

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE
ALLIANCE OF CIVILISATIONS
(2010 – 2012)

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I INTRODUCTION

The Alliance of Civilisations was established on July 14, 2005 on the initiative of the Spanish and Turkish Governments under the auspices of the United Nations. Even though this initiative came into existence as a result of the need to bridge the growing gap between Muslim and Western world, it will over time take on a wider scope, whereby the respect for human rights, multilateralism, good governance, combating all types of discrimination and the like will hold a more important place.

That same year (2005) the then Secretary-General of the UN Kofi Annan established the **High Level Group** whose main aim was to analyse the cause of contemporary polarisation between societies and cultures. The group of 20 eminent representatives from political and academic circles, civil society and media presented their findings in a Report in November 2006. The Report of the High Level Group represented a *key* document with a number of political recommendations and practical initiatives in the field of *education, youth, media and migration*. These four fields became the central area through which the Alliance of Civilisations endeavours to combat further polarisation and extremism in the world.

Among others, the High level Group recommended to the Secretary-General of the UN to name a **High Representative for the Alliance of Civilisations** and to commence with the activities of the forum of the Alliance of Civilisations, who would gather representatives from governments, international organisations and civil society. On April 26, 2007, the Secretary-General of the UN appointed the former President of Portugal Dr. Jorge Sampaio as the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilisations, and at the beginning of 2008, the First Forum of the Alliance of Civilisations was held in Madrid. Mr. Sampaio invited the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilisations, which now numbers over 100 countries, international organisations and bodies, to compile their national plans and strategies in order for them to be implemented throughout the Alliance.

In accordance with the recommendations of the High Level Group, the Alliance of Civilisations is structured around the following three goals: the development of a partnership network with governments, international organisations, civil society and the private sector in order to strengthen their interaction and cooperation within the UN system; developing and supporting projects which promote understanding and reconciliation between cultures at the global level, in particular between Muslim and Western societies and through four main fields of activity of the Alliance of Civilisations – education, youth, media and migration; establishment of relations and facilitating dialogue between groups who can act as moderating forces in times of growing intercultural tensions. The Alliance of Civilisations in its activities does not intend to duplicate already existing activities nor present it as a parallel actor in the already existing political relations, but to strive to assist in the creation of conditions for the better familiarisation and understanding between those who come from different cultural and religious surroundings. A further goal is to gather those groups which may act as an important factor in reducing the already existing tensions of a larger or smaller extent.

The Republic of Croatia, as a country at the cultural, civilisation and religious crossroads, and a country where Central and Eastern Europe meets the Mediterranean, Christianity meets with Islam and Judaism, has embraced this idea and joined the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilisations in May 2008. At numerous Forums, the Republic of Croatia has provided its support to the Alliance and emphasised that the Government of the Republic of Croatia will in its everyday policies include specific goals and practical measures by which the ideals of the Alliance of Civilisation would be broadened on a national, regional and global level.

Even though the Alliance of Civilisations is a global project, its full meaning materialises with the performance on a national and regional level, stimulating and implementing numerous initiative, which

contribute to the stability and prosperity to the Republic of Croatia, South-Eastern Europe and beyond. In this context, cooperation between countries in the region undertakes an important role where respect of others, mutual trust, broadening of good neighbourly relations and interpersonal understanding becomes the *credo* of the countries in the region. Continuous emphasis should be placed on the importance of „reconciliation“ of the past with the present, promotion of tolerance, peaceful resolution of disputes, respect of human rights and democracy in general. It is important for the removal of bias and stereotyping, as well as interreligious misunderstanding.

The above mentioned have given rise to the joint initiative for the organisation of a conference under the auspices of the Alliance of Civilisations, which was launched by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Spain and the Republic of Croatia (Moratinos and Jandroković). In fact, during the bilateral meeting between the Ministers the idea crystallised for the organisation of the conference in Sarajevo (held in the middle of December 2009) which was supported by the **Regional Cooperation Council**.

South-Eastern Europe has a number of characteristics – in addition to specific cultural and religious features, which should be seen as a treasure and should encourage intercultural dialogue. However, the events during the past twenty years have witnessed exactly the opposite, a large number of casualties and suffering whose consequences are still present today. In identifying and processing individual guilt, the whole region must be oriented towards European integration whose policies in the region should contribute to the stability and development of this part of Europe. Political leaders should have a crucial role in the process

As a candidate country for the European Union, the Republic of Croatia can be taken as a successful example due to its numerous activities on the global and regional level and its growing presence in many international organisations. Here we have to emphasise its membership in the **Security Council of the UN (2008 – 2009)** where it made a great progress from being a country which was subject of debates in this body to making important decisions on the global level. Its specific experiences in the field of conflict prevention and post-conflict management situations the Republic of Croatia offered as value added to the work and debates in the Security Council of the UN, and will, in this manner, continue its efforts in the future.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia continually emphasises the importance of cultural diversity, and the key document which confirms the Government's engagement in the promotion of these differences is the 2006 **Law on the Ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression**. The year 2008, which was declared by the EU as the **Year of Intercultural Dialogue**, and a number of activities which occurred in the Republic of Croatia as a result of this initiative, further strengthened the focus of the Republic of Croatia in respecting cultural diversity, not only in this area but broader.

