



PROJEKT GRAĐANSKIH PRAVA Civil Rights Project

Activity Report – July/August 2011

Office activities

In the reporting period, CRP Sisak received **781** clients, out of which there were **373** new clients, both in the CRP Sisak office and the field offices in Hrvatska Kostajnica, Dvor, Gvozd, Krnjak and Glina.

Target groups:

NEW clients by status:

<i>Status</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Domicile	107
Returnee	192
Settlers	7
Refugee	25
Not defined	42
<u>Total</u>	373

NEW clients by reception mode:

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Office	173
Field	200
<u>Total</u>	373

TYPE OF CASE	NUMBER OF EVENTS
Citizenship	29
Documents and status	189
Ownership	132
Pension and health and social security	104
Housing care/tenancy rights	323
Labour	14
Free legal aid	106
Crime cases/misdemeanour	21
Other: other legal issues, information, etc.	98
TOTAL	1016

During the reporting period, there were **350** successfully solved requests. They mainly relate to documents, establishment of ownership and other cases.

ASSISTANCE

Appeals/complaints	32
Lawsuits	22
Administrative lawsuit	5
Letters	71
Requests/applications/proposals	117
Submissions	134
Legal counselling	507
Quick advises	176
TOTAL	1064

Legal issues

The legal issues that CRP has been dealing with remain the same, as it can be seen in the table above (type of case.) Also, despite of some changes in proceedings, the problems related to cases remain generally the same: lengthy proceedings, postponing of court hearings, etc. The courts and administration do not act impartially when the State is involved in the case, but exactly the opposite, being completely on the side of the State. The laws, even when they are good, are not being applied well, etc.

The above said may be demonstrated with many of the CRP cases that relate to different legal issues.

Namely, the **status and citizenship issue** remain problematic for returnees. The status (temporary/permanent residence) became even more problematic recently. Even the clients that are provided with housing care, mainly with flats outside the Areas of Special State Concern, are being rejected with their requests for temporary residence. Those are the clients that had been living for years and/or decades in Croatia, but now they are treated as foreigners. Furthermore, they are being rejected for first temporary residence. The explanation for rejection mainly consists of one

sentence and it mainly says that clients did not prove their reason for stay or that they represent danger for public order, health and security. E.g. CRP clients cases nos. 12073, 5439, 13269, 11405, etc.

Other problem related to the above one is **health insurance of the returnees** that are considered foreigners in Croatia. They have to pay for their health insurance, though they have other basis for insurance, such as being family member of insured person or similar, and they are returnees to Croatia, and not “classical” foreigners, so they should be treated differently, especially if Croatia is encouraging return of refugees. E.g. CRP clients nos. 12073, 5439, 11405, etc.

Housing case programme is generally very problematic, especially outside the ASSC. First of all, it is very difficult to satisfy criteria for housing care. But if the client satisfies the criteria and finally gets the apartment, the apartment is completely empty, i.e. with no furniture and equipment whatsoever. So, it is very difficult to furnish the apartments, having in mind the fact that clients have right to housing care only if they were refugees, if they have not had and property, etc., which clearly says that we are talking about socially vulnerable population. It is even more difficult for those who have no Croatian citizenship and have to pay for health insurance, as well as fees for regulation of status. E.g. CRP clients nos. 3779, 11222, 4502, etc.

Related to the above, there is a problem of buying off the flats, which is only to start. Namely, the flats are to be bought at relatively convenient prices, but if we are talking about the socially vulnerable population, it is questionable, especially if the clients need to pay for status fees and health insurance, etc. Furthermore, the question is how those who have no citizenship can buy apartments.

Therefore, there are still many obstacles related to the housing care program, i.e. return of refugees to Croatia, even after over 15 years.

Other activities

On 2 July 2011 in Sjeverovac, CRP organized one day study visit to a family farm Džakula. 40 people, mainly rural population from the Petrinja area, were involved. There was a theoretical part, a lecture given by Mr. Rodoljub Džakula on farming and agriculture trends. Mr. Džakula also organized a very interesting tour around the village of Sjeverovac where he had his farm.

On 7 July 2011 in Skopje, Macedonia, CRP participated at the regional conference on free legal aid to promote access to justice in South-Eastern Europe. The conference was organised by the OSCE Mission to Skopje in cooperation with the Justice Ministry. Government representatives and practitioners involved in free legal aid in Macedonia, BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia shared their experiences and lessons learned.

On 8 July 2011 in Zagreb, CRP Sisak participated at the workshop on housing care, Law on Areas of Special State Concern and buying off of flats. The workshop was

organised by the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management and UNHCR.

On 29 July 2011 in the Centre for Social Welfare Sisak, CRP participated at the coordination meeting of NGOs and others involved in providing of social services to socially vulnerable population. It was once again agreed that the NGOs and institutions should work more closely and exchange information in order to coordinate the work. The new Law on Social Welfare was commented and it was concluded that there were still many issues not covered clearly and completely.

During July 2011, CRP met with NGOs – legal aid providers in Slavonia. There were meetings with the Centres for Peace Vukovar and Osijek and “Izvor” Tenja, as well as with two attorneys from Osijek and Vukovar. All of them are not satisfied with the Law on Free Legal Aid or with its Amendments. They all have very low number of vouchers for free legal aid. At the same time they have lots of free legal aid cases, which they do through other projects, systems.

CRP Sisak and CRI Klinac organised firewood donation to Gligo Simić in the village of Klinac on 3rd of August 2011. Firewood was donated by humanitarian work of CRI in Klinac. Namely, CRI was organising cleaning and maintaining of roads in the village and its surrounding during July 2011. As a result of that activity some firewood was secured and CRI members decided to donate it to their member Gligo Simić, who could not manage to buy it himself due to his poor social and health status. Nevertheless, maintaining of the roads in the village is precondition for implementing of the future CRP Sisak and CRI in Klinac activities there.

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