face. They can communicate detected problems and propose solutions to decision makers.</p>

<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design, planning, evaluation, review assessment and implementation of the practice.</p>	<p>The practice involves beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design and planning of the practices, considering that the organisations who initiated the practice are conducting research in order to collect socio-demographic data of persons with disabilities and their attitudes connected to social housing. Further advocacy activities related to adequate living conditions and social housing could be based on the input collected directly from the wider range of members of the affected groups.</p>
<p>Explain, if applicable, how the practice provides for review and assessment.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Annex 2 – Case Law

Thematic area	EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION Please provide one high court decision addressing discrimination against EU citizens based on nationality or against LGBTI people. Where relevant, always highlight any relevance or reference to multiple or intersectional discrimination in the case you report.
Decision date	<u>No case law has been identified for this thematic area.</u>

Thematic area	RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE Please provide the most relevant <u>high court</u> decision concerning the application of <u>either</u> the Racial Equality Directive or the Framework Decision on racism and xenophobia, addressing racism, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance more generally.
Decision date	<u>No case law has been identified for this thematic area.</u>

Thematic area	ROMA EQUALITY AND INCLUSION Please provide the most relevant high court decision addressing violations of fundamental rights of Roma and Travellers.
Decision date	<u><i>No case law has been identified for this thematic area.</i></u>

Thematic area	ASYLUM, VISAS, MIGRATION, BORDERS AND INTEGRATION Please provide the most relevant high court decision – or any court ruling – relating to the implementation of the <u>right to an effective remedy</u> in the context of storing data in national large-scale databases and in EU IT systems (Eurodac, VIS, SIS) delivered in 2021.
Decision date	<u><i>No case law has been identified for this thematic area.</i></u>

Thematic area	INFORMATION SOCIETY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION Please provide the most relevant high court decision related to the topics addressed in the chapter, i.e. data protection, and/or artificial intelligence systems.
Decision date	21 December 2021
Reference details	Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, Joint decision on cases No: U-II-5417/2021, U-II-5569/2021, U-II-5570/2021, U-II-5717/2021, U-II-5782/2021, U-II-5783/2021, U-II-5919/2021, U-II-6005/2021, U-II-7005/2021, U-II-7006/2021 Decision available at web site of the Constitutional Court of the RoC .
Key facts of the case (max. 500 chars)	<p>The Constitutional Court did not accept the proposals for review of constitutionality of the Civil Protection Headquarters' decisions introducing a special security measure of mandatory testing for SARS-CoV-2 virus of all employees in the healthcare system and in the social welfare system which shall be performed at least twice a week, unless the employee has been vaccinated or has overcome the Covid infection.</p> <p>Several proposals for constitutional review have been submitted, some of them on the basis of applicants' claim that employees of the health care and social welfare system are thereby put in an unequal position compared to others, as well as that the questioned decisions violate privacy and personal and labour rights of non-vaccinated employees who are exposed to stigmatisation and their personal data is revealed through testing obligation.</p>

<p>Main reasoning/argumentation</p> <p>11 (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>The Constitutional Court did not accept the proposals for constitutional review. It found that, given the deteriorating epidemiological situation and increased risk of infection, it was necessary to introduce a measure to reduce the risk of employees of health and social welfare institutions infecting the patients and users.</p> <p>The Constitutional Court found that in this particular case, the legitimate aim of the obligation to conduct Covid-19 test is primarily to protect patients and users of social care institutions and to protect lives and health of employees in the health care and social care systems, thereby ensuring the sustainability of these systems.</p>
<p>Key issues (concepts, interpretations) clarified by the case (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>The Constitutional Court found that, in addition to the undisputed legality and legitimacy of the goal, the Civil Protection Headquarters decided on all relevant factors for the adoption of disputed decisions that were available at the time of their adoption, and determined a measure that is appropriate, necessary and proportionate to the goal, and at the same time does not represent an excessive burden for its addressees.</p> <p>That is because the challenged measures introduced mandatory testing, and not vaccination, which is why the Court emphasized that employees are left with a choice between free and available vaccinations and free testing conducted upon arrival at work, at least twice in seven days.</p>
<p>Results (sanctions) and key consequences or implications of the case (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>The Constitutional Court rejected the proposals for review of constitutionality of the Civil Protection Headquarters' decisions because it found that the requirement of obligatory testing of unvaccinated employees of healthcare and social welfare institutions has an objective and reasonable justification. The Court concluded that the measure has a legitimate aim and is proportionate in the sense that a fair balance has been struck between the interests of the community and respect for the rights and freedoms of individuals.</p>

Key quotation in original language and translated into English with reference details (max. 500 chars)

"Zaključno, Ustavni sud ocjenjuje da je pri donošenju osporenih odluka Stožer vodio računa o ravnoteži između potreba i zaštite društva u cjelini i ljudskih prava pojedinaca. Zbog svega navedenog Ustavni sud prihvaća da je donositelj propisa ispravno utvrdio sve relevantne čimbenike te uzimajući u obzir najbolji interes stanovništva s aspekta zaštite zdravlja i života donio osporene odluke u svrhu provedbe legitimnog cilja - zaštite života i zdravlja te stabilnosti zdravstvenog i sustava socijalne skrbi." (str.39, točka 23. Rješenja)

In conclusion, the Constitutional Court finds that in adopting the disputed decisions, the Headquarters took into account the balance between the needs and protection of society as a whole and human rights of individuals. Due to all the above, the Constitutional Court accepts that the legislator correctly identified all relevant factors and, taking into account the best interests of the population in terms of health and life protection, adopted disputed decisions in order to implement the legitimate goal - protection of life and health and stability of health and social care systems. (p.39, point 23 of the Decision)