The National Programme of the Republic of Croatia for the Alliance of Civilisations is composed of already existing national documents (programmes, plans, strategies, laws, undertaken and planned measures and activities) which are combined and presented in a manner which allows an overview of actions in the four mentioned areas of the Alliance during a three year period (2010 – 2012). Added was a fifth area, which places emphasis on the promotion of tolerance, understanding and intercultural dialogue towards **national minorities**, which is of special interest to the Republic of Croatia as a generator of regional stability based on the respect and promotion of human rights and freedoms.

At the end of this introduction to the National Programme of the Republic of Croatia for the Alliance of Civilisations, we hope that the whole programme, with its numerous related activities which have been implemented or will be implemented in the future, allows for the creation for its main aims, which the

Republic of Croatia will continue with its example and experience to provide full contribution not only at a regional but also at a global level.

II PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

1. YOUTH

As almost one quarter of the world's population is between 15 and 30 years of age, youth is one of the priority areas where the Alliance of Civilisations has directed its efforts. Extensive research has shown that the lack of possibility for employment results in the alienation, frustration and difficulties in the social mobility of youth around the world. Increased violence is one of the largest threats to world peace, and therefore finding the means to turn youth away from such actions is one of the basic aims of the Alliance of Civilisations. Inadequate inclusion of youth in politics and civil society has directed the activities of the Alliance of Civilisations towards assisting young people to participate and represent their own interests in social and political processes at the national, regional and international level. A global increase of youth organisations and associations in the last few years provides new possibilities for mobilisation – student exchange, sport activities and political participation contribute to the promotion of intercultural understanding and respecting diversity.

In order to create social, educational, cultural and material conditions for lasting benefit for youth and for their active, full and responsible participation in civil society, the Government has brought and is implementing measures drawn in a number of national documents¹, such as:

- **National Youth Programme 2009 - 2013** which refers to youth from 15 to 30 years of age, encompassing 7 areas, and consists of 53 measures which comprise of 157 implementing activities. The above mentioned activities include activities for youth participation in the community and civil society, as well as for their mobility, informing and advising, and promoting inter-culturalism.

Youth in this age compose 21.3% of the total population and they are a guarantee for the future well-being and the overall development of the Republic of Croatia. During the last half century, the percentage of youth has decreased from 27.7% to 20.6%. Similar demographic changes occurred in most European societies, and with the trend of an aging population, youth are additionally made a more valuable resource of society.

- **Activity Programme for Preventing Violence among Youth for 2009**, contains numerous measures which relate to the development of tolerance, peaceful resolution of conflicts, and encompasses a total of 41 measures which relate to the amendments and annexes to legislations

¹ - National Youth Programme from 2009 till 2013

- Activity Programme for Preventing Violence among Youth for 2009

- National Plan of Activities for the Rights and Interests of Children 2006 - 2012

- National Strategy for the Prevention of Behavioural Disorders among Children and Adolescents 2009 - 2012

- Activity Programme for Preventing Violence among Children and Youth and Protocol on Proceedings in Case of Violence among Children and Youth

- National Population Policy

- National Programme for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights from 2008 to 2011

- National Strategy for the Protection against Family Violence from 2008 to 2010 and Protocol on Proceedings in Cases of Family Violence

- National Strategy for Fighting Narcotic Abuse from 2006 to 2012

- National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development

and regulations (4), adoption of strategic documents in the field of preventing violence among youth (2) and priority prevention measures (35).

The purpose for the adoption of the measures is awareness of experts, parents, youth, professional and wider public about the problem of violence among youth, establishing systematic resolutions for the prevention and combating instances of violence among youth, and the reduction and removal of its consequences. The aim for the adoption of measures for the prevention of the occurrence of new cases of violence among youth was the education of experts who work with youth, increasing awareness of the public, parents and youth about the harmfulness of violence among youth, and implementing expert preventative activities for social – paediatrics workers aimed for youth and their parents.

Recommendations were also issued for local and regional governments (3) which relate to the implementation of the Law on Youth Advisory Boards, i.e. the establishment of county and municipal Youth Councils and the active participation of youth in planning, enactment and implementing measures for the prevention of violence among youth, planning and implementing priority measures, as well as establishing a Council for Prevention in all cities and recommendations to the media (5) which relate to reporting on positive examples youth behaviour and all recommended measures with the aim of reducing violence among youth and combating sensational reports in the media , as well as the percentage of violence shown.

- **National Strategy for the Prevention of Behavioural Disorders among Children and Adolescents 2009 - 2012** is the first strategic document in the field of preventing behavioural disorders in children and adolescents and relates to children and adolescents until 23 years of age bearing in mind that criminal sanctions towards minors can be executed until 23 years of age.

The general overall objective is to ensure the minimum conditions required for a high quality, successful and healthy growth and development of new generations, removal of risk factors responsible for the creation of behavioural disorders and existing behavioural disorders and their consequences.

It also consists of 22 measures with 74 activities in 4 fields (research on its existence, enhancing the system for the prevention of behavioural disorders in children and adolescents, family empowerment and local community empowerment). Activities contain numerous measures which relate to the promotion of equality, tolerance, peaceful resolution of conflicts and respecting diversity.

In accordance with the stated documents, the implementing activities as well as the analysis and research, it is evident that the inclusion of youth in civil society organisations, as well as their own self-organisation offers great possibility for the exchange of ideas and non-formal learning, and hence, additional possibilities for the creation of tolerance development and peaceful resolution of conflicts amongst youth. The inadequate inclusion of youth in the political processes, as well as their active participation in decision-making at the local and regional level, and their insufficient mobility directs the activities of the Alliance of Civilisations towards the above mentioned areas.

