



# PROJEKT GRAĐANSKIH PRAVA

## Civil Rights Project

Activity Report – June 2009

### Office activities

In the reporting period, CRP Sisak received **234** clients, out of which there were **30** new clients and **204** old clients revisiting **303** times, both in Sisak and Glina. There were **11** court cases dealt with by the CRP external lawyer before the municipal courts in Sisak and Glina.

### Target groups:

#### *NEW clients by status:*

<i>Status</i>	<i>Totals</i>
<b>Domicile</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Refugee</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Returnee</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Bosnian Croat</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Not defined</b>	<b>1</b>
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b>30</b>

#### *NEW clients by reception mode:*

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Totals</i>
<b>Office</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Field</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Letter</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Phone</b>	<b>1</b>
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b>30</b>

As it can be seen in the above statistics, CRP continued working in Glina, as a part of the “Citizens’ Centre” in Glina project financed by the EC Delegation and Norwegian Embassy in Zagreb. Namely, the Center in Glina is open every day for citizens to come, ask for information, read newspapers, do something on computers, etc. The CRP lawyer attends the Centre on Wednesday mornings to provide legal aid, and CRP’s partner ADELA provides psychosocial assistance on Wednesday afternoons. An info-point stand has been opened and it provides different types of information and materials: new laws and regulations, all types of forms, brochures, documents, newspapers, etc.

**PGP CRP Sisak, Rimska 6, 44000 Sisak**  
Tel: + 385 44 571 752; Fax: +385 44 521 292  
e-mail: [pgp-sisak@crpsisak.hr](mailto:pgp-sisak@crpsisak.hr)  
[www.crpsisak.hr](http://www.crpsisak.hr)

<b>TYPE OF CASE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF EVENTS</b>
Citizenship	20
Documents and status	35
Ownership	45
Pension and health and social security	39
Housing care	9
Tenancy rights	3
Labour	5
Misdemeanour	2
Family violence	15
Other: other legal issues, information, courses, etc.	103
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>276</b>

During the reporting period, there were **82** successfully solved request. They mainly relate to documents, establishment of ownership and other cases.

#### **ASSISTANCE**

Appeals/complaints	5
Letters	32
Lawsuits	1
Submissions- institution of proceedings	2
Submissions – other	35
Legal and psychosocial counseling	115
Quick advises	98
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>288</b>

#### **Legal issues**

CRP has been approached by a high number of clients and the legal issues remain the same, as it can be seen in the tables above. Also, despite of some changes in proceedings, the problems related to cases remain generally the same: lengthy proceedings, postponing of court hearings, not encouraging the return of refugees, etc. The court 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 and regulations, even when they are good, are not being applied well; e.g. convalidation.

According to the Croatian Pension Fund, since 17 May 2008 when the Regulations on procedures of convalidation of decisions and individual acts related to pension insurance came into force, 7796 applications were submitted, out of which 861 has been decided, among which 425 positively and 436 negatively. The highest number of applications (2662) comes from Sisak.

The Regulations says that the working period spent in paramilitary formations should not convalidated. It also says that only the working period supported by written

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evidence shall be convalidated. These stipulations should not be problematic, but the practice is different. Namely, the Pension fund branch office Sisak rejected many requests based on the fact that the applicant were active in military or police, or in the Ministry of defence or the Ministry of the Interior of so called Republic of Srpska Krajina, though the applicants mainly were not active in any of the above mentioned institutions. For example, the client R.T. (CRP case no. 2788) was rejected with his application for convalidation with an explanation that was he working with the above mentioned institutions, though he was working in a correctional institution with juvenile delinquency, which was under the Ministry of Justice and administration. CRP filed an appeal.

Regarding the written evidence on working years, according to the Regulations, only written acts related to requested convalidation shall be convalidated, i.e. no witnesses or other evidences shall be accepted. It is difficult to meet these criteria in the areas of special state concern, i.e. in former war areas. Namely, many of firms and offices were damaged during the war and there is no documentation, as it was destroyed. Many firms, factories and similar, which worked during the war, do not exist any more, and there are no legal successors.

For example, the client LJ.V. (CRP case no. 10550) worked during the war in a company in Petrinja. She applied for convalidation and her application was accepted only for the period from 1 October 1994 to 30 June 1995 and rejected for the period from 15/10/1991 to 30/09/1994 and from 01/07/1995 to 05/08/1995, with an explanation was that there was no evidence. CRP filed an appeal based on the fact that the applicant worked during the whole period in the same working place and based on the Law on General civil procedure, which says, among other issues, that the client should be heard on all facts and circumstances.

### **Other activities**

During June 2009 the English language courses for women and children, which started in May, continued to be held in the Citizens' Centre in Glina.



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On 5 June in Sisak CRP participated at the workshop “From idea to project proposal” organised by IKS Petrinja and Info centre for youth Sisak. The workshop is a part of the Programme “E-mission” sponsored by the National Foundation for development of civil society in Croatia.

The formal opening of the Citizens’ Centre was held on 17 June 2009 at 12 hours, in the Croatian House in Glina. The Citizens’ Centre is a place of meeting for all the citizens of Glina and the surrounding area, where education, legal, psychological and social assistance activities are implemented. The project of the Citizens’ Centre in Glina is financed by the European Union through the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway, the representatives of which visited Glina on that occasion. The opening was attended also by the Mayor of Glina and representatives of the City authorities with the support of which this project is implemented. The Project is implemented by the Civil Rights Project Sisak and the ADELA Centre for women.

Sisak, 14 July 2009

***PGP CRP Sisak, Rimska 6, 44000 Sisak***  
*Tel: + 385 44 571 752; Fax: +385 44 521 292*  
*e-mail: [pgp-sisak@crpsisak.hr](mailto:pgp-sisak@crpsisak.hr)*  
*[www.crpsisak.hr](http://www.crpsisak.hr)*