Thematic area	RIGHTS OF THE CHILD Please provide the most relevant high court decision related to the topics addressed in the chapter.
Decision date	25 February 2021
Reference details	Presuda Vrhovnog suda RH br. Kžzd 1/2021-4 Judgment of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia No. Kžzd 1/2021-4 Vrhovni sud potvrdio maksimalnu kaznu za silovanje maloljetnice - Novi list Novi list (2021), 'Supreme Court upheld the maximum sentence for raping a minor', 23 March 2021
Key facts of the case (max. 500 chars)	The defendant was found guilty of criminal offences of rape and criminal threat. He was a friend of the child's mother, staying at the victim's house. In the evening, he began to touch the victim inappropriately, although the minor unequivocally opposed physical contact. He held her hands and performed a violent sexual intercourse. A week later, he threatened the victim's brother by phone and then sent a threatening text message demanding from the victim to drop criminal charges.
Main reasoning/argumentation (max. 500 chars)	The defendant is a recidivist. He was convicted of raping two women and got a prison sentence of eight years, after which he got a prison sentence of ten years for incest and rape of his underage daughter. He was repeatedly convicted of theft, criminal threat and causing grievous bodily harm. The defendant is a person who does not hesitate to commit serious sexual offences or other criminal acts. Another aggravating circumstance is that, at the time of the incident, the victim was a child.

<p>Key issues (concepts, interpretations) clarified by the case (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>The case is an example of a maximum prison sentence pronounced to a serious criminal with multiple convictions. The case is also an example that shows the need of prescribing adequate security measures with the aim of rehabilitation of offenders and prevention of crime.</p>
<p>Results (sanctions) and key consequences or implications of the case (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>The Supreme Court upheld the guilty verdict and maximum penalty according to Croatian law for rape of a minor. In addition, the Supreme Court upheld the guilty verdict regarding the offence of criminal threat. The defendant was sentenced to a prison sentence of 10 years and five months. The significance and character of aggravating circumstances justified the maximum penalty for this form of rape. Mitigating circumstances have not been found.</p>
<p>Key quotation in original language and translated into English with reference details (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>“Sve to jasno pokazuje da je optuženik kriminalizirana osoba koja ne preže od činjenja najtežih seksualnih delikata. Kriminalno ponašanje njegov je životni obrazac zbog čega ga je nužno izdvojiti iz društva na dulje vrijeme.”</p> <p>"All the above clearly shows that the defendant is a criminal who does not shy away from committing the most serious sexual offences. Criminal behaviour is his pattern of life, which is why it is necessary to separate him from society for a longer period."</p>

Thematic area	ACCESS TO JUSTICE Please provide the most relevant high court decision related to the topics addressed in the chapter.
Decision date	1 April 2021
Reference details	<p>Presuda i rješenje Vrhovnog suda RH br. Kžzd 28/2020-5, Kžzd 29/2020-4 Judgment and decision by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia No. Kžzd 28/2020-5, Kžzd 29/2020-4</p> <p>Ženu i djecu davio i mlatio metalnim šipkama. Dobio je 13 i pol godina zatvora - Večernji.hr (vecernji.hr) Večernji list (2021), 'Strangled and beat his wife and children with metal bars. Received 13 and a half years in prison', 29 April 2021</p>
Key facts of the case (max. 500 chars)	The defendant tried to kill his partner, whom he had repeatedly insulted and threatened before. He approached her from behind and wrapped a bandage over her mouth. The victim showed resistance and they fell to the floor. Their daughter tried to separate them, and the victim managed to break free and run away. Two days later, the defendant forcibly entered their family home and waited for them. Upon their return home, he attacked them with a metal bar.
Main reasoning/argumentation (max. 500 chars)	The Supreme Court stated that the court of first instance took into account the mitigating factor of the defendant's diminished capacity. The defendant partially pleaded guilty for punching the victims. He expressed partial regret for hitting his daughter. He endangered the lives of two people. He expressed utter recklessness for personal property and rights of the victims. The circumstances indicate that the crime was premeditated. In addition, the defendant was a recidivist.

<p>Key issues (concepts, interpretations) clarified by the case (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>This case is an example of inefficiency of the Croatian legal system to protect the victims, even in cases of recidivism.</p> <p>It is also an example of reducing sentences to serious offenders by taking into account mitigating circumstances.</p>
<p>Results (sanctions) and key consequences or implications of the case (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>The defendant was sentenced to 13 years and six months in prison according to the Supreme Court judgment which rejected his appeal against the judgment of the Varaždin County Court from July 2020. He was charged and convicted of seven offences, including three aggravated attempted murder, domestic violence and three violations of child's rights. He was also compelled to attend treatment for alcohol addiction.</p>
<p>Key quotation in original language and translated into English with reference details (max. 500 chars)</p>	<p>“Protivno žalbenim navodima, prvostupanjski sud je iscrpnom, temeljitom i savjesnom ocjenom dokazne građe pravilno zaključio da je optuženik svojim radnjama ostvario obilježja terećenih kaznenih djela, iz toč. 1. i 2. u stanju bitno smanjene ubrojivosti, odnosno u stanju smanjene ubrojivosti kod učina kaznenih djela iz toč. 3. izreke.”</p> <p>"Contrary to the grounds of appeal, the first-instance court correctly concluded based on an exhaustive, thorough and conscientious assessment of the evidence that the defendant through his actions committed the criminal offences he was charged with under point 1 and 2 in a state of significantly reduced accountability, and the criminal offence stated under point 3 of the operative part of the judgment in a state of reduced accountability."</p>

Thematic area	DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD) Please provide the most relevant court judgment, which quoted the CRPD or prominently referred to the CRPD in the reasoning.
Decision date	<u><i>No case law has been identified for this thematic area.</i></u>