1.1. Aims

- Promotion of equality, multiculturalism, tolerance, peaceful resolution of conflicts and the participation of youth in the decision-making process as fundamental values to society;

- Improving the mobility of youth and their active participation in society.

1.2. Legal Framework

The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia sets out that the State protects motherhood, children and youth and creates social, cultural, educational, material and other conditions which promote the creation of the right to a decent life. This Constitutional obligation is embedded in the legal framework of the Republic of Croatia². The Law on Youth Advisory Boards, as the first law on youth in the Republic of Croatia, defines the advisory bodies for youth (15 – 29 years of age) in cities, municipalities and counties and opens the space for the participation of youth in community life and in the decision-making process.

1.3. Activities and Implementing Measures

- 1.3.1. Securing financial support for projects of youth association which promote tolerance, multiculturalism, peaceful resolution of conflicts and participation of youth in the decision-making process;
- 1.3.2. Encouraging youth for monitoring and implementing the National Youth Programme 2009 - 2013:
 - encouraging the organisation of conferences, round tables and youth panels,
 - stimulating the creation of local programmes for youth by local and regional governments and the participation of youth in its implementation and monitoring,
 - Creation of guidelines for the work of the Commissioner for Youth in government bodies,
 - marking the International Youth Day on August 12;
- 1.3.3. Encouraging the implementation of the Law on Youth Advisory Boards by local and regional government in order to establish them at a local and regional level;
- 1.3.4. Full inclusion of the Republic of Croatia in the implementation of the European Community programme „Youth in Action“;
- 1.3.5. Securing co-financing for the work of youth clubs and stimulating the establishment of new clubs;
- 1.3.6. Supporting the development of information centres for youth and quality information for youth;
- 1.3.7. Encouraging the initiative for respecting diversity and social integration of social marginalised groups (war affected areas, rural areas, islands and small towns);
- 1.3.8. Special measures in these areas which relate to civil society include:
 - improving programmes for up-brining and education on human rights and citizens democracy for Secondary School aged children in extracurricular activities;

² Anti-discrimination Act, Law on Volunteering, Family Law, Law on Upbringing and Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools, Law on Social Care, Act on Trade and Commerce, Act on Catering Industry, Act on the Restriction of the Use of Tobacco Products, Law on Games of Chance and Prize Competitions, Act on the Protection from Domestic Violence, Act on the Prevention of Disorder at Sporting Events, Fight Against Narcotics Abuse Act, Law on Offences Against Public Order and Peace, Criminal Code and Juvenile Courts Act.

- strengthening the inclusion of civil society organisation in the Republic of Croatia in cross border cooperation programmes and projects of the EU on the themes relating to youth policy;
- Stimulating networking and strengthening interpersonal cooperation of civil society organisations in the Republic of Croatia and the south-eastern Europe region and beyond in the area of implementing youth policy
- developing cooperation with civil society organisations in the implementation of development assistance policy of the Republic of Croatia in third countries in the field of youth policy.

2. EDUCATION

The right to education, as one of the universal, indivisible and inalienable human rights, is an essential instrument for the enjoyment of other rights and freedoms. Full realisation of the right to education necessarily implies learning about human rights. Respecting the right to education as a condition for the affirmation of human dignity, which is confirmed in international provisions on the right to education, governments have a historic responsibility to secure to all citizens the conditions to gain useful knowledge, including those essential for the protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms, in order for citizens to answer the complex challenges of modern time and contribute to their well-being and to the well-being of society as a whole.

In addition to the guidelines of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia which guarantees the right to compulsory and free education, adopted are further legal frameworks for the implementation of this right. Thus, the **Preschool Education Act** provides for the right to a systematic education and training from the earliest age. The **Law on Upbringing and Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools** implements the education in accordance with the general cultural and civilisation values, human rights and the rights of children, the principle of diversity and tolerance and active and responsible participation in the democratic development of society. The **Law on Vocational Education**, among other things, stipulates the principle of accessibility and establishing a gender balance of students, and the **Law on Adult Education** provides educational accessibility to all, with the aim of enabling individuals to participate in the learning process in accordance with their capabilities and needs. Furthermore, the **Law on Research and Higher Education** further strengthens the principle of equality and accessibility of higher education to all citizens, while the **Law on Quality Assurance in Research and Higher Education** guarantees the participation of all actors in the learning process for the successful enforcement and quality implementation of the principles of the **Bologna Process**.

In the Republic of Croatia, a number of national programmes have been adopted which have been integrated in the educational system³, such as the following documents:

- **Education System Development Plan for 2005-2010**, which as a strategic development document based on a comprehensive reflection and monitoring system of education in Europe and the world aims to: increase the quality of education as a function of lifestyle, economy and society based on knowledge and democratic principles and ensuring the right to education for all, and the development of high quality, accessible, adaptive and efficient educational system in order to create intellectual and human working capital as a key treasure to the Croatian state.

This Plan provides for the integration of the **European Reference Framework of Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning** which contains: democratic citizenship, adoption of the **Croatian National**

³ Programme of Activities for the Prevention of Violence among Children and Juveniles, School Security Programme, Programme to Prevent Addiction in the Educational System, National Programme for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons, Gender Equality Programme

Educational Standard (CNES) and the adoption of the **National Framework Curriculum for Preschool Education and Compulsory General Primary and Secondary Education**, and teachers' commitment to implementing human rights and democratic citizenship education.

- **Croatian National Educational Standard (CNES)** is a project of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, which began to reform the system of primary school education, and based on the experimental implementation of the Experimental Teaching Plan and Programme for Primary Schools and training of teachers, principals and support staff, with the aim of promoting new methods, forms and teaching strategies.

In 2006, the Curriculum Plan and Programme for Primary Schools was adopted, and in 2008, the Parliament adopted the State Educational Standard for Primary Education, and began with the drafting of the National Framework Curriculum.

The Curriculum Plan and Programme for Primary Schools includes education on human rights and democratic citizenship as an optional integrative one (in class teaching through programme activities and in the subject teaching through two special elective programmes). Encompassed education is of the importance for the promotion of ideas of the Alliance of Civilisations (human rights, identity and multiculturalism, peace and peaceful conflict resolution, preventing prejudice and discrimination).

- The **National Programme of Education for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship** was introduced in the educational system in 1999, and is implemented by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports⁴. It encompasses the fields of human rights, democratic citizenship, identity and interculturalism, peace and peaceful conflict resolution, preventing prejudice and discrimination, and sustainable development. Methods for its implementation is through *cross-curriculum* approach (subjects with themes related to human rights), elective courses, projects, teaching hours, extracurricular activities, and systematic training through the entire school curriculum and programme, and conducted from preschool (compulsory) through primary school (optional integrated activities) to secondary school level. During the ten year period, a number of preconditions have been developed for its successful integration – professional development for more than 4,500 educational personnel, appointment of team leaders of county councils for democratic citizenship and creating handbooks for teachers and textbooks for students.

- The **Croatian Qualifications Framework 2008 – 2012** is the instrument for the establishment of gained qualifications in the Republic of Croatia. It encompasses the creation of occupational standards (qualifications) and school curriculum and represents the harmonisation of education with the labour market needs and analysis of curricula. It is an important precondition for the administration of lifelong learning which is the backbone of a knowledge-based society. .

2.1. Aims

- Understanding the key values of democratic society, training for the promotion of education for human rights and democratic citizenship and inter-culturalism;

⁴ Its implementation is guaranteed and the National Programme for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2008 – 2011 and the Action Implementation Plan, which analyzes the current situation and recommends a set of measures for the promotion of human rights in the Republic of Croatia, including in the field of education.

- Awareness and training to comply with gender, social, national or racial equality and the equality regardless of one's beliefs, religion or political opinion;
- Acquisition of knowledge, values and attributes that promote the respect for others, especially development of empathy and solidarity to enable all members of society to responsibly participate in the democratic development of society of equal citizens and equal opportunities;
- Developing awareness of global interdependence and solidarity to enable joint life and activity on the Earth;
- Ensuring access to education for all under the same conditions according to personal abilities and to continue implementing measures to support vulnerable groups in society.

2.2. Legal Framework

Support for the implementation of education for human rights and democratic citizenship (in particular ensuring the right to education) is enshrined in a number of laws⁵ and strategies, of which (with the previously described in the introduction) we should point out:

- The **National Plan of Activities for the Rights and Interests of Children, 2006 – 2012** - which provides for the implementation of programmes for the prevention and control of violence and programmes to eliminate discrimination against children belonging to national minorities, Roma, foreigners and children with special needs;
- The **National Programme for Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015** with the fundamental goal of full integration of the Roma national minorities in society
- The **National Strategy for the Creation of a Sustaining Environment for Civil Society Development, 2006 – 2011** with the aim of involving civil society organisations in the implementation human rights policy;
- The **Strategy for the Development for Vocational Education in the Republic of Croatia, 2008 – 2013** with the principle of accessibility to ensure equal access to education and to promote equal rights and conditions of learning for all citizens.

2.3. Activities and Implementation Measures

2.3.1. Systematic training of teachers from preschool to higher school level in order to be qualified to educate about human rights, democratic citizenship and inter-culturalism with special emphasis to develop social and civil competencies and cultural awareness and expression in order to strengthen multiculturalism;

2.3.2. Implementation of Citizens Programmes and Basic Democracy for Students – the acquisition of knowledge, attributes and skills for problem solving in the community (topics: individual rights and

⁵ Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, the Act on the Use of Languages and Scripts of National Minorities and the Act on Education in the Languages and Scripts of National Minorities grants national minorities the right to education in their mother tongue, the Asylum Act, the Anti-discrimination Act and the Primary and Secondary School Textbooks Act

responsibilities, the rights of others; the development of personal and cultural identity; inter-culturalism; democratic citizenship);

2.3.3. Promotion of intercultural dialogue through debates – enabling students to develop intercultural dialogue speaking skills;

2.3.4. Training for school teachers about the Holocaust and the prevention of crimes against humanity in order to develop tolerance, prevention and combating anti-Semitism and intolerance towards difference;

2.3.5. Application of bilingual classes – attending some courses in English, German or French which implies understanding of cultures and civilisation in the area of speech;

2.3.6. The implementing of mediation (teachers conciliators and students conciliators in schools) – training of teachers and students at school and the local community for the peaceful conflict resolution;

2.3.7. Implementing the „Week of Lifelong Learning“;

2.3.8. Celebrating the „International Day of Literacy“;

2.3.9. Informing participants about the Alliance of Civilisations through public media, „the School Paper“, and especially on the web pages of relevant government bodies;

2.3.10. Inclusion of educational content that supports the goals and values of the Alliance of Civilisations in the curricula;

2.3.11. Special activities and measure in the field of civil society:

- Enabling the systematic transfer of knowledge and experience in the implementation of programmes of civil society organisations in the field of education on human rights and democratic citizenship, inter-culturalism and the preservation of cultural heritage with countries in the region;
- Developing programmes for the professional education and training of civil servants in relation to participatory democracy, civil society development and strengthening voluntarism;
- Increase the inclusion of civil society organisation in the Republic of Croatia in EU cross border cooperation programmes and projects relating to the implementation of informal educational programmes;
- Develop and support cooperation with civil society organisations in the implementation of development assistance policy of Croatia to third countries in the area of education policy.

3. MIGRATION

The Republic of Croatia by its geographic positions is at the crossroads of numerous migrations, especially between East and West. Economic development, transport connections, the needs of the labour market and open borders have accounted for the extensive migration. The tradition of emigration in Croatia dates back to the 16th century. The first major emigration wave was recorded in the second

half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The last emigration wave occurred during 1991 and 2001 as a result of the aggression on Croatia and its consequences. One of the tasks of the Republic of Croatia is the stimulation for the return of emigrants, especially those who left the homeland during the past decade. On the other hand, the trends from economically developed areas of the world are being felt, such as the migration movements of highly skilled people, qualified workers and business people. This all contributes to the present disproportion of supply and demand in the labour force market, that is, inability to obtain suitable profile of workers on the domestic labour market. To meet the challenges of international migration, countries must adopt new policies and practices which would regulate and manage migration routes. In this manner, the Republic of Croatia has adopted a Migration Policy.

In order to promote more efficient management of migration flows, significant efforts have been made in education, social welfare, health care and other areas of importance for the acceptance and integration of migrants in society, and for the prevention of xenophobia, discrimination, segregation and social marginalisation.

Apart from being a potential immigration country, the Republic of Croatia accepts the obligation to welcome and integrate aliens, who need international protection, and provide special protection to children of migrants and other vulnerable groups of foreigners.

The **Asylum Act** provides for the right to education for asylum seekers, asylees, aliens under subsidiary protection and aliens under temporary protection. Minor asylum seekers have the right to primary and secondary education under the same conditions as Croatian citizens, and which are provided within three months from the date of application for asylum, or a year if they do not know the Croatian language. Education for asylum seekers can be organised also in shelters for asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection are entitled to primary, secondary and higher education under the same conditions as Croatian citizens in accordance with special regulations. Asylum seekers have the right to training, retraining, skilling and specialisation under the same conditions as Croatian citizens. Family members of asylum seekers who have regulated their stay in the Republic of Croatia are entitled to education in accordance with the provisions in the **Aliens act**. Aliens with temporary protection are entitled to primary and secondary schooling and retraining and additional training under the same conditions as Croatian citizens.

The competent Ministry shall ensure conditions for the inclusion of asylum seekers in cultural, economic and social life – organise Croatian language courses, vocational training and education in Croatian history, culture and state organisation.

3.1. Fundamental Principles and Objectives of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia are:

- The principle of respect for and protection of human rights and freedoms, and the principle of non-returning (*non-refoulement*),
- The principle of State responsibility, primarily for immigration and emigration and regulating naturalisation,
- The principle of solidarity, international burden-sharing and responsibility for forced migration,
- The principle of long-term macroeconomic benefits,
- The principle of equality, freedom and mutual participation, which is based on the integration policy.

Migration policy objectives include creating a unified and systematic approach to the issue of migration to ensure:

- Transparent and efficient management system, legal or free migration of individuals, conducive to national development and economic growth,
- Equitable and modern system of compensation claims arising from the problems of forced migration,
- Clear, transparent and effective system of control and preventing illegal migration.

3.2. Legal Framework

The **Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia** provides a framework for comprehensive action in respect to international migration, and is governed by the following laws;

- Law on Croatian Citizenship
- Aliens Act
- Asylum Act
- Law on Monitoring State Borders

3.3. Activities and Measures to Provide for the Effective and Harmonised Implementation of Migration Policy are:

- 3.3.1. Creating the preconditions for the establishment of a population registry (Croatian citizens and foreigners);
- 3.3.2. Strengthening the capacity of administrative structures at national and local level, decide on the legal regulation of entry and residence for foreigners and asylum seekers;
- 3.3.3. Continuous amendments to the asylum system to ensure adequate protection of refugees and persons in need of international protection, under international humanitarian law and standards of the EU;
- 3.3.4. Development of a comprehensive analysis of the labour market – taking into consideration the supply and demand for certain professions with proposed measures to meet manpower needs;
- 3.3.5. The establishment and improvement of bilateral/multilateral cooperation with the countries of origin, transit and destination;
- 3.3.6. Implementation of activities aimed at raising public awareness about different aspects and causes and effects of migratory movements as a prerequisite for the prevention of xenophobia, prejudice and negative attributes towards foreigners.
- 3.3.7. Effective surveillance of state borders and border crossings (professionally trained security authorities to prevent smuggling and human trafficking and the detection of forged travel documents with the aim of discovering illegal aliens in the Republic of Croatia and their effective return to the country of origin or transit).
- 3.3.8. Specific measures in this area relating to civil society include:
 - Encouraging networking and cooperation of civil society organisations in Croatia with civil society organisations in Southeastern Europe and beyond dealing with migration policy

- Developing cooperation with civil society organisations in the implementation of development of assistance policy of Croatia to third countries in the area of migration and asylum policy.

4. MEDIA

The Republic of Croatia in its constitutional provisions guarantees the freedom of thought and expression through the freedom of press and other media, freedom of speech, public expression and free establishment of all institutions of public communication. The national legislation⁶ has been harmonised with the international treaties which the Republic of Croatia is a party to and the recommendations of the Council of Europe and European Union. Censorship is forbidden and guarantees the freedom of reporting and access to information.

In addition to protecting and promoting human rights, laws regulating the media contribute to media pluralism and diversity. The media have an important role in raising public awareness about the need to protect and promote human rights. On the other hand, the media actions can infringe human rights (violating the right to privacy), and encourage human rights violations („*hate speech*“). It is therefore necessary to harmonise the freedom of expression and the legal ban of „*hate speech*“ in which one should take care that the restrictive measures do not affect freedom of expression.

On the basis of legislation, the media are obliged to contribute to respect and promote fundamental human rights and freedoms. Special attention should be devoted to projects and programmes in the area of culture that protect and promote human rights. The media in any society has one of the most important roles in the protecting human rights, promoting tolerance and combating discrimination. The possibility of their influence in shaping public awareness is proportional to the need to promote cultural dialogue, tolerance and fighting against all forms of discrimination.

In this context, the **Croatian Radio-Television (CRT)** as the public television station has the obligation to spread awareness about the dangers of all forms of discrimination. For subscription CRT receives, 3% is allocated for programmes to encourage diversity and pluralism of the electronic media and programmes that promote tolerance among differences and are opposed to any discrimination (there are initiatives to be financed from this fund and non-profit media).

Also, the **Croatian Journalists Association (CJA)** works with civil society organisations whose primary mission are the freedom of information, protection of human rights, gender equality, and with the Ombudsman and other specialised Attorney Generals, to promote the values which are consistent with the objectives of the Alliance of Civilisation. This particularly applies to the free flow of information which promotes understanding and tolerance. As in the CJA operates the **Assembly of Journalists of National Minorities**, often is considered the treatment of national minorities in the media, and there is the idea of establishing a radio for national minorities at a national level.

The CJA actively participates in the legislative initiative, such as activities on projects on the application of the **Right to Information Act** and the proposal that the right of the citizen to information be entered into the Constitution – for democracy it is essential that all citizens, not just journalists, receive timely answers to questions addressed to bodies of public authority.

⁶ Media Act, Electronic Media Act, Croatian Radio-Television Act, Criminal Code, Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities.

According to the **Anti-discrimination Act**, the Office of the Ombudsman is given the power and warns the public on the occurrence of discrimination. To be sure, the greater tolerance and combating discrimination is extremely important to cultivate media ethics. To this end, the CJA intends, with the support of the Ombudsman, to establish a tripartite **Media Council** composed of representatives of publishers, journalists and civil society, as well as to create a new **Code of Honour for Croatian Journalists**.

The CJA promotes international contacts in order to develop media freedom and journalistic freedoms, which have a special role in the development of tolerance and encounters of civilisations and is included in the cooperation of self-regulatory body for media ethics and professional journalist organisations in the region. Furthermore, it maintains regular contacts with the Association of European Journalists, which promotes common European values in journalism.

- Within the framework of the Agency for Electronic Media, since 2005 the **Fund for Promoting Pluralism and Diversity of Electronic Media** has been in operation, whose funds are used to encourage the production and publication programs of electronic media at the local and regional levels on topics of public interest – the right of citizens to public information, national minorities, cultural creativity, the development of education, science and arts, creativity of Croatian dialects and the development of awareness of gender equality.

4.1. Aims

- Promoting pluralism and diversity of the media
- Ensuring the autonomy of the media
- Improving the compliance with the rules of journalistic ethics and professionalism

4.2. Legal Framework

The media regulations of the Republic of Croatia secure the protection of the media from political influence and guarantees media freedom and complete independence of the media. The **Media Act** regulates the conditions for the realisation of the principles of freedom of the media, as well as the rights and obligations of publishers and journalists, the method of achieving public ownership of the media, and controls the right to correction and response. The **Electronic Media Act** regulates the rights, obligations and responsibilities of legal and natural persons engaged in the production and publication of content programme and programming services via electronic media. The **Croatian Radio-Television Act** regulates the legal status, activity and methods of the CRT as a public electronic media owned by the Republic of Croatia. The **Croatian News Agency Act** (HINA) regulates the legal status, activities and practice activities of the agency owned by the Republic of Croatia.

The new **Electronic Media Act** adopted at the end of 2009, incorporated the provision of the Directive 2007/65/EC on audiovisual media services.

4.3. Activities and Implementation Measures

- 4.3.1. Encouraging the production and publishing of software content of electronic media on the local and regional level which are of public interest by the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity of Electronic Media;

- 4.3.2. Stimulation of regulations and effective implementation of media legislation and organisation of round tables, seminars and workshops for journalists, publishers, representatives of civil society;
- 4.3.3. The organisation of human rights education – journalists, editors and spokespersons in government bodies at the national and local levels and the EU Acquis Communautaire and acts of the Council of Europe concerning the media;
- 4.3.4. Strengthening the role of civil society in this field will be encouraged through:
 - Improving the legal and institutional framework for the operation of non-profit media with the aim of strengthening democracy and civil society
 - Developing training programmes for media representatives on issues of civil society, rule of law and combating corruption.

5. NATIONAL MINORITIES – Promoting Tolerance, Understanding and Intercultural Dialogue

Mutual respect, tolerance and understanding among different social groups in the country, particularly between majority and minority groups are necessary preconditions for the successful functioning of the state as a whole. The degree of democracy in each society is best seen in the relations of the majority towards the minority, that is, the effective protection of minority rights. At the international level, their clearly defined relationship based on mutual tolerance, understanding and respect is the key to peace, security and stability.

Minorities (national, religious, etc.) constitute a potential bridge of cooperation between states. This is of particular importance to the Republic of Croatia, which has been building a positive environment for national minorities through the promotion of tolerance, understanding and intercultural dialogue, also contributes to regional stability and the global objectives of the Alliance of Civilisations.

Individual and collective participation of national minorities in the realisation of their rights contribute to the strengthening of the democratic processes in society, and create an atmosphere of trust in state institutions and authorities at all levels, while a clear minority policy, **building an institutional framework**⁷ and fulfilling European standards of human rights, contribute to the improvement of their position. By carrying out such a minority policy, the Republic of Croatia directly contributes to strengthening its own European reputation and international standing as a regional leader.

Croatia has for a number of years actively participated in the field of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity within the framework of various international organisations (UNESCO, Council of Europe, EU INCP). In order to encourage cultural activities of national minorities, financial support is provided for the event „**Cultural Creativity of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia**“ in which national minorities present their culture.

5.1. Aims

⁷ The establishment of an institutional framework includes – the Office of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for National Minorities, the Office of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Human Rights, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Interior, the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia.

- Improving the rights of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia
- Developing a positive policy towards national minorities and implementing activities and campaigns of education and public awareness of Croatian citizens
- Combating stereotypes and prejudice towards national minorities
- Accelerating the realisation of the rights of Roma national minorities and their better integration
- Educating and encouraging self-awareness of Roma for social inclusion
- Improving the social inclusion of Roma, especially the youth
- Strengthening cooperation in the region and in the Mediterranean
- Preservation of cultural heritage as an integral part of sustainable development
- Creation of joint networks in culture and protection of cultural heritage
- Intensifying joint projects in the field of culture and cultural heritage protection

5.2. Legal Framework

In the Republic of Croatia, special efforts are made to protect, promote and improve the rights of national minorities. The **Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities (CARNM)** and **numerous laws**⁸ provide the foundation for a high level of protection of national minority rights in accordance with international documents, such as the use of language and script of national minorities, education in the language and script of the national minorities, the use of emblems and symbols, cultural autonomy, the right to preserve their religion and the establishment of religious communities, access to means of communication, self-organisation and association, the representation of national minorities in public administration, participation in public life. The **Action Plan for the Implementation of the CARNM** from June 2008 promotes additional efforts in ensuring the realisation of all guaranteed rights of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

The Implementation of the CARNM also represents the implementation of obligation arising from international treaties which the Republic of Croatia is a party to, with a focus on the **Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities** and the **European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages** and other international documents such as the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** and the **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**. In the framework of action to promote tolerance towards diversity and combating

⁸ The **Constitution of the Republic of Croatia** guarantees the protection of national minority rights, and provides that, other than general voting rights, national minorities have a special right to elect their representative in the Croatian Parliament, and guarantees the freedom to express their national affiliation, freedom to use their language and script and cultural autonomy.

The **Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities** standardises the right of members of national minorities which can be enjoyed individually or together with other persons belonging to the same or different national minority. These are: the right to private, public and official use of language and script, the right to use symbols and signs, the right to celebrate events and persons of importance to the historical-cultural identity of national minorities, the right to education in the language and script of the national minority, the right to belief, expression and religious understanding of the world, the right to form religious communities, the right of association, the right of access to media. In addition, regulated are the rights of national minorities to participate in public life and represent their interests at local and regional government levels. In this context, it is important to point out the right of national minorities to be represented in representative bodies at central, regional and local levels of government and proportional representation in judicial bodies and government authorities. The Croatian Parliament may through special legislation govern the exercise of special rights in accordance with specific position of national minorities in a particular area or depending on its numerical size and obligations under international treaties. The Constitutional Act provides for the possibility for political representation of national minorities in the Croatian Parliament, and in the current constitution of the Croatian Parliament, national minorities have 8 of their representatives, of which the largest national minority – the Serbian minority has 3 Members of Parliament.

discrimination, the **National Plan to Combat Discrimination 2008 – 2013**⁹ and the Action Plan for its implementation was created.

The protection of Roma national minorities occupies a special position in government policy – support is given for activities for the implementation of the CARNM, as well as for the **National Programme for Roma** and the **Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015**¹⁰, and continued increase in fund allocation from the State Budget for the needs of national minorities. Progress in the achievement of the rights of national minorities is visible through the regular annual reports on expenditures for the implementation of the CARNM.

In the broader context in relation to cultural diversity, the Republic of Croatia has committed itself to numerous documents in this field.¹¹

5.3. Activities and Implementation Measures

5.3.1. Implementation of the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the accompanying Action Plan

5.3.2. Organizing expert conferences on combating stereotypes and prejudice towards national minorities

5.3.3. In cooperation with the Judicial Academy of the Ministry of Justice, organisation of consultations with the presidents of the courts on the implementation of the Act on the Use of Language and Script of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia

⁹ The **National Plan to Combat Discrimination 2008 – 2013** affirms the current state, determines the objectives and planned measures to protect vulnerable social groups and ensure their equal inclusion in society in order to upgrade the existing system of protection against discrimination.

¹⁰ The **National Programme for Roma** – The Government of the Republic of Croatia in 2003 adopted the National Programme for Roma taking into account the specific position and problems of the Roma population and with the intention of providing systematic assistance to Roma to improve their living conditions and their participation in social life and decision-making processes in the local and wider community,. The Programme points to the basic problems that the Roma population encounters and contains a number of short and long-term measures in the areas of health, education, social welfare, employment, housing and status issues, which contribute to solving unresolved problems and successful integration of Roma, as well as improving the overall situation of the Roma community.

The **Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015** – The Republic of Croatia has, along with other Member States of the Decade (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Slovak Republic and Serbia) prepared the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion and assumed the obligation of its implementation in the next ten years. The measures envisaged in the Action Plan contribute to the elimination of marginalisation and discrimination of the Roma minority and poverty eradication, and in line with economic development and ensuring a higher standard of living. The Action Plan is complementary to the National Programme for Roma and represents a detailed breakdown into four areas suggested by the Roma community as priorities: education, health, employment and housing. In all four areas special attention was given to the rights of children and women, their education, health care, and inclusion of Roma in various forms of employment.

¹¹ Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Law on the Ratification of the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Community and the Republic of Croatia on the Participation of the Republic of Croatia in the Cultural Programme (2008 – 2013), Law on the Ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression

5.3.4. Continuous monitoring of the annual statistical overview of court proceedings conducted in the language of national minorities in accordance with the provisions of the Act on the Use of Language and Script of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia

5.3.5. Conducting public information campaigns on anti-discrimination provisions in the Criminal Code.

5.3.6. Conducting one-day workshops on combating covert discrimination at the Judicial Academy of the Ministry of Justice

5.3.7. Further upgrading of the existing system of judicial management of cases in a manner that within the framework of judicial statistics guided procedures for criminal acts of discrimination against a particular discriminatory reason should be given separately. In addition, a database of court cases (criminal and misdemeanour) for acts committed on a discriminatory basis

5.3.8. Implementation of the National Programme for Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015

5.3.9. Continued training and education of Roma, in particular women and youth to participate in decision-making processes and for exercising rights through involvement in social life

5.3.10. Allocation of space owned by the Government of the Republic of Croatia for extra-curricular, cultural and other forms of social inclusion

5.3.11. Continued cooperation with the BJCEM – Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (candidature of the Republic of Croatia to be host of the 16th BJCEM in 2013)

5.3.12. Further affirmation of the International Center for Underwater Archaeology – UNESCO Regional Centre

5.3.13. Cooperation of the Republic of Croatia with the activities of the Anna Lindh Foundation, further to accession of the Republic of Croatia to the Barcelona Process –Union for the Mediterranean in 2008

5.3.14. Celebrating Cultural Diversity Day on May 21 (free workshops and concerts)

5.3.15. Continued cooperation of the Republic of Croatia within the framework of the International Network of Cultural Policy (INCP) ¹²

5.3.16. Further cooperation in the project Bejahad (under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and UNESCO) ¹³

¹² The Network is engaged in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, that is, media and culture, the relationship between cultural diversity and globalisation, and cultural industries or cultural observatories.

¹³ The project of cooperation of the Jewish Community in South-East Europe with the aim of strengthening the unity and fellowship, encouraging creativity and preserving the Jewish cultural heritage

5.3.17. Strengthening the role of civil society in this area will be encouraged through:

- developing cooperation with civil society organisations in the implementation of programmes and projects relating to strengthening tolerance, intercultural dialogue and protection of right of national minorities
- fostering the inclusion of civil society organisations in community programmes that encourage strengthening of intercultural dialogue, a better mutual understanding and solidarity between citizens of Member States, and also candidates and potential candidates for EU membership (e.g. Europe for Citizens Programme, Culture, etc.)

III INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The **National Programme for the Alliance of Civilisations (2010 – 2012)** was compiled by the Working Group, which will after its adoption by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, continue to monitor its implementation as well as other activities relating to the Alliance of Civilisations initiative, including its regional and global dimension.

The Working Group is composed of representatives from:

- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration**
(Coordinator for the process of the compilation of the National Programme)
- **Ministry of Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity**
(Sub coordinator for Area 1: YOUTH)
- **Ministry of Science, Education and Sports**
(Sub coordinator for Area 2: EDUCATION)
- **Ministry of Interior**
(Sub coordinator for Area 3: MIGRATION)
- **Ministry of Culture**
(Sub coordinator for Area 4: MEDIA)
- **Office for National Minorities, Government of the Republic of Croatia**
(Sub coordinator for Area 5: NATIONAL MINORITIES)
- **Ministry of Justice**
- **Office for Human Rights, Government of the Republic of Croatia**
- **Office for NGO's, Government of the Republic of Croatia**
- **Croatian Journalist Association**

In its capacity as coordinator of the National Programme and in cooperation with representatives of the Task Force, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration will monitor the implementation of the National Programme periodically, in accordance to the needs and dynamics of development in the areas covered.

Detailed evaluation is anticipated after the completion of the three-year National Programme based on the reports of the competent authorities, which, the sub coordinators responsible for specific programme areas, will unify. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration will submit a summarised overview to the Government of the Republic of Croatia for adoption.